



Continuing Professional Development

Definition

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is part of the Institute's mission. The Institute expects all its members engaged in the field of accident investigation and/or reconstruction to maintain and develop the knowledge, skills and expertise gained at an early stage in their career or at the time of joining the Institute. The system should also encourage renewal, development and enhancement of their personal skills and professional competence.

CPD Explained

As a member of the Institute of Traffic Accident Investigators, you are not compelled to keep a record of Continued Professional Development (CPD), but it is strongly advised that it is in your professional interests to do so. Many members find that they are already active in professional development but have not acquired the habit of recognising and writing it down. This is particularly true if you include day-to-day learning in the workplace and not just formal courses.

For many Institute members, CPD is an integral part of their professional working life and the needs for it are not dependant upon career stage or status. An individual's working background may encompass the tenants of various disciplines, Institutes, Societies and other organisations. Whilst encouraging members to undertake CPD, for the purposes of the Institute, CPD should normally be demonstrated by the individual to be relevant to the field of accident investigation and/or reconstruction.

ITAI promotes activities and events for the benefit of its members and such occasions may be allocated a preset number of hours CPD which attendees may claim as part of their personal CPD, whether the subject is wholly relevant to accident investigation and/or reconstruction or not. Such events are typically for the benefit of the membership in a professional capacity. Allocating preset CPD to such events encourages participation by the members with the resultant exchange of views and ideas whatever the topic.

Why has the CPD scheme changed yet again?

CPD and revalidation are part of the philosophy of setting high standards in keeping with the original ethos ITAI adopted with its original CPD scheme as relevant at that time.

However, experience suggests CPD has evolved and the recording process was unnecessarily complicated and bureaucratic for all concerned. Given this background and following consultation of ITAI members, the Council has modified the scheme.

We aimed for the revised scheme to be easier, less prescriptive and in keeping with the pattern widely in use by other professional communities.

Requirements

The Institute has set a recommended minimum CPD of 18 hours per calendar year. If you choose to record your personal CPD it is up to you as to the format and content. Your CPD may be called upon as part of any application to change to your membership grade.

Since individuals have differing career paths and specialism, it is not possible to be too specific with respect to the exact nature and amount of professional development activity to be completed: the demands of an individual's job and the extent of their personal ambition will determine what and how much should be done.

Remember that ITAI recommend a minimum of 18 hours, it's also quality not quantity that counts!

Development Activities

Development activities take many forms with the principle that they result in relevant learning and/or development. CPD activity may be verifiable or non-verifiable. Verifiable being where a certificate or other form is presented by the activity provider recognising participation, whilst non-verifiable activity being where no such document is provided.

CPD may be achieved by attending or undertaking structured activities such as:

- Courses, seminars, conferences, workshops or technical meetings organized by the Institute, other professional and learned society bodies or course providers
- Distance learning courses or other supervised study packages
- Technical authorship
- Lecture preparation and presentation of a 'fresh' paper for an organized event.
- Private studies of a structured nature

CPD may also be unstructured, such as:

- 'On the job' research or experimentation
- Study of books, journals, professional magazines, periodicals and reporting for the benefit of others on research texts or new publications
- Experience of new and extended technologies, providing a relevant précis of applied new techniques
- Informal research and post-qualification studies.

Recording CPD

Although it is entirely a matter for the individual to decide on the means of recording their activity, a sample CPD record form is available to download, use and save on the ITAI website (**shortcut to forms page**).

Where a member records their CPD, it is a reasonable expectation that they may be requested or offer to have it read and assessed by another person. It is therefore important that CPD is considered and recorded carefully. Whether the CPD is retained for personal records, to be submitted for assessing by the Institute or viewed by a third party, the CPD entry should be logical and readily understood. Due regard should be taken of the experience, qualifications and prior knowledge of the subject when assessing the individual's professional development gained for any activity.

The following format may be of assistance in recording and presenting CPD.

Activity. Explain exactly what was involved in the activity, such as details of a test or experiment, topics of private or structured study, course content and details, purpose and results of 'on the job' research.

Relevance. Describe how you found the activity to be relevant to your accident investigation and/or reconstruction role. Whilst the relevance to you may be obvious, consider how it may be interpreted by another reader.

Development. Explain how or why this activity progressed your knowledge or skills, taking account of your previous professional experiences and qualifications. Reflecting upon the activity and its relevance is an active process of reviewing its content, relevance and benefit to you and is particularly useful for capturing learning from informal or incidental activities, which may often form the greater part of an individual's CPD.

In recognition of this, and in order to ensure that individuals understand the outcomes of their CPD, members are encouraged to record this outcome for each learning activity.

Activity Time and CPD time. The number of hours engaged in the activity compared with the number of hours CPD claimed is a matter for the individual and will be dependant upon their previous knowledge or experience of the subject compared to the content and quality of the activity.

On occasions ITAI promote events that may be allocated a specific CPD value and this can be shown directly to the member's CPD record. In all other cases, simply transferring attendance time to CPD value is discouraged in favour of some explanation of the activity, its relevance and the subsequent professional development provided.

Whilst the CPD from one discipline may overlap that of another, due regard and explanation should be given to demonstrate that which is relevant to the Institute and the field of accident investigation and/or reconstruction.

Voluntary assessment of CPD

Institute members are not required to submit any details of their CPD to the Institute, unless they are applying for a membership upgrade. However, any ITAI member may voluntarily submit their relevant annual CPD for checking or 'assessment'. CPD is assessed per complete calendar year to a maximum of the current and the previous two years.

For example, CPD 2008 is the current year to be assessed in 2009. The previous two CPD years being 2007 and 2006. For completeness, members who have submitted their CPD will receive feedback. For full members, there is an option to have this *checking or 'assessment'* noted on the relevant page of the ITAI website. Again this is for a maximum period consisting of the current CPD year and the previous two CPD years, after which the oldest entries are removed.

For full members, a dated CPD logo (jpeg format) may be provide for use on stationary or other forms. This logo is valid for the same periods as entries upon the website.

If the Institute is to apply consistency to checking CPD assessment, it is right that the CPD portfolio is assessed or 'considered' rather than simply being submitted and automatically accepted. It is recognised that assessing CPD of another person can be subjective and two people attending the same activity may gain differing degrees of development.

If the assessing of an ITAI member's CPD is to have a value to the individual and the wider membership, it is important to consider how the CPD is presented and considered, not only by other ITAI members but also externally. If the CPD is presented in such a format that it cannot reasonably be 'assessed' by the Institute, it would follow that it would be difficult for an external party to carry out an assessment. In such instances it would be inappropriate for the Institute to accept the submission. Members submitting CPD will be provided with feedback. In the event of the CPD not being accepted members will be permitted to amend their CPD portfolio with the opportunity for re-submission.

If members have any questions or other matters they wish to discuss in relation to recording, retaining and revealing their CPD, please do not hesitate to contact Secretary to the Grades Assessment Team – gradessec@itai.org .