

Guidelines for your continuing professional development (CPD)

These are guidelines for teachers, trainers and tutors across the FE sector. This includes further education colleges, sixth form colleges, work based learning providers, community based providers for adults, specialist colleges for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities – the range of providers funded by the LSC

October 2007

“CPD is fundamental in maintaining the good professional standing of all teachers, trainers and tutors in the sector.”



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Defining your continuing professional development

From September 1st 2007 all full time teachers, trainers and tutors in the FE sector are required to undertake at least 30 hours of CPD per year and record their professional development. Initial professional development (IPD) begins in teacher training for those who are not already qualified or working towards qualification. Continuing professional development (CPD) is required year-on-year for all teachers, trainers and tutors employed in the sector.

In the 2007 regulations on CPD (www.dius.gov.uk) the definition clearly complements the Institute for Learning's aim to promote teacher-centred development activities:

'CPD, in relation to a teacher, means continuing professional development, which is any activity undertaken for the purposes of updating knowledge of the subject taught and developing teaching skills'

In this broad definition, CPD is fundamental in maintaining the good professional standing of all teachers, trainers and tutors in the sector. It is the mechanism through which high quality learning opportunities for the individual professional and their institution are identified, maintained and developed.

It is an important part of the reforms to teaching and training that teachers meet the regulatory CPD requirements. As the professional body for the sector, we believe that the minimum requirement of 30 hours per year for full-time teachers (and the pro-rata equivalent for part-time teachers) should be just that - a *minimum* number of hours of CPD. We have evidence from our research that many teachers do 30 hours of CPD or more already. However, as a professional body, we stress that it is the quality of the CPD that is undertaken that is crucially important to the notion of professional development.

CPD has now become a responsibility for all teachers and employers across the further education sector, but it is teachers who have the central role in determining that they undertake effective CPD for development is an integral part of achieving and maintaining professional teaching status. For every teacher learning about what they teach (updating their subject specialism), how they teach (refreshing teaching approaches) and the relevance of where they teach and the kinds of learners they teach (the institutional and national policy context), takes place continuously. This learning can be formal or informal, consciously planned and undertaken or more opportunistic. However the learning takes place, being professional means taking responsibility for making sure that learning is exploited and made explicit:

- to oneself: through a process of recorded reflection on action (critical reflective practice);
- to learners: in the development of learning activities and feedback so that CPD leads to real impact and improved practice (action research and evaluation);
- to colleagues: in the process of collaborative learning and professional dialogue;
- to the professional body: for continuing registration as a teacher in the sector.

So CPD comprises more than just courses, workshops or formal study; it is the critical reflection on different learning experiences and resulting action planning that demonstrates development as a teacher. A growing body of research on CPD has shown that the kinds of professional development which make the most difference to practice are based on professional dialogue about teaching and learning and the improvement of practice through a variety of activities including coaching, mentoring, shadowing and peer support. Awareness-raising events are useful for absorbing information and updating knowledge but are not likely to lead to skills development. Therefore, when deciding on your priorities for CPD, it is important to consider what kinds of CPD will be the most effective for developing your practice as a teacher.

In summary:

Continuing professional development means maintaining, improving and broadening relevant knowledge and skills in your subject specialism and your teaching so that it has a positive impact on practice and learner experience.

Using the IfL model of dual professionalism

The IfL model of CPD and reflective tools on the online portal will help you to structure your planning and recording of professional development but we suggest that the model of dual professionalism can be a starting point for your reflection on priorities for your CPD in any one year (figure 1 below and a downloadable resource is available on our website for you to use). Consider the two parts of your professionalism; subject specialism (part 1) and teaching and learning (part 2) and reflect on the drivers that will determine your focus for development activities. Both parts of your professional practice are equally important but the balance of the activities you undertake will inevitably be decided by a consideration of the context in which you work (part 3).

In any one year, particular drivers in each part of the model will highlight important areas of development for you to consider and, although a balance of CPD activities is desirable, you can give a rationale for your choice. For example, you may spend a considerable time on developing your practice in using e-learning approaches if these are new to you and you need to write some online materials for your subject, but relating these to the personalisation agenda in teaching and learning will give a more balanced approach. Interrogating the model will help you to plan your professional development activities, although within the year your priorities might change and your plan can be amended accordingly.

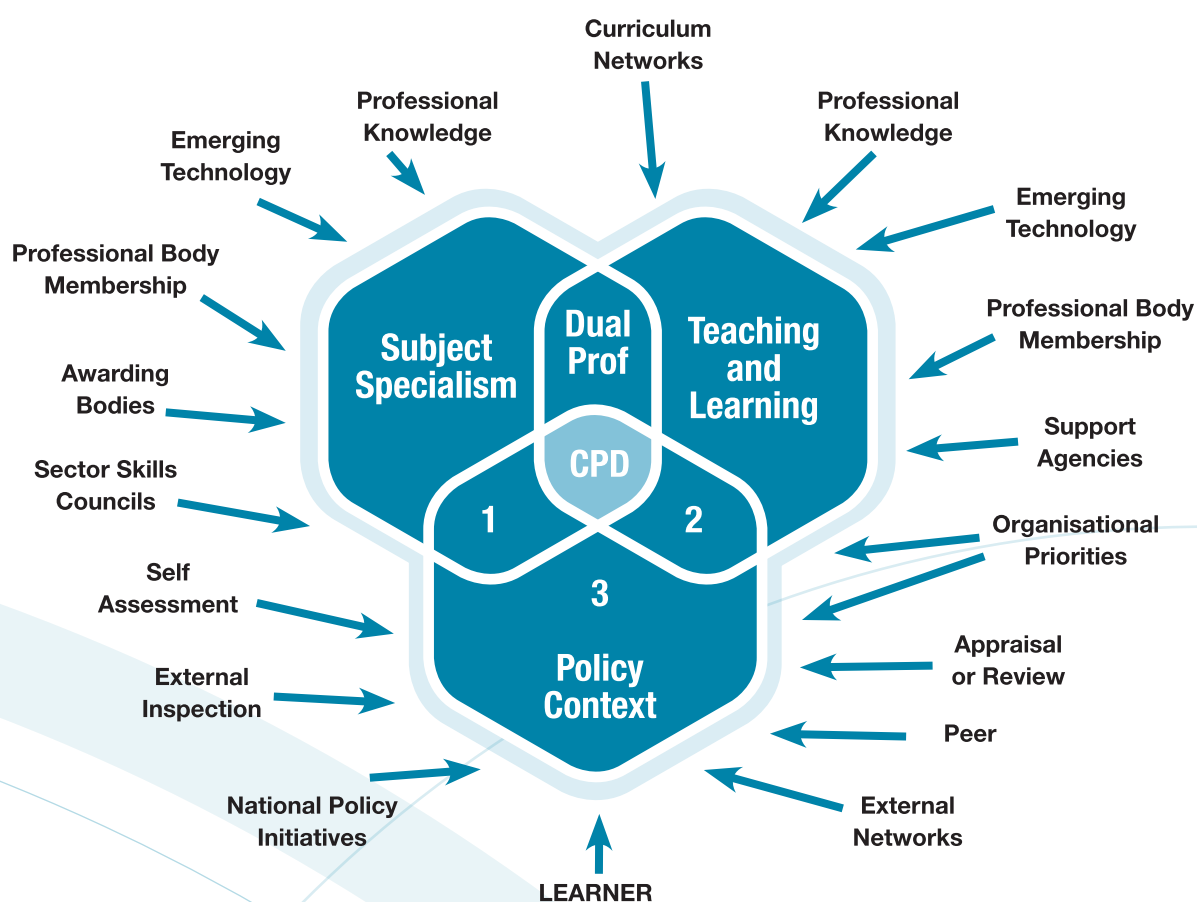


Figure 1

Dual professionalism and its impact on the model for continuing professional development where 1 relates to CPD arising out of subject specialism and 2 relates to CPD arising from teaching and learning in the context in which you work(3).

Recording your CPD

In conjunction with the model of dual professionalism, the cycle in figure 2 will help you to plan your recording of CPD. As with any experiential learning cycle however, your learning and development will not always follow these steps neatly

and in sequence. It is quite appropriate that you address a particular stage of this process when you see it as relevant and timely to your own developmental journey.

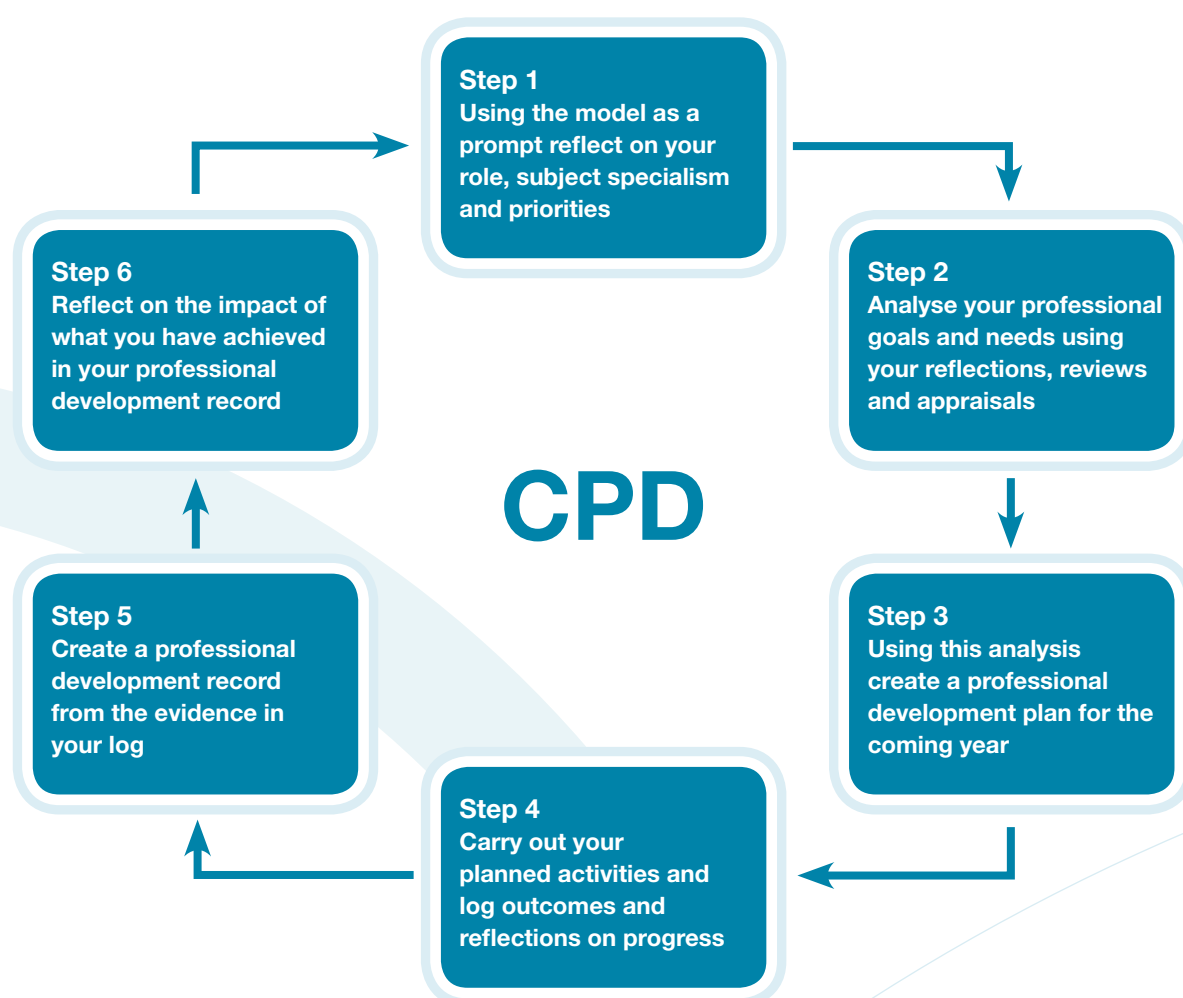


Figure 2

The professional development cycle incorporating reflective practice.

How to plan your professional development cycle

Step 1 - contextual analysis:

- If you are a new teacher your priority is to become qualified and gain QTLS or ATLS (www.lifelonglearninguk.org). If you are already qualified you will need to use the tools on our portal to begin the reflection on the relationship between the LLUK standards for teachers and the development of your professional practice (http://www.lluk.org/standards/new_prof_standards.html). Using the model in fig. 1, you will need also to think about the most important drivers within your organisational context which will mean you will need to improve or update your subject specialism and teaching and learning approaches over the coming year you will need to take into account the wider national policy context. From this initial reflection on your context you will be able to identify priority areas.

Step 2 – needs and goals analysis:

- Analyse these priority areas using other forms of evidence such as learner feedback, impact evaluation on learner outcomes, appraisals, peer review and teaching observations. Then, mapping these against the relevant domains in the teaching standards, make a critical self-assessment of your needs and goals for the coming year that will address identified areas for development.

Step 3 - individual development plan

- Using the evidence from your self-assessment, identify professional development activities that you think will address these needs and goals thinking carefully about the type of activity as well as the focus or topics that are most likely to be effective for you. Create a professional development plan giving a brief rationale for each activity, a time-line for achievement, outcomes and what you think will be the measures of success.

Step 4 – professional development log

- Carry out the activities identified in your plan, keep a log of the activities you complete with dates and some indication of time spent together with your reflections on progress.

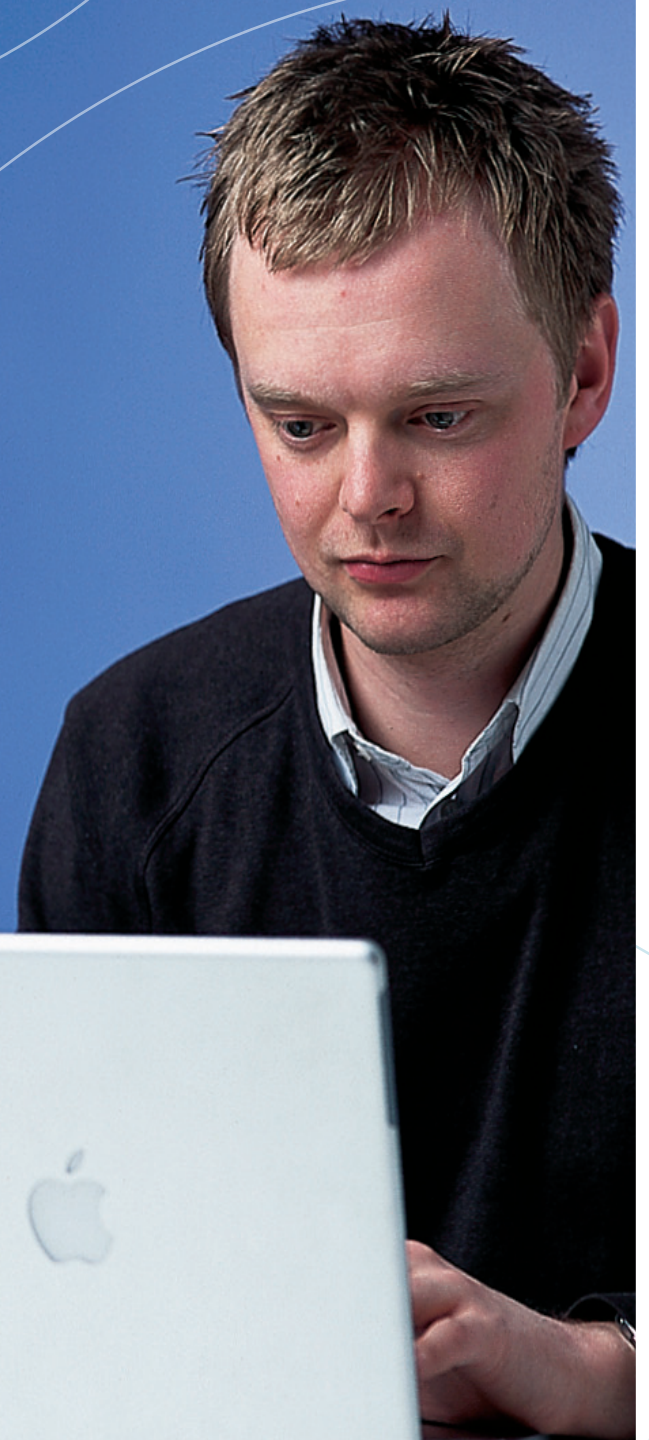
Step 5 – professional development record

- During the yearly cycle keep a professional development record to show you have undertaken at least 30 hours of CPD or pro rata if you are a part-time teacher.

Step 6 – reflection on practice and impact analysis

- Reflect on the impact on your professional practice and on your learners of each aspect of CPD you have undertaken. This will be one of the prompts for the next cycle for another year but will also be an integral part of your learning log.

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Deciding upon suitable CPD activities

As you reflect on your teaching practice, listening to the many and varied sources of feedback on your performance, you are best placed to determine the type and nature of activities that will make the greatest impact on teaching and learning. Remember that it is important to continue to build on your strengths as well as address perceived areas of weakness and share these with others, colleagues and managers.

This approach to CPD is about you and your professionalism. The type and nature of activities through which you can improve and broaden your knowledge and skills in your subject specialism, in teaching, and in the context in which you work are limitless. For example, keeping up to date with developments in technologies and using them effectively for teaching and learning is an on-going activity. As a teacher who is committed to your own professionalism you will want to be at the leading edge of practice and stay abreast of developments in national policy and will choose to plan your CPD accordingly.

The following examples are offered as a guide to some of the activities through which you can develop your professionalism. This list is by no means exhaustive and will be updated as we find examples from you of creative and exciting practice across the sector.

Updating your teaching and learning methods and skills

- peer coaching (coaching others and being coached in your subject or vocational area)
- subject learning coach training
- accredited courses or programmes related to teacher development
- mentoring new colleagues
- peer review
- peer observation
- work shadowing
- team-teaching
- team/department self-assessment
- carrying out and disseminating action research
- evaluation of feedback (learners and peers)
- significant input at team meetings
- engagement in structured professional dialogue/learning conversations
- preparation for and evaluation of appraisal
- membership of committees, boards, steering groups related to teaching and/or your subject area
- partnership activities (schools, employers, other providers)
- visits to community organisations
- curriculum design/ development/validation
- e-learning activities
- accredited CPD courses or programmes
- reading journal articles
- reviewing books or articles
- updating knowledge through the internet/TV (including Teachers' TV)/other media and reviewing these with a group of professional colleagues

Deciding upon suitable CPD activities (continued)

Updating your subject specialism

- gaining qualifications in Skills for Life (literacy, numeracy, ESOL) (<http://excellence.qia.org.uk>)
- accredited courses or programmes related to subject/vocational updating
- industrial updating through visits, placements and reading
- secondments
- membership of a special interest group
- examiner/verifier/assessor responsibilities, and feedback from these for your courses
- briefings by awarding bodies and impact on practice
- membership of professional bodies, guilds and/or societies in order to maintain or develop specialist vocational skills
- giving a presentation at a conference in your subject area
- supervising research
- subject learning coaching training
- subject-specific project work or project development
- attendance at subject-specific conferences
- writing reports/papers
- joint work with other organisations
- links with employers and the impact on learners
- planning or running a staff development activity or event
- organising trips/ residentials /work placements
- reading journal articles
- reviewing books or articles
- updating knowledge through the internet/TV/CD/other media
- public service/voluntary work

Activities related to the national policy initiatives and the wider context in which you work

- updating on national policy developments and the impact for you and your organisation
- updating on teaching in new contexts such as Train to Gain
- updating on teaching for new curricula and qualifications such as 14-19 diplomas and integrating skills for life in vocational programmes
- updating on liaison with other support services and the impact on teaching and learning
- updating on new policies/initiatives which relate to teaching such as the personalisation agenda
- equality and diversity training/updating and the impact on teaching and subject
- involvement in relevant institutional research projects
- reviewing and developing teaching in preparation for inspection
- ICT/e-learning courses for skills updating and application to own teaching

The activities you choose as relevant to you and your practice will only count as CPD:

- if you can critically reflect on what you have learned
- if you can evidence how you have applied this to your practice
- if you can evidence how this has impacted on your learners' experience and success

Your organisation will share information with you and update you on a variety of administrative matters or new systems and this is, of course, important for your practice but what you need to record with your professional body are the hours that you have spent on developing your practice as a teacher together with a reflection on impact for yourself, your learners and the context in which you work.

Sending your statement of completed CPD to the IfL

As research shows, professional conversations about CPD are vitally important for your development as a teacher. We would recommend therefore that from the outset you share your on-going development work with a colleague who will also be able to act as a critical friend, supporter of activity and peer reviewer of your planning and reflection on CPD.

When you are ready to send your statement of completed CPD for the year to the IfL, you will find a form on the members' area of the website. On this form we will ask you to declare where we can find the evidence of your CPD should we wish to audit your record as part of our sampling process.

The results of this audit will be shared with you in the form of examples of creative and effective CPD from a range of teachers and organisations which will help you in your future planning and evaluation of CPD.

The Institute welcomes your views, questions and comments on professional development throughout the year so please do contact us at www.ifl.ac.uk or phone us on 0844 815 3202.

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