

How to Guide - Continuous Professional Development

What is it?

Continuous Professional Development (CPD) is the process of planning, tracking, documenting and reviewing the knowledge, skills and experiences we gain at work. This includes both formal and informal learning, development and training, beyond any initial training. It should plan, record and evaluate what we experience and learn, and most importantly, how we then use and apply it in our everyday practice.

CPD evidence is normally collected and kept in a physical or digital portfolio, documenting our development as professionals. CPD normally focuses on the identification of formal development priorities, how professionals use these (as well as informal learning opportunities), to reflect on their learning and development.



Although CPD will be individualised, it will not be carried out in isolation. Many people will impact on our CPD; colleagues, managers and clients/customers and Independent Training Providers (ITPs) will also input on and influence it. Formal training opportunities play a large role in CPD, especially when learning to do something specific, such as learning a new skill or competence. However, developmental and more informal activities are just as important; these are normally related to capability, behaviours and competencies - progression from basic know-how to more advanced or complex understanding and adapting working practices.

Relating these points to end-point assessment (EPA), an apprentice would document their CPD activity, reflect on it and how it has been applied in their day-to-day work. It is not only a record of training attended; it should also include detailed reflection on the learning and how useful/relevant it was to use in practice. It should be for both formal and informal training and development, could relate to both on and off-the-job learning and provide an overview of professional development whilst on the apprenticeship programme.

CPD is often a requirement of membership of a professional body/organisation. It can be useful to help apprentices to:

- have an overview of their professional development whilst on-programme
- identify and acknowledge their achievements and successes
- identify any gaps in skills, knowledge and capabilities, whilst also providing an overview of how the gaps were filled and/or problems overcome
- identify their further development needs and opportunities
- demonstrate their commitment to CPD activity
- exhibit their professional standing and attitude to clients and employers.

How to Prepare

The evidence of CPD activities undertaken will be reviewed at EPA; the Independent End-Point Assessor (IEPA) will base their questions and/or discussion focus on the contents of the apprentice's collection of CPD evidence. The apprentice must therefore be familiar with the evidence they submit, and be able to confidently talk about it, answer questions and elaborate further on how the activities contributed to their learning and development in the workplace whilst on-programme. It is vital that the collection of evidence is not left until late in the programme; recording starting skills and knowledge would be extremely useful, and as CPD activities are planned and occur, an ongoing log of the activity should be maintained.

Apprentices could consider:

- what learning they received from colleagues or gained and shared in networking
- learning about new technologies and/or methods of working
- any ongoing changes in legislation relevant to their industry/working
- any insights/learning points gained from coaching and mentoring
- reflections and learning points from taking on new responsibilities
- organisational or role changes
- secondments/temporary role changes within their organisation
- deputising or covering for work colleagues
- insights and lessons learned from critical incidents and/or mistakes.