

AS EASY AS



Knowledge gained through qualifications can quickly become out of date without CPD, **Niall Boyd** offers some tips on CPD best practice

As a CII-qualified member, compliance with the institute's continuing professional development (CPD) scheme is a non-negotiable requirement of your membership. Non-compliance with the CPD requirements will result in disciplinary action that can lead to the withdrawal of the right to use a qualification designation and/or Chartered title.

So why is CPD so important? CPD activity reflects the fact that, in today's fast changing insurance market, knowledge gained through qualifications quickly dates. So, if you are to remain competent, you must continue to develop and enhance your knowledge.

Equally, eligibility for, and use of, member qualification designations is not simply an indicator of study you have completed, but also of your commitment to subsequently keep

this knowledge current and your willingness to be bound by a code of ethics.

CPD helps ensure that, as a CII-qualified member, you have the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in a competitive market. It helps you to:

- Build public confidence and credibility;
- Adapt positively to change by continuously updating your skills;
- Develop your career goals by focusing on relevant training and development;
- Be more productive and efficient by reflecting on your learning and highlighting gaps in your knowledge and experience and planning action to address these.

Common CPD misconceptions

There are many misconceptions regarding CPD, including:

- It does not apply to me as I have been practising for many years;

- It does not apply to me as I am not resident in the UK;
- I am a specialist so there are no training courses for me;
- I will never be able to undertake 35 hours' CPD;
- If I do not do it, nothing will happen;
- The only activities that are suitable are training courses, qualification study, conferences, seminars and the like.

Outlined below is general guidance on the scheme to help dispel these myths.

CII CPD scheme

Since 2005, the CII has operated a compulsory CPD scheme for all qualified members. Last year, however, saw the introduction of a new scheme, which became mandatory from the 1 January 2013.

It is a time-based scheme, meaning there is a requirement to undertake a minimum 35 hours' CPD annually (21 hours structured). This applies irrespective of the level or length of membership, specialism or position of the individual member.

The scheme is based upon the Financial Conduct Authority scheme for the retail investment sector and is designed to be clear, comprehensible and easy to follow.

Importantly, it recognises the broad range of development activities members undertake in the course of their working lives.

The scheme also provides a practical framework for ensuring your professional development is addressed and satisfies the requirements of the CII as a Chartered professional body.

As members are required to undertake a minimum 21 hours of structured CPD, a frequent question is what constitutes 'structured' versus 'unstructured' CPD. Put simply:

- **Structured CPD** is the specific undertaking of any formal learning activity to meet a specific learning outcome (this is what an individual

THE FOUR-STAGE CPD PROCESS

- Identifying learning and development needs and planning activities to address them;
- Carrying out the appropriate activities to meet those needs;
- Recording the time spent on each activity and maintaining a verifiable audit trail;
- Adding a statement to confirm the extent to which the activity has met the original need.

is expected to know, understand or do as a result of the learning). An example would be attending a technical lecture to understand business interruption, if you had identified knowledge of business interruption as a development need.

- **Unstructured CPD** is activity that may not have been specifically designed to meet an identified need. An example might be reading an article on business interruption in the trade press in the course of your day-to-day activities. If it has met a learning outcome that you had previously identified then it still qualifies as CPD, just not 'structured' CPD.

Maintaining a record

Each year, the CII randomly selects up to 10% of qualified members and requires them to submit a record of their CPD activities for the past 12 months. This is where planning and recording can make life much easier if you are asked to submit yours.

Rather than having to create a record from scratch of all the activities you have undertaken, if you have planned and formally recorded your CPD activity as you have undertaken it, and kept appropriate evidence,

THE DO'S AND DON'TS OF CPD

DO:

- Fully familiarise yourself with the CII scheme rules;
- Plan your CPD;
- Utilise the range of CPD services on offer from the CII and local institutes;
- Aim for a balance between the types of CPD activities;
- Maintain an ongoing record of activity;
- Keep evidence of activities;
- Reflect on the appropriateness of an activity.

DON'T

- Wait until you are asked before creating your CPD record;
- Assume we know the learning outcomes for a particular event;
- Forget that the scheme is now hours based;
- Forget that adherence to the scheme rules is mandatory;
- Forget the variety of CPD opportunities that CII membership offers;
- Submit your CPD record unless we ask;
- Forget that knowledge and skills create new business and career opportunities.

then you will already be in good shape to submit your record. The CII provides a free, simple to use, online planning and recording tool to help members.

CPD need not be onerous

Thirty-five hours equates to less than an hour a week and, when you consider the types of activity that are eligible, you will be surprised by how much of this you already do as a matter of course.

Remember, it is not 35 hours of additional CPD, but a total of 35 hours including any undertaken as development activity in the course of your job. In practice, we find many members, even those not studying, actually do much more than this.

You can use any method to plan and record your CPD. Some members use tools provided by their employer while others use the CII's free tool for members available at www.cii.co.uk/cpd

The only condition is that the chosen method must provide the following information:

- Your identified learning and development needs;
- The activities you plan to have undertaken (date/learning objectives, etc);
- Confirmation of whether the activity was structured or unstructured;
- The number of hours spent performing each activity;
- A 'reflective' statement – did the activity meet your identified need?
- Where available, supporting evidence eg uploaded documents that verify the details of CPD activity (such as a training provider's attendance certificate or a course syllabus).

Suitable CPD activities

CPD encompasses a wide range of activity and a good CPD record typically encompasses a blend to address the varied development needs of individuals.

All the traditional activities you would expect are listed, including:

- Training courses and workshops;
- Conferences, seminars and webinars;
- Qualification study;
- Self-managed learning.

Additionally, there is a range of less obvious activities:

- On-the-job training;
- Internal training;
- Training others;
- Technical authorship;
- Mentoring/shadowing;
- New product development.


CPD SCHEME OVERVIEW

- Applies to all CII qualified members.
- A minimum 35 hours' CPD is required annually.
- At least 21 hours must be structured CPD.
- Each activity must be at least 30 minutes in duration (different activities to address a common development need can be combined).
- A free planning and recording tool is provided.
- It is self-certifying: records only need to be submitted as and when requested by the CII.

Helpful resources at your disposal

Remember that a core element of CII membership is helping you develop professional knowledge and skills, so members can typically satisfy much, if not all, of their annual CPD commitment by making the most of CII events and online resources (the majority of which are free to CII members), such as:

- CII technical papers, market reports, briefings and policy updates;
- An online library (with a physical library in London) providing unrivalled access to insurance and financial services publications and documents produced by the CII and many other leading providers of technical and market information;
- Membership of a sector/discipline specific faculty providing access to a range of career-enhancing CPD activity including face-to-face events, online broadcasts, research reports and technical bulletins;
- In the UK, Channel Islands and Isle of Man, local institute membership providing access to technical, market and business skills events;
- *The Journal* – six issues a year, providing several hours of unstructured CPD reading;
- Discounted training events, qualification study and online training and competency programmes.

Remember the CII CPD scheme is self-certifying, so development activities should only be recorded if they have assisted your professional development. As a member you are bound by the CII code of ethics to be honest in your declarations. 

FIND OUT MORE ///

For an overview of the CII CPD scheme rules, along with FAQs, please visit: www.cii.co.uk/cpd