

Guidance for CPD (Continuing Professional Development)

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1. Introduction

Professional Development is vital for all nuclear professionals whatever their age or status. There should be a seamless transition between initial development and continuing development after admission to membership. Maintaining and reporting your professional development is a requirement for registering and maintaining your membership with the Nuclear Institute. It is also a requirement of maintaining registration with professional bodies such as the Engineering and Science Councils.

Professional development is not just about technical skills, but also about the non-technical aspects of our working lives. It is a rapidly changing world that we live and work in. Keeping up to date with technical developments is vital to all professionals. So too is the need to exhibit inter-personal, presentational and managerial skills for meeting modern professional expectations.

Professional development is considered in two stages:

- *Initial Professional Development (IPD)* for those recently qualified.
- *Continuing Professional Development (CPD)* for those considered as having completed Initial Professional Development.

Initial Professional Development

IPD should be appropriate and should consist of a core programme of generic knowledge and skills related to the nuclear industry plus job specific knowledge and skills training. The training should also include skills related to management, finance and commerce.

Continuing Professional Development

CPD in the nuclear industry covers a wide and diverse area. It must be emphasised that control of CPD lies in the hands of the individual member. Many professional development activities are dictated by employers requirements and training provision. However this is only a part of the input to an individual's plans. It may or may not be the most important part but the individual member has to be in charge of his or her development plan, even if this is simply to ensure that the employer's provision is adequate and appropriate.

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What counts as CPD?

It should normally include at least three (exceptionally 2) of the following categories:

1. Work- based learning
2. Professional activity
3. Formal/educational
4. Self directed learning
5. Other Activities

Evidence from surveys shows not only that Institute members have a high level of activity in professional development but also that they are overwhelmingly in control of this development and, most frequently, undertaking the development as a personal initiative.

2.A Personal Professional Development Plan

You may find it useful to have a personal development plan. This plan can range from simple, e.g. satisfying oneself the training provision provided by the employer is appropriate and adequate for the tasks to be undertaken, to challenging, e.g. when moving to an entirely new area of work; assessing all the needs and organising adequate provision of knowledge acquisition and skills training. Individual members may find it useful to make a realistic assessment of the skills and knowledge which need to be acquired and the time and resources available to do this. Then a strategy for the professional development activity should be prepared.

Considerations should include:

- (i) Does the employer offer any resources and are they appropriate?
- (ii) Has the member to arrange his own provision?
- (iii) What self study resources are available?
- (iv) What is a good study strategy?
- (v) Is advice needed?
- (vi) Will the employer or anyone else provide or sponsor the resources required?

How should the success of the professional development activity be assessed? The NI does not specify a minimum amount of CPD hours or CPD points. An outcome-based approach is more appropriate to professional learning rather than relying on quantitative measures such as hours or points. Because of the personal nature of CPD, recording of individual reflective analysis of the outcome of the activity is extremely important. Where possible this reflective analysis should consider relevance to the NI's Nuclear Delta.™ or the individual's role and responsibilities.

3.The Personal Professional Development Management Cycle

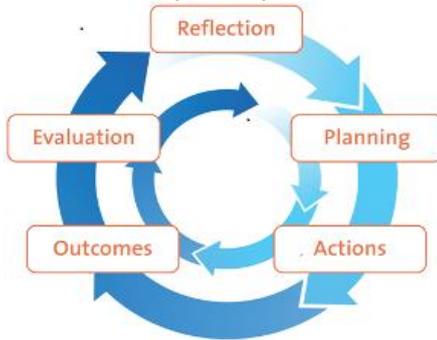
Questions to ask:

- (i) Where am I now?
- (ii) Where am I going?
- (iii) What do I need to get there?
- (iv) What do I need to do to maintain my level of professional competence?

Actions to take:

- (i) Establish and undertake adequate and appropriate knowledge acquisition and skills training.
- (ii) Evaluate the extent of success of the professional development undertaken.
- (iii) Make an adequate record of personal professional development achievements.

The above may be represented as:



Member Professional Development Requirements

Personal Professional Development Record Keeping

Members are required to maintain a Personal Professional Development Record. The maintenance of a CPD record is also a requirement of many professional registration bodies and failure to maintain an adequate record or submit a CPD return will put an individual's professional registration at risk. The format of the record is not mandated.

The individual professional member is responsible for:

- Managing his or her own professional development following the Engineering Council or Science Council Code of Practice if appropriate.
- Choosing which professional development activities to undertake and on what subject matter
- Maintaining an appropriate balance between technical and non-technical professional development activities, with a good spread of activities from at least 3 (exceptionally 2) of the 5 categories of CPD above.

For most members this may be little more than recognising and formally recording the professional development, which they do already!

4. How to Format CPD Recording

The guidelines for best practice are to:

A. Plan development and follow the professional development cycle

B. Describe professional development in terms of competence acquired

So record

- 1) **what** you learned and
- 2) **how** you applied it or will apply it in your job

C. Record the amount of time spent on each activity, in minutes or hours

D. Focus professional development on a few specific activities at any one time

E. **Keep up to date records of developing competence** – we recommend using the free **mycareerpath®** online CPD system to assist – visit www.nuclearinst.com/mycareerpath for more information.

F. Use support from other people and from the Nuclear Institute

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As you can see, professional development does not necessarily mean formal attendance at conferences/courses. You should undertake activities that add to your skill, knowledge and experience and are relevant to your job and career development needs.

There are virtually no limitations to the range of subjects that can count as professional development (see categories above). It is your career - whatever is relevant to your present or future career is eligible. It can include anything, such as private study, on-the-job experiential learning, in-house training programmes, research projects, giving presentations, writing papers for publication and formal courses.

Wherever possible this should be related to the NI's [Nuclear Delta](#) and activities should be chosen in collaboration with your employer, perhaps discussed during an appraisal. You should also take time to reflect on what you have learnt from the CPD activities – this is the most important of all to guide future CPD and career plans.

5. Begin Your Record

You are strongly recommended to regularly update and review your record of professional development. There is no intention of being prescriptive about records, the form and content of your record is your choice, but should be related to job needs, career development and competences. You are recommended to use mycareerpath®, a Professional Development System for NI members. It is an online tool which is designed for professionals who want to enhance their careers, and allows all NI members to record activities and experiences that contribute to their professional development throughout the year and reflect upon how this learning has helped them. The tool can also be used to build evidence for applications to professional chartership with the Engineering Council and Science Council, as well as the four different grades of professional membership at the NI.

Start using the tool now and get into the habit of logging CPD throughout the year. This will assist with year end CPD submission and help with future planning. The mycareerpath® online tool was developed by the Engineering Council and has profiles for all professional membership and chartered grades the Institute offers, including Science Council. Other features allow users to create plans, upload evidence, and generate reports to send to mentors, colleagues or professional institutions for online review. The tool is accessible by desktop, table and smart phone.

To set up your profile and start recording, please visit: www.nuclearinst.com/mycareerpath

A short step-by-step guide is available on the NI website to assist members in setting up their profile. Please note, you will need your member login details to access the mycareerpath tool. Please contact us if you need a username or password reminder.

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6. The Nuclear Institute's Role

Each year, the Nuclear Institute will request a percentage of its members to confirm that they are undertaking CPD. This sample will include all members registered through the NI with the Engineering Council and Science Council.

Individuals have 3 months from the request to submit their CPD declaration. In the event of a non-submission, the Individual's professional registration will be at risk. The Nuclear Institute will review your professional development on a regular basis by means of a sample audit of a proportion of the professional membership. Failure to provide the evidence when requested could also put an Individual's professional registration at risk. Each member audited will be provided with feedback and in the event of an unsatisfactory submission, support to the member will be offered.

7. Extenuating Circumstances

In some cases you may be unable to comply with the NI CPD policy, for example if you are no longer professionally active or in cases of unemployment, maternity or sick leave. In these circumstances your records will not be subject to audit.