



# Continuing Professional Development

**Guidance for Engineers**



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## INTRODUCTION

Continuing professional development (CPD) is a way for you to show that you are committed to learning and developing throughout your career.

To stay relevant, you need to keep your skills, knowledge and experience up to date, and record what you learn and then use in your job.

As an Engineer, you need to manage your own professional development. You should be able to send us an annual record of your past year's CPD and your plans for the year ahead.

This guide explains why CPD is important and the best ways to approach it. It includes examples of subject areas and activities that you can include in your records and gives advice on how to make your CPD as effective as possible.

## BENEFITS OF CPD

### Demonstrate your professional pride and integrity

Life is competitive and engineering is no different. It makes sense to allocate time to developing and maintaining your knowledge and skills.

As an Engineer, you are likely to have plenty of opportunities to keep your professional competence up to date – spending time in briefings, reading relevant publications, and going to conferences, presentations and courses.

When you use the CPD concept to record your development, identify skills gaps and plan how to fill them, you will show the commitment you are making to your career and to upholding professional standards.

### Client reassurance

You can also prove your expertise in consultancy, and the planning and delivery of projects, to clients by showing your knowledge of current regulations and effective engineering practice.

### Career development

Whether you are newly qualified or an experienced engineer, planning ahead will help you spot the skills, experience and qualifications you need to keep your career moving upward. It will also help you make the most of learning opportunities.

By recording the steps you take to achieve new learning, you will demonstrate your commitment, knowledge and relevant experience, and show you are suitable for future work roles.



## CURRENT PRACTICE IN CPD

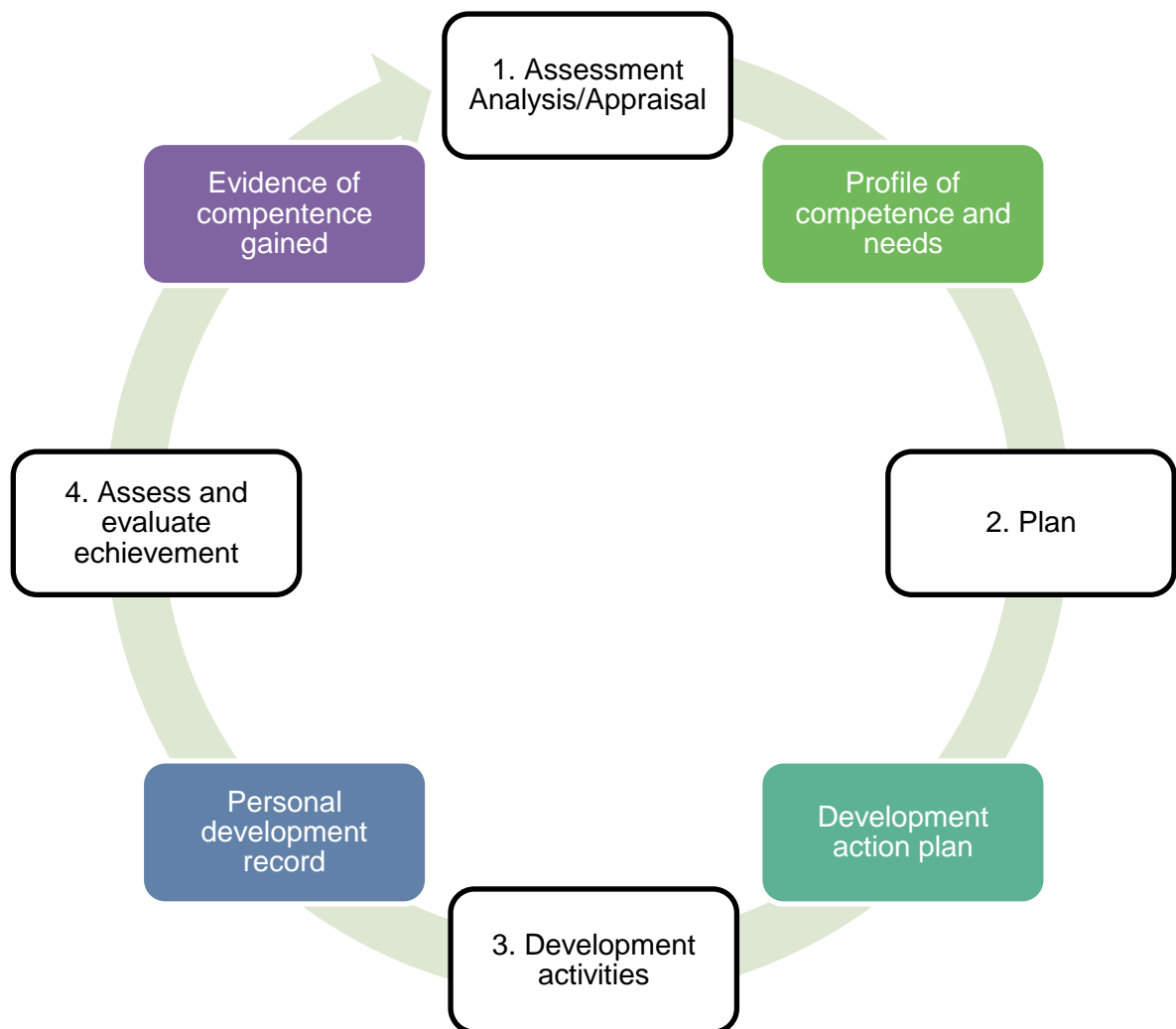
Best CPD practice is always changing. Employers are also taking it increasingly seriously.

As a guide, you should be doing at least 40 CPD hours a year up to the Professional Assessment stage.

Later in your career, you will need to do enough to develop and maintain the professional knowledge, skills and competence that you need for your role.



## THE CPD CYCLE



Think of your CPD as a cycle. In the diagram, the white boxes show you how to approach and structure your CPD. The blue boxes show you how to plan and record your CPD.

There are many ways to plan and record your CPD. If your employer gives you regular performance appraisals, these records can be used as CPD activities, as long as they identify the four key stages in the CPD cycle.

There are circumstances when you don't need to do CPD – for example when you:

- ☐ Are on or about to go on maternity leave
- ☐ Are retired and not a Assesmenter nor undertaking consultancy work
- ☐ Have been unemployed for more than six months

If the above apply to you, we would still encourage you to record your development – for example, reading relevant publications or web-based research. However, we would consider you for exemption from audit of your CPD records.



## DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN

Your development action plan will work best if it combines the first two steps of the CPD cycle – your Assessment and plan.

You will decide how often this should take place, but we recommend that you do it at least once a year.

### Assessment

First, you should Assessment your recent performance. Identify both your current competences and the areas where you need further learning and development. A SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis is a useful tool for this.

Your analysis should consider your short-term and long-term development goals, as well as 'hard' (technical) and 'soft' (behavioural) performance. You should also think holistically – look at what your employer needs, and what engineering, society and the law expects of you.

Find more examples of areas for personal development in Appendix C.

### Plan

Having prioritised your CPD needs, you should draw up a plan to meet them.

Think about possible activities, resources and timescales.

'Resources' will be wide-ranging, and might include advice from colleagues, secondments or assignments, books and journals, the internet, open/distance learning material, conferences and courses. The cheapest and often the most effective CPD is on-the-job learning.

You should also decide how you will know if your activities have been successful.

Find a template development action plan in Appendix A.

## PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT RECORD

Your personal development record will work best if it combines the last two steps of the CPD cycle – the record of your CPD activities, and their evaluation.

### Development activities

This is about putting your plan into practice. There are many activities you can do – you can find ideas for subjects and activities in Appendix D.

You will come across different types of CPD – the activities that you plan and carry out, and the unplanned CPD opportunities that you spot along the way.

Both types of CPD are valuable and will encourage you to explore further – good CPD becomes addictive!



## Evaluation

Once you have done any CPD activity, it is important to record it, identify what you have learned and how it has helped you. For example, think about how it will make you act differently.

When you have completed this record, do you still feel your plan is good enough? Does it need updating?

You may choose to record and evaluate your CPD using the personal development record template in Appendix B.

## SUPPORT FOR YOUR CPD

If your employer gives you regular performance appraisals, these can provide good CPD documentation, and will take place within a framework of training support.

Any development activities you do that are above and beyond your employer's requirements can be recorded on the personal development record – see Appendices C and D.

However, if you are not regularly appraised by your employer or are self-employed, you'll need to take personal responsibility for your own learning and development.

We are always happy to offer advice – please get in touch on [pujaoffice01@gmail.com](mailto:pujaoffice01@gmail.com)

## SUMMARY

Once you've completed the full CPD cycle, you will have new learning and development needs, and the process simply starts again.

You can see that your development action plan links to your personal development record. We recommend that each objective for improvement in the plan should be matched up in your personal development record with:

- ☐ What activities you did to achieve that objective, and
- ☐ Your evaluation of these

You will set your own goals, motivate yourself and manage your CPD, while your employer will provide many of the resources you need, and help you plan and evaluate. You can also include any education and training you need or undertake.



It is vital that you make your CPD records as effective as possible. As the diagram below shows, your key stakeholders will increasingly demand proof of your continuing competence.







## APPENDIX A – Template of CPD development action plan

Please copy and paste this template into a new word document when submitting your CPD record

<b>Name:</b>								
<b>Job role and responsibilities:</b>								
Assessment of learning needs				Development plan				
Date	Ref	In what area do I need to improve my performance?	How does this link to other objectives (eg employer, etc)?	What do I need to learn in order to achieve this?	What will I do to achieve this?	What are the likely resources and support that I will need?	How will I evaluate a successful outcome?	What are my deadlines for meeting this target?



## APPENDIX B – Template of CPD personal development record

Please copy and paste this template into a new word document when submitting your CPD record

Name:						
Job role and responsibilities:						
Development activity				Evaluation		
Details of CPD activity	Dates	Effective learning time	Dev. Plan ref.	Key Learning Points	Key Benefits/Value added	Further comments: Was the plan successful? How can I improve it in future?



## APPENDIX C – Example subject areas for development

This list of subjects and topics will help you identify your development needs. However, this list isn't exhaustive, and you might be able to include other subjects and topics, provided they help your development.

### Self-Development

- Interpersonal skills
- Leadership and team management
- Decision making
- Stress management
- Time management and delegation skills
- Career development and planning
- Foreign languages
- Professional ethics and rules of conduct

### Communication

- Report and letter writing skills
- Interview skills
- Negotiating skills
- Managing meetings
- Information management
- Presentation skills
- In house, to clients, at public meetings

### Strategic Management

- Establishing practice strategy and developing business plans
- Improving employer's performance – business improvement
- Health and safety legislation, policy and procedures
- Quality assurance and quality management
- Environmental management
- Employee relations and human resource management
- Diversity management – EO & DDA
- Training and development of others

### Technical

- Detail design
- Environmental design/technology/impact analysis
- New design skills
- Procurement – estimates, bids and tenders
- Construction site management
- CAD
- Energy efficiency/energy conservation
- New building materials
- New forms of contract and partnering



### **Legislative**

- Engineering regulations
- Engineering contract law
- Health and safety legislation
- Environmental legislation
- Employment legislation
- Different forms of contract – adversarial, partnering, PFI, DBFO

### **Associated professional areas**

- Adjudication
- Architecture
- Arbitration
- Facilities management
- Planning supervision
- Project management

### **Working with others**

- Team leadership
- Motivation skills
- Negotiation skills
- Delegation skills
- Managing poor performance
- Performance appraisals

### **Commercial practice**

- Client care and management
- Marketing skills and techniques
- Public relations; dealing with media and VIPs

### **Information technology**

- Information Technology:  
In house systems; external computer services; personal computing skills; specialist software

### **Contract management**

- Financial planning and management - reporting systems, establishing a budget, cost control systems, cash flow, profit and loss account, balance sheets, project finance
- Procurement procedures
- Contract management
- Terms of appointment and contract administration
- Risk management
- Disputes resolution



### **Specialist interest areas**

- ☐ Energy
- ☐ Environment and conservation
- ☐ Ground
- ☐ Maritime
- ☐ Public sector / municipal
- ☐ Research and innovation
- ☐ Structural and building surveying
- ☐ Transport
- ☐ Water
- ☐ Virtual design
- ☐ Urban planning and design

### **Health, safety and welfare**

- ☐ Legislation
- ☐ Evaluation of role of Health and Safety Executive (HSE)
- ☐ Personal responsibility for health, safety and welfare
- ☐ Management of health, safety and welfare in design
- ☐ Management of health, safety and welfare on site



## APPENDIX D – Example development activities

This is a list of example CPD activities. However, it isn't exhaustive, and you may choose to include other activities as long as they contribute towards your development.

- Learning on the job
- Peer guidance and discussion
- In-house presentations
- Attending trade exhibitions and systematically gathering information and knowledge to develop as an engineer
- Structured reading (test your understanding of the reading material)
- Work shadowing to add to your stack of knowledge and expertise for routine tasks
- Promoting engineering in primary and secondary schools
- Technical presentations
- Writing reports and writing for publication
- Preparation of CPD presentations to colleagues and other professionals
- Exposure to new situations at work which require action
- Participating in careers conventions
- Job secondment
- Listening to training CDs for research purposes and technical information
- Participating in PUJA activities such as acting as a Assessor, a student liaison officer or joining a committee where new initiatives and ideas are discussed
- Sharing knowledge and expertise with others
- Allied professional events
- Acting as a coach or mentor for a fellow professional
- Lecturing at organised events
- Research both on the job and for further qualification
- Teaching (for those not in teaching post)
- Self-study through reading text books or study packs
- Personal learning from the internet
- Validated and accredited qualifications (not if used to achieve required educational base)
- Formal distance and open-learning courses (not if used to achieve required educational base)
- Conferences, seminars and workshops