

# CPD scheme - frequently asked questions

## [Education & Professional Development team](#)

Our CPD (continuing professional development) scheme is for paediatricians who are not in training. Here we answer your questions about the scheme.

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## **What is CPD?**

CPD (continuing professional development) is any learning outside of undergraduate education or postgraduate training that helps doctors maintain and improve their performance.

It covers the development of their knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours across all areas of their professional practice. It includes both formal and informal learning activities.

There is no single correct way to do CPD, nor is there a fixed definition of what constitutes a CPD activity. Any activity that provides educational benefit to you is worthwhile, and therefore eligible for CPD.

## **Do I have to join the College's CPD scheme?**

The College strongly recommends that all career grade paediatricians participate in the RCPCH CPD scheme.

Trainees should only participate once they have acquired a CCT (certificate of completion of training) or CESR (CP) (certificate of eligibility of specialist registration - combined programme), or once in their first career grade post if sooner.

The scheme provides the assurance of a specialty-based framework for you – and your appraiser(s) – as well as tools to support you in planning, reflecting on and recording your learning and creating Personal Development Plans. The scheme is supported by a helpdesk facility for advice and guidance.

Some individuals may, however, choose to participate in the CPD scheme of another college or faculty where they believe this is more appropriate to their professional needs, or may choose not to participate in any CPD scheme.

The GMC suggests that participation in a college or faculty CPD scheme is helpful, both in terms of keeping up to date and being able to show that you are practising to appropriate specialty standards, but does not mandate it.

## **Do I have to have a CPD diary with RCPCH for my appraisal or to be revalidated?**

No. Evidence of learning from and attendance at CPD is essential to the appraisal and revalidation process and we recommend that you collect evidence to support your record of CPD activities within a structured portfolio.

You can use the College's online CPD diary, or a tool provided by your employer.

The CPD diary is set up to allow you to record and download essential CPD information (a detailed summary of activities and reflections, a quick CPD summary of credits, a Personal Development Plan). Information can be shared as a paper document or uploaded to an online appraisal and revalidation system of your choosing.

## **Do I need to record CPD credits?**

The focus of CPD should be on the outcomes or outputs of the learning for your patients, your practice and you, rather than purely on the amount of time spent on an activity.

Therefore, collection of CPD credits is no longer required, but recommendations are made for those who prefer to continue recording them. For example, RCPCH recommends accumulation of 250 CPD credits every five years.

## **What balance of CPD should I aim for?**

You should aim to achieve a balance of activities that reflect your practice and developmental needs, covering broad-based and specialist activities. In order to support paediatricians in obtaining a proportion of their CPD outside their workplace, the College recommends that at least 50% of CPD should be external. CPD should also be predominantly clinical, for all paediatricians involved in direct clinical care.

To ensure a balance of CPD is undertaken, the RCPCH CPD scheme recommends some limits for those following a credits-based approach. We recommend:

- no more than 100 credits of Personal CPD towards the 250 credits per five years
- no more than 100 credits for a single activity, such as study for a Masters or PhD programme towards the 250 credits per five years.

## **How do I decide whether an activity belongs to the Clinical or Non Clinical category?**

As a general rule, any CPD that improves your clinical skills or knowledge should be recorded as Clinical. This includes your learning from conferences at which you present an academic paper on a clinical topic, your learning from, for example, clinical audit, preparation of clinical lectures, clinically relevant publications/research activities and examining.

Activities that enhance professional or academic skills, eg appraisal training, management courses, IT training, research skills, critical appraisal skills, should be allocated to Non Clinical. This could also include learning professional skills from performing roles such as Regional Adviser, College Tutor, Educational Supervisor etc.

## **How do I decide whether an activity is External, Internal or Personal CPD?**

Activities away from base are External CPD. Activities at base are Internal CPD. Personal

CPD activities are those that are not part of a formal course, conference or training programme, but from which you derive learning of relevance to your practice.

Various issues can arise. For example, meetings with outside (hence arguably External) speakers, but held at one's own base, are generally considered as Internal CPD. The exception would be if there was a regional meeting, held locally, which was attended by colleagues not just from the base (which would make it Internal CPD) but from elsewhere so allowing a broader CPD experience, and justifying a claim for External CPD.

## **What should be kept as evidence to support CPD activities?**

Paediatricians are expected to keep details of all their CPD activities in the form of a portfolio; more on this in Appendix 2 on page 18 2015 CPD Guidelines.

## **Can I record CPD from events which have not been approved by the RCPCH?**

Any activity which provides educational benefit to you is eligible for CPD, regardless of whether it is approved by RCPCH or another college/faculty or not approved by any body.

You should be able to demonstrate the value of the learning activity and self-accredit it.

## **How do I record CPD from postgraduate examining/hosting/question writing?**

CPD recorded from postgraduate examining, hosting, question writing groups and other examining activities where the doctor feels they have learned something from attending should be recorded as Personal (rather than External) CPD.

Formal training courses should still be recorded as External or Internal CPD.

For those who continue to follow a credits-based approach, CPD credits claimed for these activities where the doctor feels they have learned something from attending, should be self-accredited. Self-accreditation uses the principle that 1 hour of learning content = 1 CPD credit and should be supported by considering what has been learnt and its effect on practice.

## **I have completed online learning and want to record it as CPD – what category should I use?**

E-learning is generally classed as Personal CPD as it occurs outside a formal learning programme. You would only categorise online courses as External or Internal CPD if you interacted with others during the course (for example via a discussion forum).

## **I made an arrangement to observe a clinic at a different**

## **hospital and want to record it as CPD – what category should I use?**

You should record it as Personal CPD as this arrangement occurs outside of a formal learning programme, self-accrediting it on the principle that 1 hour of learning content = 1 CPD credit and considering what has been learnt and its effect on practice.

## **I have done, eg an audit at work which took me several weeks to complete and planned to record it as Internal CPD, claiming credits for the amount of time I spent running the audit, collecting data and writing up the report. How do I record it as CPD?**

Carrying out an audit is relevant for CPD only if you learnt something from it and it has had an effect on your practice. Self-accredit the learning on the principle that 1 hour of learning content = 1 CPD credit rather than on the time spent doing the audit.

## **I have retired from the NHS but am still doing private/medico-legal/advisory work. Do I need to do CPD?**

Yes, to keep abreast of developments in paediatrics related to these areas of work and, if required to hold a licence to practice for these roles, to ensure you comply with revalidation requirements.

## **What are the College's recommendations about CPD for doctors working abroad?**

We recommend that if doctors working overseas expect to return to work in the UK, they plan carefully to ensure that sufficient evidence of CPD is collected over the five year revalidation cycle.

Greater use of self-accredited on line courses and personal CPD whilst abroad could help with this. Any shortfall should be made up on their return.

Periods of absence of more than one year may require specific CPD as agreed with their appraiser.

Doctors who are registered with the CPD Scheme but working permanently overseas are expected to follow the same CPD scheme recommendations as doctors working in the UK. See also the GMC guidance for overseas regulators in the links section below

## **What are the College's recommendations about CPD and prolonged ill health, parental leave or other extenuating**

## circumstances?

In these circumstances and through discussion with the Responsible Officer and appraiser, the quantity, balance or time allowed for individuals to meet CPD targets may be adjusted. Any difficulties or imbalance in one year can, and should, be redressed over the five year period.

See also our [guidance on taking a career break and returning to practice](#) in our Career development for paediatricians page.

See also RCPCH Return to Practice guidance in the related content section

## **If I am running an educational event for non-training paediatricians, does it need to be approved for CPD or endorsed by the RCPCH?**

No. Neither RCPCH CPD Approval nor endorsement are mandatory and delegates are encouraged to self-accredit their learning. However, we do encourage organisers to seek CPD approval or endorsement from us, as it can be a great publicity and marketing tool, helps us ensure consistency of structure and essential content for attendees and it helps us to promote educational events to our CPD scheme participants via the online CPD diary and RCPCH website.

External links

[Revalidation FAQs for overseas regulators and overseas organisations](#)