
CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD)

POLICY & GUIDANCE NOTE FOR MEMBERS

May 2021



**IRISH PLANNING
INSTITUTE**

Institiúid Pleanála Na hÉireann



CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD)

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1. Introduction

The Irish Planning Institute’s mission is to advance planning by serving, improving and promoting the planning profession for the benefit of the community and the common good. The Institute represents a highly skilled profession but capacity building is required to continue to grow the knowledge and skill set of planners. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is held to be one way of adding value to the profession and for promoting career-long learning.

The purpose of this guidance note is to;

1. Outline the need for Continuing Professional Development (CPD).
2. Set out the policy of the Irish Planning Institute on CPD.
3. Clearly set out the members’ requirements with regard to CPD.
4. Provide supporting guidance and advice on meeting the CPD obligations and demonstrating compliance.
5. Explain how CPD is monitored.
6. Explain the consequences of non-compliance.

1.1 THE ROLE OF CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is an important part of delivering best practice in the planning profession in Ireland and ensuring that the profession is appropriately equipped for the future. CPD should form a core activity of all planners.

The Irish Planning Institute, in common with almost all other professional planning associations require its members to undertake CPD. The purpose of CPD is to ensure that the Irish Planning Institute as a professional organisation can guarantee that its members are kept up to date and trained in ongoing developments in the planning field.

IPI members who are employers or managers are encouraged to support their staff in meeting their CPD requirements. Investment in CPD and staff development is good management practice and part of an organisation’s long-term investment in its future. Employers and managers are encouraged to frame their budgets and work programmes to support their employees’ participation in a range of CPD

activities. Access to CPD can also play a significant role in staff motivation, retention and enhancement of the quality of planning service provided by the public body/company.

1.2 THE BASIS FOR CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

The basis for Continuing Professional Development is the Institute's Articles of Association, which include objectives to raise the standard of planning practice and implementation in Ireland; encourage and contribute to the development of planning education; improve and elevate the technical and general knowledge of persons engaged in planning and promote standards to be achieved by the profession.

The specific policy for Continuing Professional Development is contained in Article 2.9.3 of the Institute's Articles of Association, which states:

“Every Corporate member and Fellow shall be bound to complete a minimum of 20 hour/credits (Or the requisite number of credits set down in the Institute's Educational Guidelines, whichever is the greater) of continuous professional development (CPD) every calendar year and provide evidence of compliance with CPD requirements in the manner set down by the Institute.”

The significance that the Institute places on CPD is reflected in a number of important documents that govern the operation of the Institute, in particular:

1. The Institute's Corporate Plan 2017-2019 which demonstrates the Institute's commitment to raising standards of professional competence of planners and improving the standing of the profession, by confirming the compulsory nature of CPD, and by instituting a process for monitoring members' compliance (*Irish Planning Institute Corporate Plan 2017-2019 Section 2*).
2. The Institute's Education Guidelines 2019 state that an important element of the Institute's role is to encourage members to maintain and develop their knowledge and skills throughout their careers. This is both in the interests of the individual member themselves and in the interest of maintaining the confidence of the public in the profession.
3. The Institute's Code of Ethics & Professional Conduct states, “All members shall take reasonable steps to maintain their professional competence throughout their working lives

and shall engage and encourage other members to engage with the Institute’s Continuing Professional Development programmes.”

1.3 DEFINITION OF CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

For the purposes of the Irish Planning Institute Continuing Professional Development is defined as

“the on-going maintenance, improvement and development of the knowledge, skills and personal qualities required in professional life. “

IPI Education Guidelines 2019

2. Requirements of the Continuing Professional Development Policy

The Institute’s CPD policy applies to Corporate members and Fellows and operates on a 1-year cycle (1st January to 31st December of the calendar year).

The successful operation of the CPD policy relies on members assessing for themselves the credits to be attributed to each CPD activity. Guidance on the credit for each type of CPD activity is given in Section 4 below.

2.1 KEY REQUIREMENTS OF THE CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY.

The key requirements of the Institute’s CPD policy are as follows:

1. Members are required to accrue 20 credits¹ over each CPD cycle.
2. There are 4 categories of activity that the Institute recognises as qualifying for CPD.

¹ or the requisite number of credits set down in the Institute’s Education Guidelines, whichever is the greater.

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- a. **Category 1:** Learning events, training, fieldtrips, seminars, conferences, workshops, and courses to develop knowledge, skills and values.
 - b. **Category 2:** Contributions to the Profession.
 - c. **Category 3:** Self-directed Learning.
 - d. **Category 4:** Non-planning related courses to develop knowledge, skills and values.
3. Each cycle a minimum of 5 credits must come from activities in Categories 1 or 2 set out in detail in Section 4 below.
 4. Members can accrue credits for CPD events and training they attend, events that they deliver and CPD activities that they participate in alone. These do not have to be IPI events and can be internal training, self-directed learning etc. Certain events or activities may carry a greater weighting, as per the suggested credits for some activities set out below.
 5. Each individual member is responsible for recording their CPD credits on their membership dashboard on the IPI Website; this requires noting learning outcomes from the activity to demonstrate subsequent learning. Members should retain documentation showing proof of compliance.
 6. CPD credits must be logged on www.ipi.ie/member-dashboard by 31st December of the relevant year to qualify for that particular CPD cycle.
 7. The Institute may approve external CPD events.
 8. The Institute acts as the monitor for members' CPD activities.

3. Activities & Undertakings Qualifying as Continuing Professional Development

The Institute will build on its provision of CPD opportunities to members, both centrally and through the branches. While members are encouraged to support the IPI's national and branch events that are tailored to meet members' needs, the Institute recognises that CPD is more than training courses and seminars and can come from a wide variety of activities. The Institute will conduct regular Training Needs Analyses to ensure its offering reflects the needs of members.

CPD includes a wide range of learning activities related to enhancing member's professional knowledge and skills. Most CPD activities attract 1 credit per hour of learning.

For any activity undertaken by a member in fulfilment of their CPD requirement, the particular event/programme of study must come within one of the subject areas set out in the 8 Core Competencies set out in Appendix A (attached).

While credits are accumulated for attendance at an activity, the subsequent learning must be explained via the CPD logbook. The onus is on the participating member to judge whether the activity has improved their competence as a professional planner, however CPD activities must generally be:

1. Of significant intellectual or practical content dealing primarily with planning related matters; or
2. Relevant to a practitioner's immediate or long term requirements in relation to the practitioner's professional development; and
3. Conducted by professionals or bodies that have qualifications and experience deemed relevant to either directly or indirectly to one of the subjects of the 8 Core Competencies in Appendix A.

For those elected to Corporate Membership 'mid cycle' the CPD requirement will be determined pro rata from the date of their election to 31st December of that year. Such members are expected to reach the 20 credits requirement in the next cycle.

Please note that where the activity is considered an integral part of one's work, that activity cannot be counted as CPD.

4. Calculating CPD Credits

As outlined in Section 2 above the Institute recognises that activities qualifying for CPD generally fall into four main categories:

Category 1: Learning events, training, fieldtrips, seminars, conferences, workshops, and courses to develop knowledge, skills and values.

Category 2: Contribution to the Profession.

Category 3: Self-directed Learning.

Category 4: Non-planning related courses to develop knowledge, skills and values.

Category 1: Courses, Education and Training to develop knowledge, skills and values.

This category of activity should lead to members developing their planning related knowledge, skills and values that involve the identifiable development of new approaches, applications, values or techniques of direct application to planning.

(a) Learning events, fieldtrips, seminars, conferences, workshops.

The following credits apply to learning events (including professional conferences, seminars, workshops, study tours, field trips)

One day's attendance at IPI or IPI approved (or equivalent) learning events	Up to 7
One day's attendance at non IPI or non IPI approved (or equivalent) learning events	Up to 5
Half day's attendance at IPI approved (or equivalent) learning events	Up to 4
Half day's attendance at non IPI or non IPI approved (or equivalent) learning events	Up to 3

In the case of IPI organised or approved events the organiser will specify the number of CPD credits available subject to the maximum set out above.

(b) Education and training formal courses organised by accredited Planning Schools.

Third level module (5 ECTS ² credits) full time or part time, at an IPI accredited planning school in any CPD cycle (one hour of contact teaching time in a recognised planning module as equivalent to one hour of IPI CPD credit)	24 IPI credits
Third level module (5 credit ECTS), full time or part time, in another relevant subject in any CPD cycle. Where the delivery of a third level programme of study is divided between two calendar years, only a maximum of 7.5 credits of the total 15 maximum credits, may be claimed within one calendar year per academic year.	Up to 15 IPI credits

For members taking more than one module, IPI CPD credits can be claimed for third level education up to a maximum of **100 IPI CPD credits/hours** in any CPD year.

Note: Third level education alone cannot meet full CPD requirements since a minimum of 5 CPD credits / hours must be obtained from category 1(a) or Category 2 in any CPD year.

Category 2: Contribution to the Profession.

This category of activity includes:

1. Research and analysis to investigate new areas of professional interest or planning concern requiring preparation of a paper or report;
2. Membership of a committee and/or other services aimed at developing the planning profession;
3. Preparation of submissions on legislation etc., where this is not an integral part of the Members' work, including on behalf of the IPI;
4. Presenting lectures and papers, CPD workshops, conference presentations;
5. Guest lectures and/or presentations to educational courses relating to the planning profession;
6. Publishing articles and papers;

² ECTS – European Credit Transfer System

7. Mentoring (both the person being mentored and the mentor are eligible to record credits unless it is considered an integral part of one's work);
8. Involvement in planning-related professional committees for the planning profession, such as, professional associations, academic institutions or community groups.

Certain Institute activities are eligible for the following credits:

President of IPI	16
Member of Council	12
IPI Committee Convener	15
IPI Committee Member.	10
Chair of an active IPI Branch Committee with minuted meetings	10
Editor of Pleanáil	10
Member of an active Branch Committee with minuted meetings	6 plus 2 per meeting subject to 10 max. total
IPI Working Group member	8
Member of an IPI accreditation team	6
Facilitator of an IPI Accreditation Team	2 (in addition to the points above)
Article accepted for publication in Pleanáil	6
Attendance at the Institute's AGM	2
Member acting as a mentor under the IPI Mentoring Programme	1 per meeting

Category 3: Self-directed Learning.

This category of activity includes informal learning, structured reading of planning and related planning publications [e.g. architecture, landscape architecture, and earth sciences], distance and self-taught courses, which contribute to the personal development of planning or non-planning knowledge, expertise and skills.

Category 4: Non-planning related courses to develop knowledge, skills and values.

This category of activity involves the development of general professional knowledge, skills and values through activities in a non-planning field that contribute to personal development, for example human relations, time management, stress management, communication skills, conflict resolution, management skills. [e.g. participation in voluntary local community project developments, Information and communication technology training].

In each CPD cycle, five credits MUST be made up of activities drawn from Categories 1(a) or 2.

5. Approved Events, Programmes and Courses

Many other organisations, professional, educational and commercial, deliver programmes and events that are of educational value to IPI members. Some of these may be approved by the IPI for CPD purposes, confirming they are in an area relevant to the professional development of planners. Approval provides a “mark of quality” indicating it is of relevance and it achieves a high quality standard.

Examples of ‘sister’ professional institutions and organisations that provide lectures and other events of relevance to spatial planning practitioners: include the Royal Institute of Architects Ireland, Engineers Ireland, The Irish Georgian Society, The Irish Landscape Institute, and the Irish Architectural Foundation.

6. Advice for Planners not Working Full Time

The Institute recognises that some members may not be able to fulfil their CPD obligations due to unemployment, leave of absence, maternity/paternity leave, parental leave or illness or unforeseen circumstances. The Institute will continue to be supportive of members if they find themselves in difficulty in completing the required CPD credits.

A decision on reducing the annual minimum credit requirement of the CPD for members in special circumstances is the responsibility of the Membership and Professional Practice Committee.

Members no longer employed in planning or unemployed.

The Institute will take a supportive approach to members who are unemployed in order to assist them to fulfil their CPD obligations. The Institute offers a number of reduced cost places for unwaged members for all IPI CPD events including events such as the National and Autumn Conferences. The Institute also offers four free Member only online CPO events per annum.

Maternity/paternity leave or illness.

The Institute recognises that members on maternity/paternity leave or due to illness (either themselves or caring for someone else) may have limited time and resources to fulfil their CPD obligations.

In such circumstances, members are exempt from CPD requirements for six months following childbirth/adoption if they are taking maternity/paternity leave, shared parental leave or adoption leave during that period.

Members who find themselves unable to meet their CPD credits due to illness (themselves or caring for someone else) should contact the Institute to discuss their CPD requirements.

Useful sources of CPD for members not working full time could include reading and research to keep up to date, keeping in touch days with your workplace and formal and informal discussions either with other planners face -to-face or through online networks.

Retired Members.

Retired members are not obliged to fulfil the CPD obligation. Unless members have actually transferred to the category of retired membership, they are required to meet the CPD requirements.

7. Monitoring CPD

The Institute recognises that the CPD system relies on self-assessment; therefore, it is incumbent on the Institute to monitor the operation and implementation of the CPD system in order to maintain its integrity and to ensure equity between members in fulfilling CPD obligations.

The Institute carries out CPD monitoring each calendar year by taking a random sample of members and assessing their CPD logbooks for the previous year. If necessary, the Institute may request the provision of further evidence (such as confirmation from event organisers, checking IPI records to ensure attendance took place at the respective CPD, booking confirmation, training materials etc.) to authenticate their records. Each item in the CPD logbook should include a short explanation of the learning outcome for the member.

Those members in the random sample who do not meet the requirements in any one year will be audited the following year.

The IPI will continually monitor its CPD policy to ensure its accessibility, currency, relevance and workability and welcomes constructive suggestions from participants, employers and other interested parties on CPD topics and/or ways in which the CPD policy can be improved.

8. Non-Compliance

Non-compliance in CPD will be taken to be:

- a. the non-submission by Corporate Members or Fellows of evidence of CPD activities via CPD logs in the absence of a declaration claiming exemption.
- or
- b. Corporate Members or Fellows who submit logs but the logged activities fall significantly short of the required level in the absence of a declaration claiming exemption.

Following notification by letter and/or email of the member's non-compliance and having been reminded of the need to submit CPD details, any Corporate Member or Fellow who does not comply with the IPI's policy on CPD and who does not give a satisfactory explanation as to why they have not met the requirements, shall be removed from the Register of Members by resolution of the Council of the IPI.

The power to remove a member if they fail to comply or provide evidence of compliance with the CPD requirements of the Institute is set in Section 2.10.1(d) of the Articles of Association of the Institute.

The Institute will always take a supportive approach to the small number of members who may, for various reasons, have real practical difficulties in meeting the requirements.

APPENDIX A

Core competencies of modern professional planning practice.

In the Irish Planning Institute's Education Guidelines 2019 eight competency headings have been identified as being 'core' or central to modern professional planning practice.

The eight 'core' competencies are as follows:

Core Competence 1: The Rationale of Planning: History, Theory and Principles.

Core Competence 2: Socio-economic Spatial Systems.

Core Competence 3: Built Environment.

Core Competence 4: Natural Environmental Spatial Systems.

Core Competence 5: Planning Techniques.

Core Competence 6: Independent Research.

Core Competence 7: Planning Instruments.

Core Competence 8: The Planning Product.

The Institute's Education Guidelines 2019 identify for each of the eight core competencies, core subject areas as well as others which are specialist or optional. These specialist and optional subjects may be suitable for further personal specialisation as CPD by members. CPD offers planners an opportunity to explore other specialist or general training and education in other related or relevant subjects according to their own interest or the strengths and capacity of the educational institution.