

IOA CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

Introduction

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is the systematic maintenance and broadening of knowledge and skills, and the development of personal qualities necessary for the execution of professional duties throughout your working life.

- **Continuing** - because learning never ceases, regardless of age or seniority;
- **Professional** - because it is focused on professional competence in a professional role; and
- **Development** - because the goal is to improve personal performance and enhance career progression.

The aim of CPD is to make sure you are competent to carry out your role in acoustics. As a member of the IOA, you are under an obligation to maintain and extend your professional knowledge and competencies under the IOA Code of Conduct. All members of the IOA shall take part in a CPD scheme to demonstrate that you are maintaining and extending your competencies. As well as supporting your career, maintaining your CPD also helps with membership of the IOA and Chartered Status. When seeking election as MIOA and FIOA, evidence of undertaking CPD is now required to support your application.

The IOA scheme aims to encourage members to consider their career and professional development. It is not merely based on collecting “hours” or “points”, but instead requires members to formulate a personal action plan to help them achieve their objectives. Your personal action plan will be individual to you.

As a guide, you should aim for *at least 20 hours of acoustic related CPD activity per year* and more for those looking to upgrade membership. The CPD activities should be relevant to your plan and address your goals. You may include general CPD activities as long as your goals are addressed.

If you have a role that includes non-acoustic activities, please identify this in your CPD forms and indicate the amount of time spent working in acoustics. You may include non-acoustic goals and activities in your plan, however, as an IOA Member it is still expected that you should carry out at least 20 hours of acoustic related CPD activities per year.

Members are encouraged to work with their employers in planning their professional development. It is recognised that IOA members are often required to complete CPD plans for other organisations, or their employers. These can be submitted in lieu of the IOA forms; providing they demonstrate enough evidence of acoustic related activity and meet the requirements of the IOA CPD scheme (please refer to the checklist on page 4).

Your CPD plan will change over your career; it is likely to have specific goals in the early stages associated with developing skills, with the likelihood of more maintenance related goals as your career progresses. It is useful to bear in mind the value of CPD records to future employers when moving jobs.

Scheme Details

The IOA Continuing Professional Development (CPD) scheme is based on identifying and achieving goals. They should relate to the theory and practice of the professional acoustic services you offer your clients and customers.

The IOA has devised forms to help you record your CPD activity, which can be downloaded from the [IOA website](#). These are updated from time to time so please check that you are using the most up to date version. Many of the formats used by other related professional bodies may also be acceptable.

The IOA aims to review around 10% of members CPD documents annually. Some of these will be reviewed automatically by the Membership Committee as part of the application process for MIOA and FIOA and by the [Engineering Division](#) for those applying or continuing to be registered as professional engineers. The rest will be chosen from the remaining members of the Institute. When submitting your CPD plan and record to the IOA, these shall cover the previous 3 full years (and no more than 4 years) as well as what you are planning to do and so will include completed, ongoing and future goals.

The suggested professional development process is set out below.

1. Review current situation

Examine your current situation. Start by reviewing your goals over the last 3 years, how you went about achieving them and what you learnt from them; include evidence of this in your plan. Some of these goals will be ongoing, such as maintaining competence and some will be new, such as learning an additional skill. Assess your strengths and weaknesses, and consider the following:

- Last appraisal, job description, CV
- Qualifications, courses, experiences, technical skills
- Current and future requirements of your job
- Potential opportunities and what you need to make the most of them
- CPD history over the last 3 years
- Future requirements of your career

2. Identify goals

Goals can be short-term, long-term and ongoing; the latter includes maintaining competences. Your goals will also have different priorities. The type of goals will depend on where you are in your career and the type of work undertaken (e.g. consultancy, research, military, public sector).

With the exception of ongoing and maintaining competences, all goals must have a timescale. Short-term goals should be specific and achievable with a deadline of up to 1-2 years ahead. Longer-term goals should include aspirations for your future career; say 3 to 5 years ahead.

Consider where you were 3 years ago and how you got to your current stage of development. Look also at your current job requirements and personal targets. Predict how the job is likely to change. Take personal circumstances into account. Consider what skills and competencies you need to fulfil your goals. Include what you need to do to maintain competency.

At the start of your career, you are likely to have more short-term goals as you develop your skills and gain more experience. At the latter stages, your CPD is likely to have more focus on maintaining competences rather than the attainment of new skills. Your CPD plan and goals should be appropriate to your requirements.

3. Planning to achieve

Once you have identified your goals, draw up your CPD plan to identify new and ongoing goals including how you intend to achieve them and their priority. Your plan will need to set out the objectives, activities and resources required to achieve your goals. The plan may also identify goals that are completed along with how this has been achieved.

The plan will inevitably change as you develop and according to your circumstances. Consider how you learn best and plan to make use of these methods. Think about how to record your learning and who can help you. Discuss your plans with your employer if possible / appropriate.

Your CPD plan is a live document and will change; therefore it is important that you review your plan regularly (at least every six months) and update where necessary.

4. Record learning

Devise a system which works for you to record development activities whether planned or opportunistic. The IOA can provide you with CPD forms but other systems may be appropriate provided it can be understood by a third party. Examples of relevant activities include:

- On the job training (in-house training courses, work based learning);
- External training (external training courses, distance learning programmes);
- Networking with peers (attendance at relevant meetings, lectures, seminars and conferences, IOA branch meetings);
- Self study (self-directed private study, reviewing technical publications, relevant standards and guidance documents);
- Preparation and delivery of papers, lectures and presentations, R & D, academic research; and

- Relevant voluntary work (involvements with committees / working groups, STEM activities, acoustic ambassadors, coaching / mentoring).

Get into the habit of updating your CPD records soon after you have undertaken a relevant activity so it becomes second nature. It can be very valuable to reflect on what you have learned and to consider how this knowledge will be applied. Supplement formal records with notes of what you have learned, especially if you learned them through private study, and note how you will be able to apply your new knowledge. It may also be interesting to note whether a particular type of training or development activity was useful to you.

Your CPD records shall include activity over the previous 3-4 years so will include completed as well as ongoing and future goals.

5. Review progress

Review progress regularly and evaluate what you have learnt and how you can use it. Ask yourself whether you have achieved your aims, what improvement is evident, how will you use your new knowledge or skills and whether the goals or plans now need to be changed. Then go back to the initial assessment and make sure that you have your plan in place for the next period of time.

CPD Plan & Record Sheets

The Institute has prepared record sheets for members to use to plan and record their CPD. Please check to make sure you are using the current CPD forms. Real examples of completed forms are also included on the IOA website. Some suggestions on using the record sheets are given below.

You may be asked to submit your CPD plan and record sheets to the IOA for review, which you must submit when requested to. When submitting information to the IOA, your whole CPD document shall be submitted as a PDF and be no longer than six A4 pages.

IOA Sheet 1 - Profile of Competence and Needs

Sheet 1 is intended to be the reference list for your development goals, based on the skills you required over the last 3 years, what skills need to be maintained / refreshed and what you will need in the future. The anticipated future competencies should set out the knowledge, skills and abilities that you wish to acquire. The development goals are the steps you will take to achieve these competencies.

Sheet 1 is used to determine your goals, for which you should also provide a goal reference and the priority (e.g. high, medium or low). This will include ongoing and future goals, as well as completed goals. Be realistic about the number of goals; the IOA suggests between 4 and 6 goals. Note that the IOA requires sufficient focus on the acoustic aspects and whilst managerial and commercial issues may be pertinent to your business, they are not necessarily relevant to your IOA membership grade. The goals should also be appropriate to the stage of your career, with more development goals in the early stage and more maintenance / ongoing goals later.

For submission to the IOA, Sheet 1 shall be contained on one page.

IOA Sheet 2 - Professional Development Plan

Sheet 2 sets out your professional development plan; it will need to identify ongoing and future goals as well as completed ones.

Using the same development goals, goal references and priorities from Sheet 1, you should set out how you intend to address ongoing and future goals and identify when they will be achieved, or whether they are ongoing. Include short and long-term goals. Sheet 2 should also set out how you have addressed completed goals and identify when these were achieved. You should note the progress made on each goal and identify what follow-up is needed; do not leave any blank cells.

For submission to the IOA, Sheet 2 shall also be contained on one page.

IOA Sheet 3 – Professional Development Record

Sheet 3 is used to record activities that have contributed to your professional development over the previous 3 full years and no more than 4 years. This should include information about the activity: what it was, when it occurred,

its duration and if it related to acoustics or other CPD. Sheet 3 should also include details of what you learnt, the relevant goal reference (or if it was general CPD) and how you used, or will use the knowledge. Identify any CPD activity that is not acoustics related.

It is important that you record all acoustics related CPD activity undertaken – some of which may not be relevant to a specific goal but nevertheless is still useful CPD. It is also important to set out the progress you have made on each goal.

Involvement with any confidential or commercially sensitive activities can be included in your CPD records but should be made general / anonymised.

For submission to the IOA, Sheet 3 shall be up to four pages long and include your CPD activity for the previous 3-4 years. Note that older CPD activities will be disregarded. Include the total number of hours of acoustic related CPD per year. Aim for at least 20 hours of acoustic related CPD activity per year.

Your record will address completed goals as well as ongoing ones, provided the activity on the completed goals occurred within the last 3-4 years.

Once you have undertaken CPD activities and recorded it on Sheet 3, don't forget to update your progress on the specific goals identified in Sheet 2.

Please identify any gaps in employment, extended absence and periods of time spent outside working in acoustics and provide a brief explanation if possible.

Submitting Information to the IOA

The IOA aims to review 10% of members CPD documents annually and you must submit records when requested to do so by the IOA. The following checklist should be used before submitting your CPD plan and record sheets to the IOA. Note that this is the same checklist that the IOA CPD reviewers will use. CPD documents submitted to the IOA for review must be as a PDF file, no longer than six pages.

Checklist	Yes/No
All 3 sheets completed as per the guidance; up to 6 pages in total, clearly laid out & provided as a PDF	
Sheet 1 - 1 page	
Sheet 2 - 1 page	
Sheet 3 - up to 4 pages	
The IOA recommends between 4 & 6 goals, all numbered with the <u>same</u> reference used on all sheets	
Evidence of both short and long-term goals	
CPD evidence for previous 3-4 years only; older records will be disregarded	
At least 20 hours of acoustic related CPD activity per year (including total number of hours per year)	
Sufficient acoustics related CPD	
Acronyms explained	
Jargon avoided	
Evidence of on the job training	
Evidence of external training / networking with peers	
Evidence of self-study	
All goals addressed	
Demonstrated what has been gained from CPD	

IOA CPD Reviewer Training Policy

The composition and training of IOA volunteer members carrying out the CPD reviews is as follows.

1. The IOA carries out CPD reviews through the IOA Membership committee as part of the application and upgrade process. CPD reviews across the wider membership are carried out on a regular basis by the CPD sub-committee of the Membership Committee. The Engineering Committee will also review CPD via applications for engineering council registration.
2. Both the Membership Committee and the CPD sub-committee maintain competence and consistency by reviewing together sample CPD submissions and discussing the agreed output in terms of the level of CPD activity and the response to that candidate resulting from the evaluation. This 'normalisation' process is carried out at the start of each sub-committee meeting.
3. New members to the group initially work with more experienced sub-committee members. Each CPD record is evaluated by at least two and usually three IOA members. If a particular CPD submission is not considered of sufficient standard or presents some new issue then that CPD record may be shared with the whole sub-committee during a review meeting, at the discretion of the sub-committee Chair. This is part of the Membership committee training as well.
4. Engineering Committee representative are invited to Membership committee meetings who will inform of any updates to Engineering Council Policy or Guidance regarding the review of CPD records.

RECOMMENDED FURTHER READING FOR CPD

Please note that Engineering Council recommendations are relevant to not only those with an engineering background but also more widely across the IOA membership including those coming from a science background.

Engineering Council resources.

[Engineering Council CPD website](#)

[Engineering Council CPD Policy Statement](#) (3.1)

Engineering Council Guidance Note on CPD (Issue 3) – May 2021