



Construction Industry Council

# **Continuing Professional Development**

## **Best Practice Guidance**



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## **Introduction and Summary**

This document provides guidance on Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for individual professionals, their employers, and the Professional Institutions (and similar bodies) which both represent professionals and recommend or require that their members engage in CPD. Previous research conducted by CIC (*CIC CPD Survey 2003; CIC 2005 Consultation on Proposed CPD Targets*) confirmed that approaches to, and awareness of, CPD across the professions within the built environment, are varied. Therefore this document starts by attempting to define CPD, before outlining the benefits of CPD to different stakeholders, then making suggestions as to how CPD could be made more useful.

Engagement in any form of development activity can be useful, and often individuals engage in activities which contribute towards their professional development without even realising they are completing CPD. This paper proposes that whilst any CPD can be useful a number of actions can be taken to enhance the value of CPD:

- Professional Institutions could do more to communicate with their members about CPD (what it is and its value)
- adopting a cycle of reviewing, planning, doing CPD, recording CPD, assessing achievement will help ensure the effort to engage in CPD results in maximum reward
- focusing upon outputs (what is achieved that improves competence) rather than just inputs (such as how time is spent on each activity will also make CPD more useful and valuable.

## **What is CPD?**

Broadly Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is any activity engaged in by a qualified professional through which they continue to develop professionally.

CPD is about learning and development that enhances the participant's effectiveness in their professional role. This should maintain and enhance existing competences as well as developing new knowledge and skills. It should not be exclusively about formal courses or qualifications (although these can be a valuable element of CPD), and may involve development in both technical and non-technical areas. CPD includes a wide variety of activities such as open learning, private study, work experience and many more.

Professional Institutions (and similar bodies) often require or encourage their members to engage in CPD. A few Institutions go no further than recommending that their members engage in CPD. Others set specific requirements for CPD, in many cases requiring members to submit records of their CPD activities. Some Professional Institutions specify particular activities or areas of learning in which CPD is required, others leave this to the judgement of the individual. Whether or not an individual is a member of an Institution which requires and monitors CPD, a committed professional should see CPD as primarily about maintaining and building knowledge and competence for their own personal career development rather than just a chore to satisfy external requirements. CPD can add to an individual's knowledge (e.g. of regulations), improve their skills (e.g. in managing projects) or both (e.g. of managing a project without breaching regulations).

Through the CPD in Construction Group (superseded by the Training and CPD Panel) CIC members defined CPD as *the systematic maintenance, improvement and broadening of knowledge and skill, and the development of personal qualities*

*necessary for the execution of professional and technical duties throughout your working life.* This emphasises that, for a practitioner to work properly, the systematic acquisition of knowledge, skills and personal qualities is essential. It further suggests that, once acquired, the same knowledge, skills and personal qualities must be methodically kept up-to-date to maintain them at an adequate level, as well as new knowledge and skills developed. This is a logical consequence of being a professional practitioner and acting with a duty of care. In a different context, we would feel unsure of entrusting ourselves to a medical practitioner who was not currently competent and unable to deal with the latest advances in medicine.

Often professionals engage in CPD without realising (for example by attending seminars, engaging in research and investigation in relation to a current project, learning from the advice of colleagues, even reading a journal). For newly qualified professionals continuing or building upon some of the activities they engaged in as part of their IPD (Initial Professional Development) will be CPD. Therefore individuals who are not currently consciously engaged in CPD might find it easier than they think to commit to a CPD plan – as they are already doing CPD. However, if individuals plan, record, and review their CPD this will help them to give some structure to and maximise the benefit of their CPD. This will help ensure they engage in CPD activities which meet their needs.

CPD is sometimes seen as an ‘input’, measured in terms of minimum hours or points. This may result in individuals engaging in poorly planned activities with little motivation. This paper seeks to raise awareness of the benefits of CPD which is planned to serve the needs of the individual professional and in turn satisfy the needs of their employer, clients, industry and society.

### **Why is CPD needed?**

Competent professionals, and the Professional Institutions that represent them, should already understand the importance of CPD – even if they do not currently label it as such. However, for those who do not fully understand the need for professionals to maintain and add to their knowledge and skills, or who want to know how to gain maximum value from CPD, this report seeks to provide guidance and address some possible misunderstandings.

Drivers for change include:

- The impact of skill shortages in many occupations and levels in the construction industry – the CIC Professional Services Employer Skills Survey (2003/4) indicated:
  - Management and communication skills gaps: Almost 50% of employers experienced problems with staff proficiency and skills gaps. There are significant issues identified by survey respondents relating to management, communication, literacy, problem solving, and client handling skills.
  - Technical and practical skills gaps: Despite nearly three-quarters of the professional services workforce being qualified to HNC or above, surveyed employers variously identified a range of skills and competence areas where capability was an issue – these include professional IT skills, processing and agreeing design schemes, surveys, procurement strategy and controlling construction operations.
  - Skills gaps in existing staff: Survey respondents indicated: Problems with existing staff are perceived as higher in

technical and practical skills, IT skills, management and other customer handling skills.

- The incorporation of the various aspects of competence into contracts. For example, many clients use tender evaluation criteria which include assessment of competence; contracts exist which contain provision for project specific training; and clauses are already being used by some large clients to specify required individual and team competence along the supply chain. Early indications suggest it is potentially more useful to focus on the outputs that competence standards provide, rather than measuring the amount of training inputs.
- There is a loss of stability in employment. With increased use of short term contracts and consultancy working, individuals need to take increasing responsibility for their own careers and development to maintain employability

### **Who is CPD for?**

Most Professional Institutions, Chartered Bodies and other organisations who have individual professionals in membership recommend, if not require, that their members engage in and record CPD. Institutions encourage CPD because they want to help their members to perform as well as possible, and because doing so can help to improve their reputation. This is often prescribed for members in Codes of Professional Conduct, which place an onus on the individual to act in an ethical and competent manner.

Businesses of all sizes (whether employing hundreds of people or one self employed professional) need knowledgeable competent people. Without engaging in appropriate CPD the workforce cannot hope to maintain competence let alone develop the knowledge and skills needed to adapt to changing business and client needs and make use of the latest technology and materials whilst conforming to ever changing legal and regulatory requirements.

Clients want to employ professionals who not only have up-to-date technical knowledge, but who also have the skills to complete a project on time and within budget, the communication skills to understand client needs, and a range of other competences needed to provide a good service. Again these are competences that CPD will help professionals to develop and maintain.

For individuals maintenance and development of knowledge and competence helps ensure employability (by clients as well as employers). CPD can serve many other purposes (beyond satisfying the requirements of PIs, employers and clients) for example to provide the new skills and knowledge needed to manage staff, develop a business, specialise, meet ever changing legal and regulatory requirements, use the latest software or keep informed of new materials and working methods.

### **Why do individual professionals need to engage in CPD?**

It is hoped that all individual professionals understand the need to continually add to and update their knowledge and skills. Pre-qualification education and Initial Professional Development cannot provide all the knowledge and skills that an individual will need for their entire career. Most professionals will want to specialise and/or move into senior or managerial positions during their careers, as

well as needing to develop the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in the context of changing markets, technologies, legislation etc.

Continued employment is a key reason for individuals to engage in CPD. Industry and the job market are continually evolving, and individuals need to be up-to-date and flexible to maximise their chance of continual employment. For many individuals engagement in CPD is a requirement to maintain membership of one or more Professional Institutions – membership which is important to their professional standing. For sole practitioners it is essential that they maintain their competence in order to remain self-reliant and provide a professional service.

The CPD activities which an individual engages in are likely to be influenced by a combination of opportunities, interests, ambitions and needs. Opportunities and needs are both likely to be influenced by employers and Professional Institution(s), which in turn may be influenced by client and broader industry expectations.

### **What are the benefits of CPD to employers?**

CIC has not conducted specific research into employer attitudes to or policies on CPD. Indeed this is an area where research might be useful. However research such as the CIC Professional Services Skills Survey (2003/04) shows that many employers are aware of skills gaps amongst their staff, 'on the job' in the most popular mode of delivering training, and most employers have encountered obstacles to training..

Employers may choose to rely on the professional judgement of their staff and the requirements of any Professional Institutions to which individual staff are members to identify in what CPD activities staff engage. However, a more proactive approach may help to ensure their staff develop and maintain the skills needed by the business and ultimately enhance its effectiveness and profitability.

Employers who want to ensure their staff engage in CPD which benefits their business may like to help their staff plan (and fund) CPD with a focus on outputs which:

- give staff the competence to expand or change their roles;
- give staff the skills to work with new technologies or within new markets; and
- address any shortcomings amongst staff.

As well as enhancing technical skills, employers should see CPD as an opportunity to support their staff to gain skills in less obvious areas to help the business for example to enhance or gain in-house competence in:

- marketing;
- communication (enhancing relationships with clients, suppliers and colleagues);
- accounts and finance management; and
- bidding/competing for work.

CPD may be beneficial to employers and their business by helping to:

- ensure employees and therefore the business are up-to-date and competitive;
- minimise the risk of professional errors and potential litigation; ,
- provide evidence of professional competence of staff;
- make the workforce more flexible which may reduce recruitment needs);
- make the workforce and business processes more efficient;

- make the workforce and business more responsive to change including new technologies, legislation and market developments;
- improve their business' profitability and reputation as an employer of a skilled workforce; and
- to motivate staff and improve staff retention.

Employers, in return, can provide support for their employees by:

- developing company procedures which support CPD;
- providing development opportunities (particularly those that can be experienced in-house);
- assisting with resources and expertise;
- giving positive encouragement and recognition; and
- helping staff assess their competence and development needs, perhaps through a process of formal reviews.

### **What are the benefits of CPD to industry?**

Professionally competent workers will enhance the public image of the construction industry, which in turn should improve relationships with clients and recruitment to the industry.

Employers, clients, Professional Institutions and Government can all benefit from CPD and the resultant maintenance, and hopefully enhancement, of the knowledge and skills of the workforce. Employers need to have a competent and skilled workforce for their business to remain competitive. Clients need professionals carrying out work for them to have the knowledge and skills necessary to do a good job. Professional Institutions want to assist their members in maintaining competence as well as to provide an incentive for membership – ensuring only competent individuals are in membership can enhance the reputation of an Institution. Government is both a big construction client and has an interest in the impact the construction industry makes to the economy and the wellbeing of the population.

CPD is beneficial to clients as a knowledgeable and competent construction team has greater potential to complete a project on time, within budget, and resulting in a good quality product. It also helps provide reassurance of competence and can help develop customer service skills.

CPD is important to the UK construction industry as a whole because it:

- helps eliminate poor performance (and associated risks to employers, clients and individuals – including health and safety risks)
- makes the workforce better placed to compete in an international market and workforce
- should result in skills which will contribute towards a better reputation for our industry, particularly amongst clients and the potential workforce
- should help foster trust in the competence of colleagues within teams.

## **What are the considerations for Professional Institutions?**

Professional Institutions seek to serve the needs not only of their members, but also of clients and industry in many of their activities. They usually set requirements for membership that include academic requirements and Initial Professional Development (IPD). For many Institutions, it is therefore a logical extension of their activities for them to recommend or require that their members engage in CPD.

Engagement in CPD is often expected of members of Professional Institutions. and they have a variety of CPD policies. These may include one, or a combination of, the following types of recommendations or requirements:

- a set minimum time to spend on CPD;
- engagement in recommended CPD programmes (often to gain CPD 'points');
- asking members to produce a plan for their CPD (in some cases following a set format);
- requesting documented CPD records (again in some cases following a set format); and
- providing evidence of competence gained through engagement in CPD.

*(CIC CPD Survey 2003)*

Whatever an Institutions' current policies, this guidance document provides recommendations as to approaches to CPD to which they might aspire to benefit their sector, members and ultimately themselves. Realistically not all Institutions will be in a position to take on board all the recommendations straight away, although for some many of the aspects may already be in place.

For some Institutions a hurdle remains of communicating to their members what is meant by CPD and what benefits appropriate CPD can bring. This document provides some guidance for individual professionals and their employers on what CPD is and how it can benefit them. CIC member Institutions are being encouraged to make use of this text within their own activities to raise awareness of CPD amongst their members, as well as considering working together on joint promotional activities. Effective communication with their members should be an urgent priority for Professional Institutions in respect of CPD.

There are other suggestions made in this paper that we hope Professional Institutions may be able to take on board in time. These recommendations include:

- moving towards an output/competence focused CPD model;
- recommending a cycle of reviewing, planning, doing, and recording CPD, and then assessing achievement;
- requiring that members complete appropriate CPD;
- working with other Professional Institutions to identify common themes for core CPD;
- if requesting that members submit CPD records to recognise these in a range of formats.

Many individuals, who wish to hold membership of more than one Professional Institution, face duplication of work as they may be asked to produce CPD records in multiple formats. A number of Institutions now accept CPD records in a range of formats, which allows their members to submit records in one format to more than one Institution. If other Professional Institutions adopt this approach, or work together to develop common CPD record formats, it will enable their members to focus more on engagement in CPD and less on how they record it, and remove a disincentive to belong to more than one Professional Institution.

Recognising CPD records in a common format might be the easiest way for Professional Institutions to work together on CPD, and make it easier for individuals to belong to more than one Institution. However, as existing policies often have common features, there are other areas in which there is potential for Professional Institutions with similar interests to work together in relation to CPD, which would possibly avoid unnecessary duplication of work and potentially enable Institutions to progress further by pooling resources:

- joint promotion and the benefits it can bring, or at least separate communication of a common message on CPD (it is suggested that a common message might initially be to say what CPD is before expanding this message to promote output focused CPD and/or use of a plan, develop, review cycle)
- identification of common core topics for CPD, which Institutions could recommend or require their members to include in their CPD and for which Institutions could jointly provide CPD activities or materials
- avoiding excessive prescription, thereby reducing the burden on individual Institutions to provide their own 'CPD events' and allowing individuals to plan CPD which best meets their individual needs within a broad framework

CPD needs to meet the needs of individual participants, their employers and any Institutions to which participants are members. Therefore CPD policies should allow some flexibility as to what development is engaged in. That said, there may be some benefits to collaboration between Institutions to identify common core topics that professionals should address within their CPD (without necessarily prescribing how this is delivered or restricting CPD to this core). Common core CPD could assist cross disciplinary team working, help professionals who wish to be members of more than one Institution or change roles within the industry, and potentially save Institutions resources. If Institutions wish to work together to identify common core CPD they can decide whether this should cover technical subjects, focus on 'soft skills' or address issues such as health and safety or sustainability. An evolving set of common core subjects could seek to ensure professionals develop competences to deal with any new working methods, address topical issues, to meet new legislation or minimise specified types of risks (such as those related to terrorism or flooding). A common core could be based on National Occupational Standards or other competence standards, although other options for developing a Common Core may be considered.

Delivery of development activities and resources is an activity in which many Professional Institutions and other organisations engage. Institutions may wish to pool resources and work together giving their members the benefit of a cross-disciplinary approach. Professional Institutions are not the only stakeholders with an interest in providing CPD and therefore delivery of CPD is discussed in more depth in a separate section of this guidance.

For those Institutions which set IPD requirements it may be logical (and make sense for their members) if their policies encourage CPD which is a progression from IPD. This could be achieved through CPD that builds upon, reinforces or enables updating of the content of IPD, uses a similar recording system and encourages the individual professional to continue some of the developmental habits they formed during IPD.

These proposals allow individual Professional Institutions freedom to decide to what degree (if at all) they set prescriptive CPD requirements. However, it is advisable not to be over-prescription. CPD should meet the needs of individual professionals and therefore allow individuals (and their employers) some flexibility to choose CPD

activities which service their individual needs, aspirations and preferred learning modes. Whilst cautioning against overly prescriptive CPD requirements, we advise those Institutions which do not currently monitor CPD to consider moving towards a policy which entails some degree of monitoring. Some Institutions may currently feel a policy of monitoring is not one they would like to adopt (due to resource implications or fear of losing members). It is clearly at the discretion of the individual body to continue this policy, but should be borne in mind that monitoring gives a significant driver for individuals to participate in CPD, and that in the long run monitoring may contribute towards a growth in membership (as the 'quality control' of monitoring makes membership a more valuable 'badge').

Anecdotal evidence suggests that, in addition to gaps existing between these recommendations and current Institution policies, there may be large gaps between the requirements of some Professional Institutions and what their members actually do in respect of CPD. Compulsion and monitoring is probably the only way of ensuring all professionals engage in CPD in a more structured way. However, monitoring of records cannot occur until professionals record CPD, which in turn cannot occur until professionals engage in CPD in a more structured way. Professional Institutions should raise awareness and understanding of the importance of CPD as a first priority, before encouraging their members to record CPD and finally monitoring. However there is also evidence from monitoring exercises conducted by Professional Institutions that suggests organisations are supportive of the principles and actions behind CPD whilst not recognising it. In this instance, individuals need to be responsive and work alongside Professional Institutions regarding their CPD guidelines. As, at present, many professionals with the support of their respective organisations are working towards positive goals and objectives that could be planned and focused using CPD.

A special meeting of CIC member Institutions agreed that much of the action needed in respect of CPD must be the responsibility of Professional Institutions not CIC.

Actions discussed included:

- raising CPD awareness and understanding among Professional Institutions' members – CIC could create a framework for guidance;
- raising awareness of good appraisal systems which result in better CPD benefiting the industry;
- discussing with the insurance industry whether Professional Indemnity insurance can be related to CPD;
- getting a common message on CPD from industry;
- raising awareness before addressing recording, and addressing recording before addressing monitoring (*whilst acknowledging that some PIs are already monitoring*);
- agreed CPD should be self assessed (placing trust in the individual practitioner) – up to the individual to decide what they need to do or understand they are working within a development cycle – i.e. setting and working towards their own targets;
- communicating initiatives that may interest other Professional Institutions; and
- consulting their members to find out the likely degree of support or opposition that policy changes might receive.

A cross industry seminar to discuss CPD identified a number of approaches to CPD from other industries. Many of the issues raised and policies adopted are the same as those identified by Institutions within the built environment sector.

Key points of interest raised were:

- Members of one body voted in favour of mandatory CPD.
- CPD needs to be flexible and relate to people at all stages of their careers, even when their roles become less directly relevant to the profession in which they initially qualified.
- Peer review could encourage mentoring and reduce the burden on Institutions in respect of monitoring CPD, although this raises a quality control issue.
- The self employed tend initially to be the most concerned about the cost and time of CPD but find that planning gives a structure to their activities and they find it useful.
- One system for CPD which focuses on the individual would allow professional to continue their CPD (and recording of CPD) when they change employers and/or Professional Institutions.
- Professional Institutions need to provide strong incentives for people to engage in CPD.
- Whatever 'requirements' are set, individuals are most likely to engage in CPD that suits them.

### **What are the sources of support and guidance about CPD?**

This document not only provides original informed guidance from CIC on CPD, but also seeks to bring together and signpost guidance from a range of sources to guide those involved in the construction professional services sector (whether individuals, employers or Professional Institutions). Other potentially useful sources of guidance include the European Project for the Use of Standards of Competence in CPD for Construction Industry Practitioners (EUSCCCIP) and the CIC Users Guide, colleagues, and Professional Institutions and similar bodies (whose interests lie within or outside the built environment). The following are a selection of websites of Professional Institutions or similar bodies which contain some guidance on CPD:

#### **Built environment related websites:**

Association for Project Management	<a href="http://www.apm.org.uk">www.apm.org.uk</a>
British Institute of Facilities Management	<a href="http://www.bifm.org.uk">www.bifm.org.uk</a>
Chartered Institute of Architectural Technologists	<a href="http://www.ciat.org.uk">www.ciat.org.uk</a>
Chartered Institute of Building	<a href="http://www.ciob.org.uk">www.ciob.org.uk</a>
Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers	<a href="http://www.cibse.org">www.cibse.org</a>
Engineering Council UK	<a href="http://www.engc.org.uk">www.engc.org.uk</a>
Institute of Clerks of Works of Great Britain	<a href="http://www.icwgb.org">www.icwgb.org</a>
Institute of Highways Incorporated Engineers	<a href="http://www.ihie.org.uk">www.ihie.org.uk</a>
Institute of Maintenance and Building Management	<a href="http://www.imbm.org.uk">www.imbm.org.uk</a>
Institute of Plumbing and Heating Engineering	<a href="http://www.iphe.org.uk">www.iphe.org.uk</a>
Institution of Civil Engineering Surveyors	<a href="http://www.ices.org.uk">www.ices.org.uk</a>
Institution of Civil Engineers	<a href="http://www.ice.org.uk">www.ice.org.uk</a>
Institution of Highways & Transportation	<a href="http://www.ih.org">www.ih.org</a>
Institution of Structural Engineers	<a href="http://www.istructe.org.uk">www.istructe.org.uk</a>
Landscape Institute	<a href="http://www.l-i.org.uk">www.l-i.org.uk</a>
Royal Institute of British Architects	<a href="http://www.riba.org">www.riba.org</a>
Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors	<a href="http://www.rics.org">www.rics.org</a>
Royal Town Planning Institute	<a href="http://www.rtpi.org.uk">www.rtpi.org.uk</a>

### **Other useful sources of information:**

Association of Chartered Certified Accountants	<a href="http://www.accaglobal.com">www.accaglobal.com</a>
British Psychological Society – CPD Planning and Recording System	<a href="http://www.bps.org.uk/cpd">www.bps.org.uk/cpd</a>
Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development	<a href="http://www.cipd.co.uk">www.cipd.co.uk</a>
Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management	<a href="http://www.ciwem.org.uk">www.ciwem.org.uk</a>
Chartered Management Institute	<a href="http://www.managers.org.uk">www.managers.org.uk</a>
Commission on Intellectual Property Rights	<a href="http://www.cipr.org.uk">www.cipr.org.uk</a>
Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland	<a href="http://www.cpd.ie">www.cpd.ie</a>
Institute of Management Consultancy	<a href="http://www.imc.co.uk">www.imc.co.uk</a>
Institute of Payroll and Pensions Management	<a href="http://www.ippm.org">www.ippm.org</a>
Law Society	<a href="http://www.lawsociety.org.uk">www.lawsociety.org.uk</a>
Professional Accreditation Of Conservator-Restorers	<a href="http://www.pacr.org.uk">www.pacr.org.uk</a>
Professional Development – How 2	<a href="http://www.pd-how2.org">www.pd-how2.org</a>
Royal College of Psychiatrists	<a href="http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk">www.rcpsych.ac.uk</a>

Support and guidance can save much time and avoid wasted effort when setting up or revising a CPD system. The EUSCCCIP Framework and CICSP Users Guide to Managing your own CPD are intended to provide such guidance and are good examples of a plan, develop, and review based CPD cycle.

### **European CPD Framework**

The model proposed in the EUSCCCIP (European Project for the Use of Standards of Competence in CPD for Construction Industry Practitioners) framework and which has set the pattern already recommended by a number of bodies, could be a useful model for a common CPD framework. This model was developed by a four nation team representing bodies in the UK, Finland, Ireland and Portugal. The EUSCCCIP framework seeks to provide an outline specification based upon the contents of the best practice CPD systems which can be applied by individuals, employers, organisations, and Professional Institutions in the construction industries of UK countries. This model does not seek to specify what topics should be covered by CPD, how much CPD should be undertaken, or how CPD should be delivered. The framework seeks to encourage designers of CPD systems to move away from those based on inputs (e.g. time spent) towards outcomes. The EUSCCCIP framework encourages a planned and reflective approach to CPD and provides a model for good practice on the basis of which individuals and organisations may wish to develop their own CPD practices and policies.

The Framework is intended to provide a flexible and comprehensive specification for CPD within any sector of industry. The framework should serve as a useful checklist for both practitioners and those producing CPD guidance or requirements.

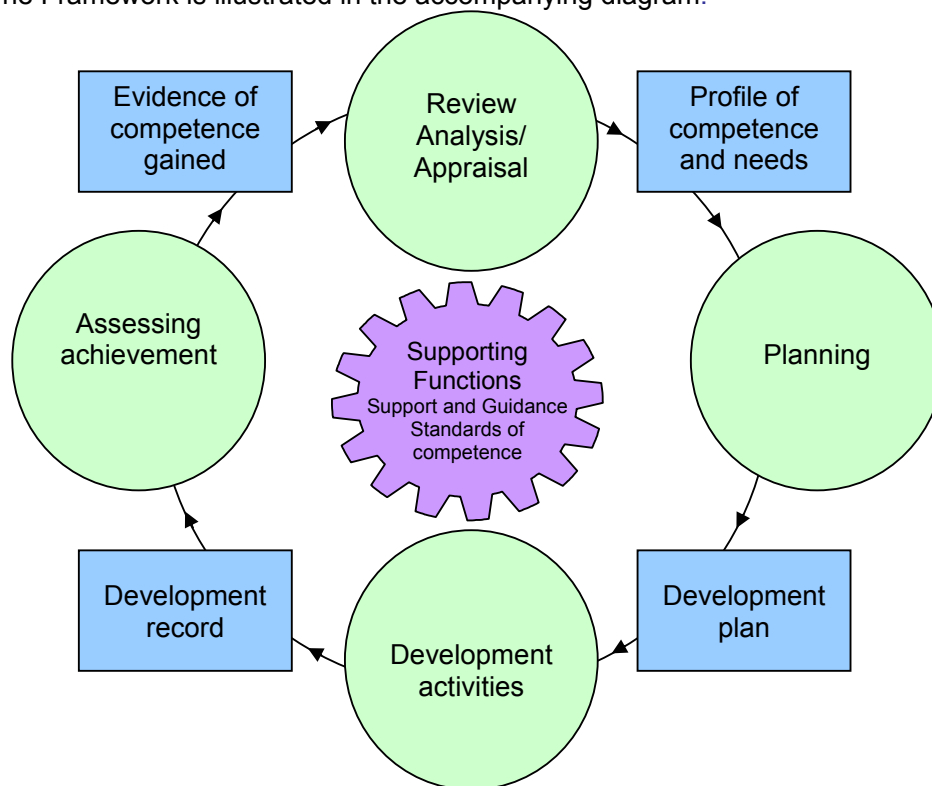
The Framework recommends that any system for CPD, whether led by employers, Professional Institutions, industry or government, will be enhanced by using an agreed framework of standards of competence. These provide individuals with the necessary clear and objective reference against which to build their development. Adopting standards already developed by others will reduce resource requirements. Such Standards should be based on what actually happens in industry and should take into account industry's real complexity, including coping with the unexpected, managing the task and managing oneself (in the UK National Occupational Standards fit this bill).

The EUSCCCIP Framework identifies a successful CPD system to consist of a structure and procedures to help an individual undertake CPD efficiently, and in a regular way. Depending on legislation and the wishes of the organisation, different components can be voluntary, obligatory or mandatory. A system can be devised to suit the needs of an individual. Alternatively it can be designed by an organisation (eg employer or professional institution) to satisfy the requirements of a number of practitioners. Systems can vary in detail whilst working within the Framework's guidelines.

The EUSCCCIP Framework suggests that a CPD system should allow individuals to:

- review and explore their professional and personal careers/competences;
- discover and set down their individual strengths and weaknesses;
- make and use a development plan; and
- record their intentions and provide verification that they have conformed to their plans and achieved their targets.

The Framework is illustrated in the accompanying diagram:



This diagram illustrates the relationship of all the components of a CPD system:

- The four essential 'Processes' - 'Review', 'Planning', 'Development Activities' and 'Assessing Achievement' - which an individual, undertaking CPD, goes through. Each process is part of a continuous cycle, inter-relates with the others and has outputs which feed into the next process. *More details on these processes are provided in this document.*
- Each of the processes results in a written 'Output'. These are 'Profiles', 'Plans', 'Records' and 'Evidence' - which record individuals' intentions and demonstrate their achievements. They also provide evidence of carrying out the processes and can be used to monitor and improve quality

- The three 'Supporting Functions' - 'Support and Guidance', 'Standards of Competence' and 'Quality' - which underpin and facilitate the processes. *More details on the supporting functions are provided in this document.*

The Framework is a development cycle. Those undertaking it find themselves more competent each time they traverse the circle, as well as becoming more effective in developing themselves and more adept at managing their own CPD. There is no 'correct' place from which to begin the cycle, although for simplicity the Framework is presented with the 'Review' process as its beginning.

### **EUSCCCIP – key processes**

- **Review - Analysis and Appraisal**  
Individuals review their personal and professional experiences in a structured way. This appraisal enables them to identify their interests and competences. Analysis of future needs takes account of current, future, job and career requirements. The appraisal results in a profile of the individuals' personal and professional competences. The analysis identifies the priority areas for their CPD development which is recorded as their profile of needs.
- **Planning**  
Individuals identify the most appropriate learning and development activities to meet their profile of needs, informed by any advice from their organisation(s) or mentor, taking into account the opportunities available as well as any preferences and constraints. They set targets which are of high priority, practical, achievable and challenging. The profile is recorded as the personal development plan which specifies objectives, responsibilities, resource requirements, time-scale and indicators of successful achievement.
- **Development Activities**  
To meet their development needs and achieve their targets, individuals choose from the wide range of formal and informal activities available to them. Although most activities will be planned, individuals are encouraged to recognise and take advantage of opportunities which arise from day-to-day work experiences, unexpected challenges and professional contacts. Successful development usually requires that learning activities are matched by practical applications. An important outcome of development activities is the detailed record, kept by the individual, of the activities undertaken. The record shows intended objectives, what activities have actually occurred and with what consequences. The development process is given adequate time to include personal reflection.
- **Assessing Achievements**  
To gain full benefit from their development activities, individuals need to ensure that the results are assessed in some way. This is done against their development plan and measured in terms of new and improved levels of competence. Individuals provide evidence of their achievements and the development activities which lead to them. A constructive and thoughtful record of assessed achievement provides an excellent opportunity for review by employers, organisations and professional bodies. It is also useful in employment and career development.

A CPD record is used to store information collected during the individual's progress through the processes of the Framework. This could include written records of: reviews, planning, development activities, and assessment of achievements. Further

suggestions about how to record CPD are made elsewhere in this guidance document.

### **EUSCCCIP supporting functions - Providing Support and Guidance to Individuals**

An organisation provides support and guidance for individual practitioners (its members or employees) who undertake CPD. Support and guidance consists of:

1. Identifying the individuals' needs for support.
2. Identifying existing sources for each component of the CPD cycle.
3. Relating these to standards of competence and quality systems.
4. Setting up the support functions.
5. Enabling individuals to gain access to appropriate sources of support and guidance.
6. Monitoring use of support and guidance, and reviewing progress.
7. Implementing improvements to the CPD systems.

### **EUSCCCIP supporting functions - Standards of Competence**

The organisation and individual select and agree a suitable set of standards of competence. The standards should express the main competences which the individual practitioners use, in an appropriate level of detail and in language which they understand. The standards should be shared and tested with others where possible. There is benefit in adopting widely shared standards of competence. The standards should be periodically reviewed to ensure that they:

- Are still the most appropriate;
- remain up-to-date and reflect current best practice, as their environment changes;
- are evolving towards more widely shared standards.

Standards of competence:

- Specify individual competence in terms of successful performance in the work-place;
- are benchmarks of good practice, which can be used to compare and assess individual performance;
- need to include: criteria for adequate performance, the range of circumstances covered, the required underpinning knowledge and understanding, and guidance on how the practitioner can show evidence of competence;
- are best defined in terms of outputs and outcomes;
- are not about tasks and detail, nor about the means of achieving competence (training and development activities);
- need to anticipate changing industry needs and improving standards of performance.

Standards of competence can be shared at various levels, these can be

- unique to an individual (eg specified in a unique personal job description);
- developed for an employer (used in performance appraisals, training schemes, pay, promotion, database of skills, work allocation);
- developed for a whole profession or sector; and
- National standards shared across all of industry.

Moving towards more widely shared standards of competence is beneficial because:

- it shares the investment in their development and maintenance;

- it facilitates communication between specialisations;
- it facilitates a flexible labour-force (eg multi-skilling and transferability); and
- it provides economies of scale.

National Occupational Standards on which NVQ/SVQs are based, are industry developed standards of competence. CIC maintains Occupational Standards for the technical, managerial and professional functions across the built environment and these are available to view online at [www.cicsc.org.uk](http://www.cicsc.org.uk). An online database of National Occupational Standards for use across all sectors of industry is viewable at [www.ukstandards.co.uk](http://www.ukstandards.co.uk)

Whilst CIC are keen to promote the use of National Occupational Standards it is emphasised that a 'review, plan, develop/learn, assess/review' cycle can be successfully adopted with reference to other benchmarks such as Professional Institution criteria, employers own standards (such as those used in job descriptions), or formal qualifications. Mapping against National Occupational Standards (not necessarily whole NVQ/SVQs) is an activity which individuals might find useful.

### **EUSCCCIP supporting functions - Quality**

Quality control: This is critical if CPD is to be seen as meaningful. Stakeholders attribute great importance to the rigour of development and assessment for Initial Professional Development, but do not follow this through necessarily to CPD. The good habits and procedures adopted for initial education and training should be compatible with those for CPD, so that there is a 'seamless' transition on gaining formal recognition. CPD includes both the maintenance and improvement of existing competences as well as the development of new competences; it implies the individual's commitment to professional excellence.

The CPD system includes a Quality component, which monitors and reviews all aspects of the Framework in order to maintain and enhance quality of the results of CPD. Both the outputs and the actual processes are monitored, to prevent CPD becoming an abstract, unfocused and unproductive exercise. The nature and scale of the monitoring reflect the needs, culture and capacity of the organisation. The results of the monitoring are fed back promptly to all those concerned (eg those responsible for recognising, improving and adding value to the CPD system, or responsible for remedial action).

The quality component is specified in writing to avoid ambiguity, but what is done is more important than what is written, although the act of recording in itself is a significant means of enhancing the effectiveness of what is undertaken. A culture of continuing improvement will be more effective than any formal system imposed from above or outside. The output records are easily monitored, and provide a clear basis for feedback. Although necessary, the output records are of much less significance to quality than monitoring the processes.

Possible means of monitoring include:

- monitoring the output records;
- asking individual participants (or a representative sample of):
  - how they performed in their review;
  - what they did to prepare their profile of competence and the profile of needs;
  - what they found difficult;
  - what they found least important/most important;
  - how they would do it differently next time;

- what benefits they have found; and
- asking others involved in each of the components (eg line managers, mentors, training department).

Those monitoring should:

- identify what can be monitored to evaluate achievement of the aims and objectives of the CPD system and to ensure good practice in each of the components;
- decide how they can be monitored in practice (by whom, how resourced, to whom reported, how frequently);
- carry out the monitoring; and
- provide periodic reports.

### **CIC User's Guide Application (7) - Managing your own CPD**

A User's Guide Application developed by CISC (now the Construction Industry Council Standards Panel) provides another suggestion for a CPD cycle. This cycle is wholly compatible with the EUSCCCIP Framework but details more steps in/linking the reviewing and planning process.

#### **Steps**

##### 1. Clarify aims

Understand the central aims and principles of CPD. Clarify personal aims (see also Application 8).

##### 2. Identify the Professional requirements

Recognise the role of CPD in professional membership. Find out your Institution's evidence requirements. For steps 3 to 6 refer also to Application 8 (self-appraisal). Relate to Occupational Standards as a benchmark to measure against.

##### 3. Find sources of help

Access help and guidance, especially the Professional Institutions. Application 8 Step 2 suggests other sources.

##### 4. Select appropriate Occupational Standards

Refer to the Common Steps to identify relevant Occupational Standards and Key/Core Skills. Use Application 8 Step 2 when deciding how to record them.

##### 5. Appraise your personal situation

Use Application 8 Steps 3, 4 and 5 to analyse your strengths and weaknesses; review personal and work experiences.

##### 6. Identify competence needs and goals

Clarify the competences you will need. Set development goals for your current job, future roles and personal aspirations. Use Application 8 steps 4 and 5.

##### 7. Plan CPD

Make a systematic plan with 'SMART' (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Timely) objectives and target dates. See also Application 8 step 5.

#### 8. Implement CPD

Implement your plan, taking opportunities that arise, integrating learning with work. Use a learning log.

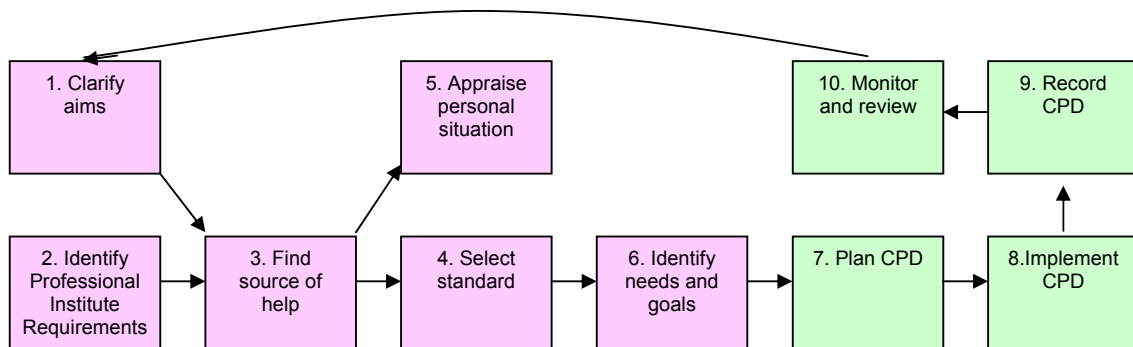
#### 9. Record CPD

Uses of records for assessing results, evidence of professional competence; formats for recording CPD. See Application 8 step 2.

#### 10. Monitor and review

Review the plan and process of your CPD. Review with others.

### How the Steps fit together



### CIC Users Guide Application (8) – Self Appraisal

Another User's Guide Application developed by CISC (now the Construction Industry Council Standards Panel) concerns self appraisal and therefore can relate to a CPD cycle. Self appraisal should provide individuals with an objective view of their own capability: expertise, competence, motivation and ability to learn. The following steps should help individuals to create a benchmark against which to measure their own performance, in the absence of a formal job description.

#### Steps:

##### 1. Clarify personal aims

Focus on your objectives – how much is your self appraisal for: improved work performance, enhanced career development or personal growth? Record your aims.

##### 2. Manage the Appraisal

Find sources of help. Use the Common Steps to identify relevant Occupational Standards and Key/Core Skills. Gather insights from others inside and outside the organisation according to personal circumstances. Record the results.

##### 3. Review personal experience

Look at your CV, performance appraisal records, portfolios of evidence, and any significant events. Assess values, interests, competences, motivation, contacts. Know yourself.

##### 4. Assess your own competences

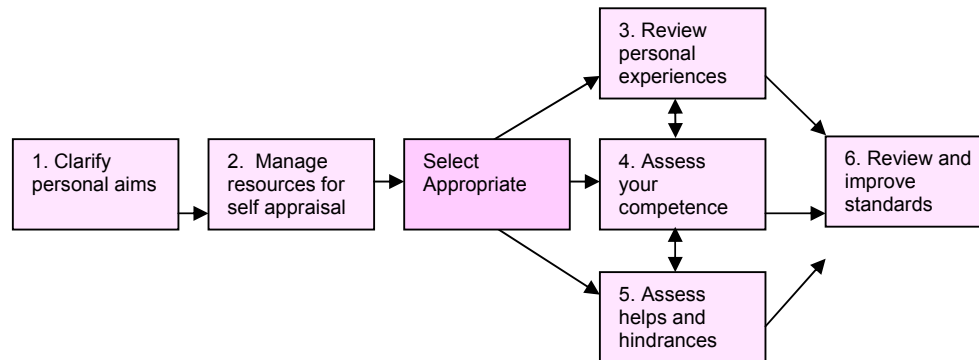
Assess yourself against Occupational Standards and Key/Core Skills. Identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Analyse your job. Use diagnostic

tools. Identify your priority competences in terms of relative importance of career competence needs and ease of access/opportunities for achieving.

5. Assess what helps and hinders your development  
Identify your learning style and forces for/against personal change.

6. Review self-appraisal process  
Identify the benefits. Record the results and improve the process. See also Application 7.

### How the Steps fit together



### Planning CPD

Planning should maximise the focus and benefit of CPD and limit time (and other resources) used on less appropriate CPD activities.

It is important not only to make short term development plans, but also to consider medium and long term goals and what CPD can do to help achieve them (whether as an individual planning your career, an employer managing a business or a Professional Institution encouraging your members to adapt to changing industry needs). In some cases more than one plan, or a plan which aims towards more than one set of goals may be needed – for example to allow for an individual's career plans beyond their current employment, to meet the needs of and opportunities provided by their current employment, and to meet any Professional Institution requirements. Ideally plans should be realistic yet aspirational, reviewed regularly and when circumstances change, and allow the flexibility for unexpected opportunities or needs to be embraced.

Guidance and template CPD plans are available from a number of Professional Institutions (including [ICES](#), [RICS](#), [APM](#) and [CIOB](#)). Whether developing a CPD plan as an individual, or as an organisation developing a template, it is recommended that the following core items should be included:

- identification of areas in which competence is needed;
- development goals (intended outputs of CPD – these should include yet might go beyond competence e.g. to include career or business goals);
- planned activities to achieve goals; and
- achievements (once appropriate).

Other useful information might include:

- targets/priorities for completion of goals;
- details of resources needed/available to support development;

- Professional Institution requirements;
- employer requirements; and
- a date to review the plans.

Individuals planning CPD should consider the outputs (competence) that they hope to achieve. Factors that individuals might wish to think about when planning CPD might include:

- Professional Institution requirements;
- employer/business requirements (these could be identified through a formal appraisal or informal conversation with colleagues or clients);
- short, medium and long term career goals (which might include promotion, expanding a business, or even a change of career);
- developments affecting their industry/profession (such as legislation, technological developments, or new working practices);
- resource availability (finance, time, Information Communications Technology);
- life outside work (influencing the mode of delivery e.g. a long daily commute might prevent attendance at an evening class but provide time for reading or listening to educational CDs; or giving extra motivation e.g. time management skills could be useful at work and at home); and
- gap analysis (assessing your current profile of competence against the needs of your current, or an aspirational role, possibly using relevant National Occupational Standards or NVQ/SVQs as a framework and/or talking to colleagues).

It is possible that one document could be used to plan and record CPD. This would support a 'plan, develop, review' cycle.

### **Recording CPD**

Many professionals need to formally record their CPD to meet the requirements of their employer, clients, or Professional Institution(s). However, recording CPD can be useful for a number of reasons other than for meeting the requirements of others. It can play a key part in the planning and reviewing of CPD activities, as well as providing a useful source when updating a Curriculum Vitae, making a case for promotion or bidding for projects.

CPD Record Books, or online CPD records, have been introduced in the UK by many organisations. Some construction professionals are members of more than one Institution and may currently be compelled to complete duplicate CPD records, in different formats. A number of Institutions that monitor CPD have flexible policies concerning the format of CPD. Members of the CIC Training and CPD Panel have recommended a move towards mutual recognition of CPD records across CIC members. This is not suggesting that an individual who has had their CPD assessed by one Professional Institution should be assumed to have met the CPD requirements of another Institution. Professional Institutions are encouraged to either collaborate to agree a common CPD record format, or to recognise CPD records in a variety of formats.

If a template is provided by a Professional Institution or other body, it is useful for initial guidance to be included, explaining for example who the record is for (the categories of individuals and who the information might be viewed by), the benefits of maintaining an up to date record, and guidance on planning, completing and recording CPD.

Whether a template is provided, or an individual designs their own format for recording their CPD, there are certain items that it makes sense to include – not only as a record but to make the record useful as a tool to facilitate review and planning. These include personal details (particularly if the record is being shown to others); a record of the individual's career; (experience and qualifications might be included here), profile of current competence and competence needs; a development plan; and records of development activities which record the competence gained through development.

Individuals may wish to include with their CPD records examples of work done through which they learnt or notes of courses and seminars they have attended.

As well as helping an individual to plan, assess and review their CPD activities, and meeting requirements of Professional Institutions or similar bodies, CPD records (including electronically stored records) can be a useful source for individuals when updating their CVs or bidding for work.

CPD records can be stored electronically or on paper. A number of factors will influence an individual or organisation's decision as to whether to adopt an electronic or paper based recording system, or a system which allows flexibility for both. These might include:

- set up costs;
- operational costs (for both the participant in CPD and anyone monitoring records);
- the level of flexibility required;
- storage of records;
- ease of accessing/sharing records;
- compatibility with other CPD recording/monitoring systems; and
- how the records will be used (e.g. within planning and review processes, monitoring, to inform CVs).

### **Assessing and reviewing CPD**

Assessing and reviewing is an important stage of both development and CPD planning.

Reflecting upon what has been learnt through a CPD activity is an important part of the development process and a good opportunity for individuals to honestly consider what new knowledge and skills they have developed and how to use and maintain their new competence. Alongside considering how a developmental activity contributes towards personal competence, individuals may consider whether any of what they have learnt should be shared with colleagues and if so how.

The assessment and review process is also important for individuals to consider whether they are taking the right approach to CPD, if they are using development methods which suit them and whether they need to engage in further development in a particular area of knowledge and/or skill. Conclusions reached through the assessment and review process should inform the planning session of the CPD cycle and may result in revisions to plans.

Assessing and reviewing CPD is a sensible conclusion to any development activity, and also essential to inform effective planning of CPD. Assessment and review is

also a process that can both inform and be informed by the recording of CPD and it may be logical to complete some recording in parallel.

By using appropriate standards (which might be Occupational Standards, Professional Institution requirements or other benchmarks) individuals will be in a better position to assess their progress.

### **Developing output focused CPD**

Moving from an emphasis on input to output focused CPD should enhance the value of CPD and make it more meaningful to participants. Focusing on inputs (such as the amount of time spent on CPD activities) can result in a perception of CPD as a chore and means that outputs (such as new or improved knowledge or competence) are not considered when planning CPD. It may be possible, if so desired, to combine an input and output focused model. Those who are used to measuring CPD against a particular input such as time may feel more comfortable adopting an approach that combines both an input (e.g. time) measurement with a focus on outputs (competence achieved).

A more effective approach to CPD with a focus on outputs should result in individuals planning and engaging in CPD that helps them maintain and develop desired competence in a purposeful way. This should enable individuals to see CPD as valuable at the same time as ensuring the workforce is skilled and knowledgeable.

Key benefits of an output focused approach to CPD include:

- Professional Institutions can help their members to focus on a structured target-based approach to CPD relevant to their changing needs;
- individuals can plan their career development;
- individuals may be more aware of where their competence lies;
- training providers can identify common development needs;
- reducing effort spent on inappropriate CPD;
- enhancing the value attributed to CPD;
- a more competent workforce; and
- seeing the real benefits of achieving targets.

Some Professional Institutions already have or are working towards output focused CPD requirements. Overall most Institutions seem supportive of the principle of output focused CPD, as long as it is not too prescriptive or expected that all CPD can be assessed in a formal way. (*CIC 2005 Consultation on Proposed CPD Targets*)

A simple way to make CPD more output focused would be to use a 'reviewing, planning, developing, recording, assessing' cycle such as those outlined in this guidance. Measuring CPD outputs against a benchmark (such as Professional or Occupational Standards) would enhance the reviewing process and help individuals, their employers and other stakeholders to assess and demonstrate competence developed through CPD.

National Occupational Standards are concerned with what individuals can do, not just what they know. They are about what people should achieve in the workplace to become effective. They promote industry best practice and have been developed by industry practitioners. National Occupational Standards form the basis for a five level framework of NVQ/SVQs (National and Scottish Vocational Qualifications).

Output focused CPD can be completed without reference to either Occupational Standards or NVQ/SVQs. It is the focus on outputs (what CPD enables the participant to do or know as a result of participation) rather than the mode of delivery that is being recommended. That said, there are a number of points of clarification that should be considered before dismissing a National Occupational Standards based approach.

- It is not intended that Occupation Standards should dictate what is undertaken by way of development. They are one possible tool for benchmarking, identifying common themes, and identifying provision needs.
- The Occupational Standards are developed, reviewed and owned by industry people to support lifelong development.
- Some Institutions already recognise NVQ/SVQs and/or have matched their membership requirements to Occupational Standards.
- Using Occupational Standards can be relatively straightforward.
- It is a misconception to regard National Occupational Standards as low level, technical and narrow. Occupational Standards cover the whole identified breadth and depth of the Built environment sector and beyond, and embrace aspects of technical, managerial and professional competence, knowledge and understanding.
- The National Occupational Standards managed by CIC for the higher levels of the built environment sector are available for free online at [www.cicsc.org.uk](http://www.cicsc.org.uk)
- The National Occupational Standards managed by CIC are subject to a rolling programme of review to reflect changing industry practice.
- National Occupational Standards are not level specific.
- CPD could be mapped against Occupational Standards – it is an Occupational Standards and not an NVQ/SVQ based approach that is proposed (NVQ/SVQs provide a discipline specific package of Occupational Standards that can be used quite apart from qualification purposes).
- National Occupational Standards may a useful guidance tool when planning CPD and reviewing the competence gained.

Whilst Occupational Standards have been advocated as a means of setting a benchmark, it is equally possible to adopt other Standards, eg., each Institution's own membership requirements, which can be used as an ongoing benchmark to maintain competence and to target ongoing development; also employers standards and job descriptions provide targets that can be used. The advantages of adopting Occupational Standards include their ability to provide a common language that links many systems around the industry, and that they are a tool which already exists avoiding the need to develop new benchmarks. If there are areas in which development might take place for which National Occupational Standards are not published this should not mean that learning should be excluded from CPD simply because they are not yet covered by National Occupational Standards. However, CIC welcomes feedback to improve the Occupational Standards and their coverage.

### **Construction Skills Certification Scheme**

For growing numbers of professionals, CPD helps them to gain a CSCS (Construction Skills Certification Scheme) card, through the Professional Membership Route, and thereby access to construction sites.

CSCS was launched in 1995 to create a register of competent operatives and craftspeople. The register has now been extended to potentially include all those who

work on or visit construction sites, including technical, professional, supervisory and management personnel.

The main route to CSCS cards is currently through achievement of a relevant NVQ/SVQ supplemented by a health and safety test, with 'industry accreditation' available for a limited period after a new card is opened. However, in response to concerns raised by a number of Professional Institutions, CIC and CSCS are helping Institutions to develop alternative 'Professional Membership Routes' to CSCS which exempt some professionals from the NVQ/SVQ requirement.

Individuals in appropriate membership of an Institution which has developed a Professional Membership Route to CSCS need two references from other members of their Institution (one of whom if possible should be their employer) to confirm that they are working within the role through which they are seeking Professional Membership, and have completed adequate CPD. They must also, in common with all those seeking CSCS cards, pass the appropriate CSCS health and safety test.

Professional Membership Routes to CSCS can be developed by Professional Institutions mapping their membership requirements against an approved NVQ and (via CIC) seeking CSCS validation.

To find out more about CSCS and existing Professional Membership Routes to CSCS visit [www.cscs.uk.com](http://www.cscs.uk.com).

If you are a representative of a Professional Institution and would like to know more about developing Professional Membership Routes to CSCS please email [lifelonglearning@cic.org.uk](mailto:lifelonglearning@cic.org.uk)

### **CPD and Investors in People**

The Investors in People framework and CIC Occupational Standards offer an opportunity for employers to develop a structured approach to CPD, rather than the 'ad hoc' arrangements currently used by many practices and companies.

The Investors in People Standard seeks to help businesses improve performance through investment in their staff.

Many of the principles of Investors in People mirror the principles recommended for a good CPD policy – encouraging investment in skills, a flexible approach, and use of a plan, do and review cycle. Therefore, it makes sense for employers to adopt Investors in People and a pro-active approach to CPD in tandem.

For further information visit [www.investorsinpeople.co.uk](http://www.investorsinpeople.co.uk)

### **Developing appropriate CPD provision**

A great deal of CPD takes place without reference to resources or courses specifically designed/labelled as CPD. This includes learning through work based activities, relevant reading, and attendance at seminars or courses which are not labelled by their provider as CPD. The value of CPD is dependent upon the ability of the activity to meet the development needs of the participant and therefore whether or not an activity to labelled as CPD should not be considered important when assessing its value. However, many organisations (and possibly employers) may opt

to design CPD programmes or materials to fill a perceived gap and possibly to generate income.

Organisations that wish to provide materials and/or courses with potential to be used as part of individuals' CPD are encouraged to think about working together if delivering CPD with potential to be of interest across a range of professions. This would enable them to pool resources, learn from each other, maximise their potential audience and potentially foster a greater understanding of job roles across disciplines. Some CPD does not need to be industry specific and therefore a cross disciplinary approach could potentially extend beyond the construction industry with potential for shared delivery across sectors in a range of skills areas including HR, management, accountancy and customer service.

An area of knowledge or competence in which development should take place needs to be identified before a CPD activity or resource can be developed. Both identification of knowledge or competence needs, and the development of CPD to address these, can be informed and aided in a number of ways.

Relevant National Occupational Standards are one tool that could be referred to as a source of guidance as to what activities a professional should be able to competently engage in:

- The 'performance criteria' will explain exactly what the professional should be able to do to be considered competent. These can form the targets or learning outcomes of the training or CPD activity.
- The schedule of 'knowledge and understanding' specifies the subject and level or extent to which the person should have knowledge and understanding about the activity.
- The standards provide indications of the most appropriate 'evidence', which will demonstrate the competence. CPD may be designed which will allow candidates to provide evidence of their competence and understanding in a particular area.

Industry is continually evolving therefore, although CIC has a rolling programme to update its suite of Occupational Standards, we acknowledge that it may not be appropriate to limit CPD to the scope of current National Occupational Standards. Professional Institution membership requirements; new regulatory and technical developments; and project requirements are other sources that can be used to identify areas where CPD may be needed.

Feedback through the Sector Skills Agreement consultation suggests that CPD objectives could be facilitated by using the project as a vehicle to cover a range of development issues throughout its duration. The Construction Industry is focused around projects – it therefore makes sense to use projects as an opportunistic means of focusing learning/development/training for competence.

This might provide a number of benefits:

- ensuring better structured training for new entrants;
- helping with recruitment and retention;
- demonstrating the importance of training in improving business performance;
- encouraging a 'learning and feedback' culture in the industry;
- encouraging cross disciplinary learning and development of team working skills;
- potential for CPD and or competence to be a requirement in procurement processes and contracts; and

- aiding identification of where competence needs improving through CPD.

Adopting a project-focused model of provision gives rise to a number of considerations:

- This would need guidance frameworks for each discipline;
- this should start with request for training plan/outcomes being part of project team selection procedure;
- trainees could be exposed to a full range of activities from feasibility to post occupation feedback;
- deliverables would include strong evidence base of training and experience covered;
- it could be combined with other parallel activities such as Approved Training Schemes. NVQs etc; and
- projects processes cannot be adjusted just to accommodate learning needs.

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