

## Continuing Professional Development

### Keeping a record is to your advantage

In common with other professional institutes the ICT encourages the practice of continuing professional development. CPD extends the effect of education and training – ‘initial professional development’ – into a process of career-long learning. At the very least it is the commitment to keeping up to date and maintaining competence in a constantly changing workplace. It is one of the aspects of employment that makes us professional in what we do.

Under some institutes’ schemes the observance of CPD is a requirement of membership and if neglected can lead to dismissal. Institutional schemes for monitoring the undertaking and recording of formal CPD activities are known as ‘mandatory’, as opposed to ‘voluntary’ schemes.

Some years ago the ICT sought a middle way. It introduced a requirement on its members to pursue CPD and record individual progress (though student and retired members are exempt.) It also reserved the right to inspect a sample of members’ CPD records periodically (rather than all, systematically). This continues to be the case, although the formal inspection of records is limited – for practical reasons as much as anything else – to an assessment at the time of admission or transfer between grades. It is also a mandatory element in the process of registering with the Engineering Council. But there is an expectation of the professional to be professional.

Mandatory or not, however, the underlying reason for members to develop professionally, and record their learning experiences is for their personal and collective benefit; to grow in knowledge, skill and competence, and to be able to demonstrate that when it counts. Think of when that might be: job appraisals, establishing your credentials, selection for promotion, justifying performance-related pay, applications for new jobs, or membership of related institutions. And who doesn’t want to do better, to enhance job satisfaction and keep the mind ticking over?

Many members will be doing this anyway without even thinking about it, so why not reflect on your progress once a year and see what you have learned or done for the first time? And if you’ve done it, keep a record. The discipline of keeping a tally is a good one to acquire and hardly onerous, but if you have let it go, an annual flick through the diary and a bit of thought about your recent work is not a lot to ask.

Some things are obvious – a training course is clearly a learning experience, as is a seminar or conference – but there is so much more that can be included. It doesn’t have to be called ‘CPD’ to be professional development. Much of it you will have done in the course of work or related professional activities: new tasks, extra responsibilities, site visits, attending tradeshows, research and preparation, writing for publication, mentoring and instructing others, purposeful reading. (How many of you don’t read at least some articles of relevance in *Concrete*, *Beton*, *Concrete in Australia*, etc?)

The Institute offers guidance on what are recognised means of achieving CPD, from the formal to informal, and these include:

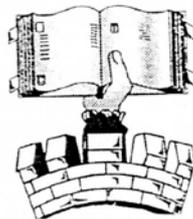
- Courses for higher degrees
- Distance learning
- Study tours and short courses

- Technical and professional conferences, lectures, seminars, workshops
- Company in-house discussions, research activities and studies
- Private study, including systematic (but not casual) study of the literature
- Preparing articles for publication
- Teaching (for those not employed in education)
- Practice (for those in education)
- Tutoring and examining
- Job rotation and secondment
- Mentoring new members
- Committee work

The test is whether you have learned anything new that is relevant to your professional skill set. Reflect on the value of the activity and what you learned. Hours spent in attendance might be barren; occasional snippets elsewhere a 'gold mine'.

The Institute also offers opportunities for acquiring CPD. ICT activities are checked for CPD value. The symposium at Convention each year, and the occasional one- or half-day technical seminars are awarded x-number of learning hours and certificates are prepared afterwards on request. Just contact the Executive Officer. The ICT is also introducing a series of single-subject reading lists as a pointer to recently published sources, a service backed by the resources of the Concrete Society's library.

## ICT-Registered Events for CPD



*Recognised as Approved CPD  
by The Institute of Concrete Technology*

CPD certificates for attendance at ICT events will be issued to delegates who requested them.

With these and informal learning as suggested above, members can easily exceed the 25 hours required by ICT each year. A straightforward record sheet is accessible on the ICT website for download and completion. Alternatively you could keep a box file for your certificates, dates, letters and other evidence, or simply maintain an on-going tally.

**But CPD is not necessarily about form-filling, and satisfying others. It is about being professional and taking responsibility for the direction of your career and your progress in it.**