

Guidelines for your continuing professional development (CPD)

August 2009



Introduction

From 2009, the Institute for Learning (IfL) has three main strategic aims, which are to provide:

1. benefits for members
2. the increased status of teachers and trainers
3. a voice for practitioners which can influence policy and practice.

A major benefit for members is support for continuing professional development (CPD).

IfL has long advocated the vision of high performing teaching and training professionals, self-regulating and self-improving through their commitment to continuing professional development (CPD). As such we were delighted to see our thinking reflected in the Cabinet Office report, *Excellence and Fairness* (2008), heralding an era of **new professionalism**, with the role of frontline professionals seen as paramount in driving forward public service reforms.

CPD gives the public, learners, the teaching community and the sector confidence that teachers, trainers, tutors and assessors are continuously improving their skills, knowledge and expertise. CPD is the hallmark of the professional.



Using REfLECT to log CPD

IfL's strategies for CPD are:

To establish IfL as a key strategic thinker.

Advancing the debate on teaching, training and learning, providing strong advocacy for teaching professionalism and encouraging employers and partner organisations to develop and sustain members' dual professionalism across the sector.

To promote the use of technology to support professional development.

Signposting opportunities and developing the knowledge and skills of members as reflective practitioners through the planning, recording and assessment of the impact of individual learning in CPD portfolios.

To add value to members' practice.

Advancing their teaching, training and learning expertise and offering opportunities for professional networking and discourse.

To engage with the whole membership, ensuring that all members are well-informed about the policies and issues that affect them.

(IfL five-year strategy, February 2009, full text available from www.ifl.ac.uk)

These guidelines are intended to support you through the process of recording your CPD.

What counts as professional development?

When you join IfL you commit to the principles of continuous improvement through our code of professional practice* IfL will recognise the evidence of your CPD as a means of remaining in good professional standing.

Our definition of CPD is broader than the conventional one that is often limited to attendance at courses, workshops or formal study. It is the critical reflection on learning experiences and activities that improve practice, and demonstrate continuous development as a teacher or trainer:

Continuing professional development means maintaining, improving and broadening relevant knowledge and skills in your subject specialism and your teaching and training, so that it has a positive impact on practice and the learner experience.

A growing body of research on CPD has shown that the kinds of professional development which make the most difference to practice are based on professional dialogue about teaching and learning, and the improvement of practice through a variety of activities, including coaching, mentoring, shadowing and peer support.

Awareness-raising events are useful for absorbing information and updating knowledge, but are not likely to lead to skills development. Therefore, when deciding on your priorities for CPD, it is important to consider what kinds of CPD will be the most effective for developing your practice as a teacher.

* IfL Code of Professional Practice, 1 April 2008
(full text available from www.ifl.ac.uk).

This means that you will need to show, year-on-year, that you are improving the relevant knowledge and skills in your area of subject expertise and in your teaching or training. In this sense CPD is personalised and any activities that are undertaken for the purposes of keeping up to date with the latest developments in a subject area and keeping abreast of changes in teaching methods will count as meaningful professional development, as long as these questions can be answered:

- what professional development activities have you undertaken this year?
- have you reflected on the learning you have gained from these activities?
- have the activities and the reflection made a difference to how you teach or train?
- can you show evidence of what the difference is and the impact it has made to learners, colleagues or the organisation in which you work?

Your record of CPD for any one year needs to show that as a self-regulating professional you can demonstrate reflection, improvement and positive impact and these will all be personal to you and the context in which you practise as a teacher and trainer.



Working together on CPD

How much CPD should I show as evidence?

For the maximum impact on practice IfL believes that the minimum requirement of 30 hours per year for full-time teachers and trainers (and a pro-rata equivalent for those who work part-time, with a minimum number of 6 hours) should be just that – a minimum number of hours*. We have evidence from research that many teachers and trainers who work in this sector are doing more than 30 hours development but this is not always reflected on or formally recorded.

The guide below is just a rough calculation that might help if you have time out during the year, change your teaching hours or if teaching/training is just part of your role in an organisation.

Average teaching hours per week	CPD hours
0-4	6
5-8	10
9-12	14
13-16	18
17-20	22
21-23	26
24+	30

Your CPD should consist of activities that are the most relevant to your development plan and could range from the formal such as workshops, conferences, courses or programmes to the informal, self-directed kind such as reading journal articles or reviewing websites.

The key thing to remember is that this is not just about completing a list of activities undertaken during the year that add up to 6 or 12 or 30 hours. The time spent can be meaningless unless it makes a difference.

For example, attendance at a half day conference or workshop which gives updates on planned curriculum changes to a subject area may well involve 3 hours or more listening, note-taking and discussion.

If on return, full of ideas for changing how you will deliver a new curriculum, you put the discussion and notes into practice and then measure the 'so what' factor by analysing:

- what has been changed
- what feedback there was
- what difference it has made to your teaching or training.

This could result in many more than 3 hours. The time spent preparing and reflecting on the activity is vital for professional development to make an impact and counts as CPD.

It will be your professional judgement that will determine the hours spent on each activity and the total for the year.

*The Further Education Teachers' Continuing Professional Development & Registration (England) Regulations 2007 [SI 2007 No.2116]; and The Further Education Teachers' Qualifications (England) Regulations 2007 [SI 2007 No.2264].

Deciding upon suitable CPD activities

The personalised approach to CPD as outlined in these guidelines will enhance your professionalism as you use your judgement and expertise to establish meaningful, effective and leading edge practice.

The type and nature of activities through which you can improve and broaden your knowledge and skills in your subject specialism, in teaching, and in the context in which you work, are limitless. The following examples are offered only as suggestions for some of the activities through which you can develop your professionalism. This list is by no means exhaustive and will be updated as we find examples from you of creative and exciting practice across the sector.

We will also provide you with a comprehensive list of links and references to supporting CPD materials, for example, see the Excellence Gateway (www.excellence.qia.org.uk) as a key source of information about practice and professional development programmes and support for teachers and trainers. Also, do use the standards for teachers and trainers developed by LLUK to help plan your CPD.



Members discussing activities

If updating your teaching and learning skills why not try

- peer coaching (coaching others and being coached in your subject or vocational area)
- subject learning coach or advanced learning coach training
- mentoring new colleagues
- peer review
- peer observation
- work shadowing
- team-teaching
- leading team/department self-assessment
- carrying out and disseminating action research
- designing innovative feedback mechanisms (learners and peers)
- chairing team meetings
- constructing professional dialogue/learning conversation opportunities – for more ideas visit www.gtce.org.uk
- becoming an eCPD adviser or e-guide
- being an active member of a committee, board, or steering groups related to teaching and/or your subject area
- peer visits to community organisations/partners
- curriculum design/ development/validation
- reading and reviewing books or journal articles
- updating knowledge through the internet/ TV (including teachers' TV)/other media and reviewing these with a group of professional colleagues
- sharing idea and resources with other teachers and trainers through REfLECT.

If updating your subject specialism why not try

- gaining qualifications in Skills for Life (<http://excellence.qia.org.uk>) (literacy, numeracy, ESOL), either as a specialist Skills for Life, or as a non-Skills for Life specialist to train in supporting and embedding Skills for Life.
- gaining further qualifications in your subject or industrial expertise through an accredited courses
- industrial updating through visits, placements, secondments or shadowing
- being a member of a special interest group or another professional body
- taking on examiner/verifier/assessor responsibilities
- attending briefings by awarding bodies and disseminate to colleagues
- giving a presentation at a conference in your subject area
- supervising research
- subject learning coaching training
- leading project development in your subject area
- writing reports/papers to inform your colleagues
- planning or running a staff development activity or event
- organising trips/ residentials /work placements
- reading the latest journal articles in your subject
- reviewing books or articles for colleagues
- updating knowledge through the internet/ TV/CD/other media
- public service/voluntary work
- networking with other subject specialists through REFLECT.

If you want to update yourself on national policy initiatives and the wider context in which you work why not try:

- searching the web for updates and disseminating to colleagues
- being an IfL Connection (contact connections@ifl.ac.uk) or a union learning representative
- programmes on teaching for new curricula and qualifications such as 14-19 Diplomas and integrating skills for life in vocational programmes
- reading and disseminating information on new policies/initiatives, for example on economic regeneration
- refreshing equality and diversity training
- leading a team in preparation for inspection
- ICT/e-learning courses for skills updating.

Your organisation will share information with you and update you on a variety of administrative matters or new systems. This is, of course, important for your practice, however, what you need to record with your professional body are the hours that you have spent on developing your practice as a teacher or trainer, together with a reflection on impact for yourself, your learners and the context in which you work.



Sharing CPD with others

What will help me identify my professional development needs?

The IfL model of dual professionalism can be a starting point for your reflection on priorities for your CPD. Consider the two parts of your professional identity:

- your subject specialism
- your teaching

and reflect on any external and internal drivers that might determine your focus for development activities. Both parts of your professional practice are equally important, but the balance of the activities you undertake

will inevitably be decided by a consideration of the context in which you work and your employer and learners' needs.

In any one year, particular drivers in each part of the model will highlight important areas of development for you to consider and, although a balance of CPD activities is desirable, you need to give a rationale for your choice of the balance of CPD activities. Interrogating the model will help you to plan your professional development activities, although within the year your priorities might change and your plan can be amended accordingly.

What drives CPD?

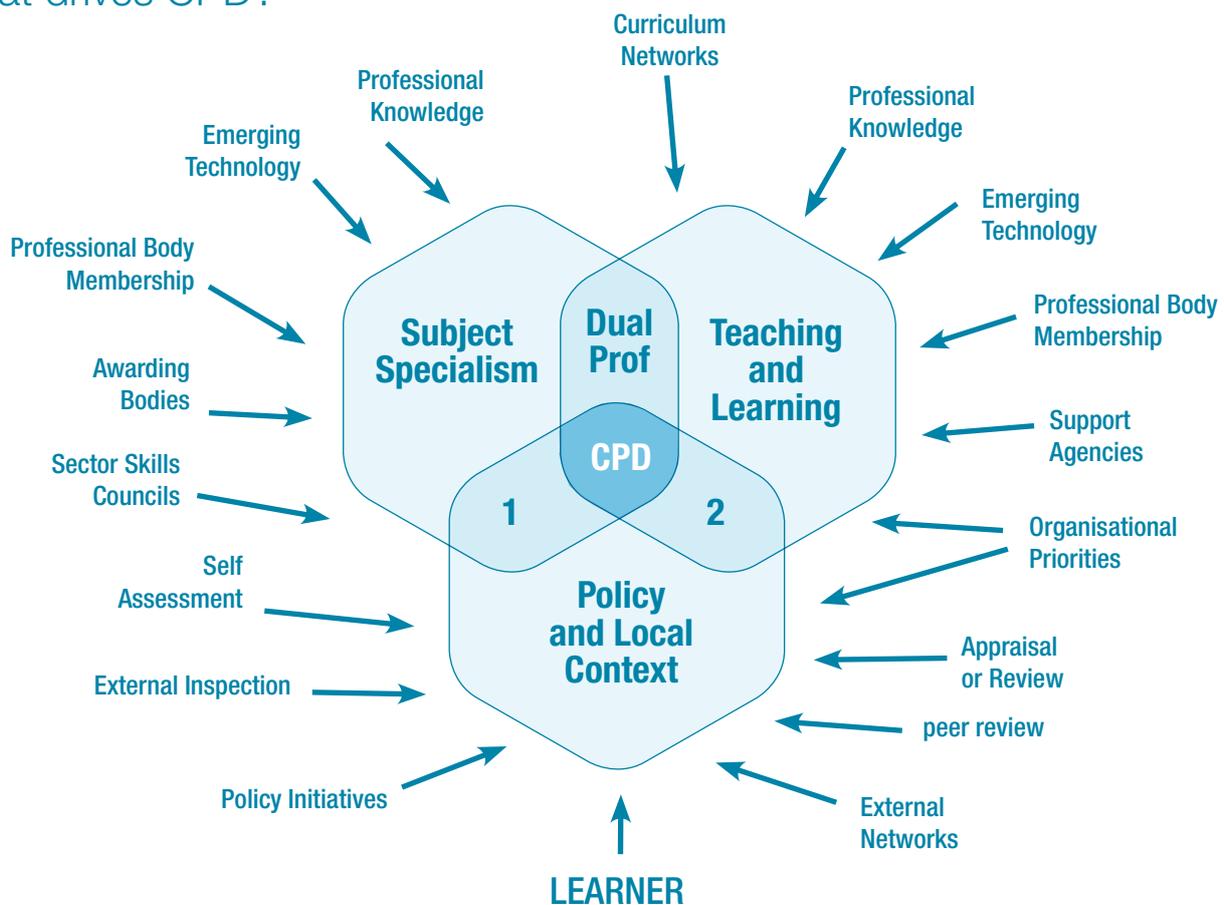


Figure 1

Dual professionalism and its impact on the model for continuing professional development: 1 relates to CPD arising out of subject specialism, 2 relates to CPD arising from teaching, and 1 and 2 both relate to the context in which you work.

How do I begin planning my professional development?

This series of 6 steps (figure 2) will help you to track professional development as it takes you through the reflective practice cycle from planning to impact assessment.

As with any experiential learning cycle, your learning and development will not always follow these steps neatly and in sequence. It is quite appropriate that you address a particular stage of this process when you see it as relevant and timely to your own developmental journey. But at the outset, particularly if you are not experienced at planning CPD, a systematic approach helps.

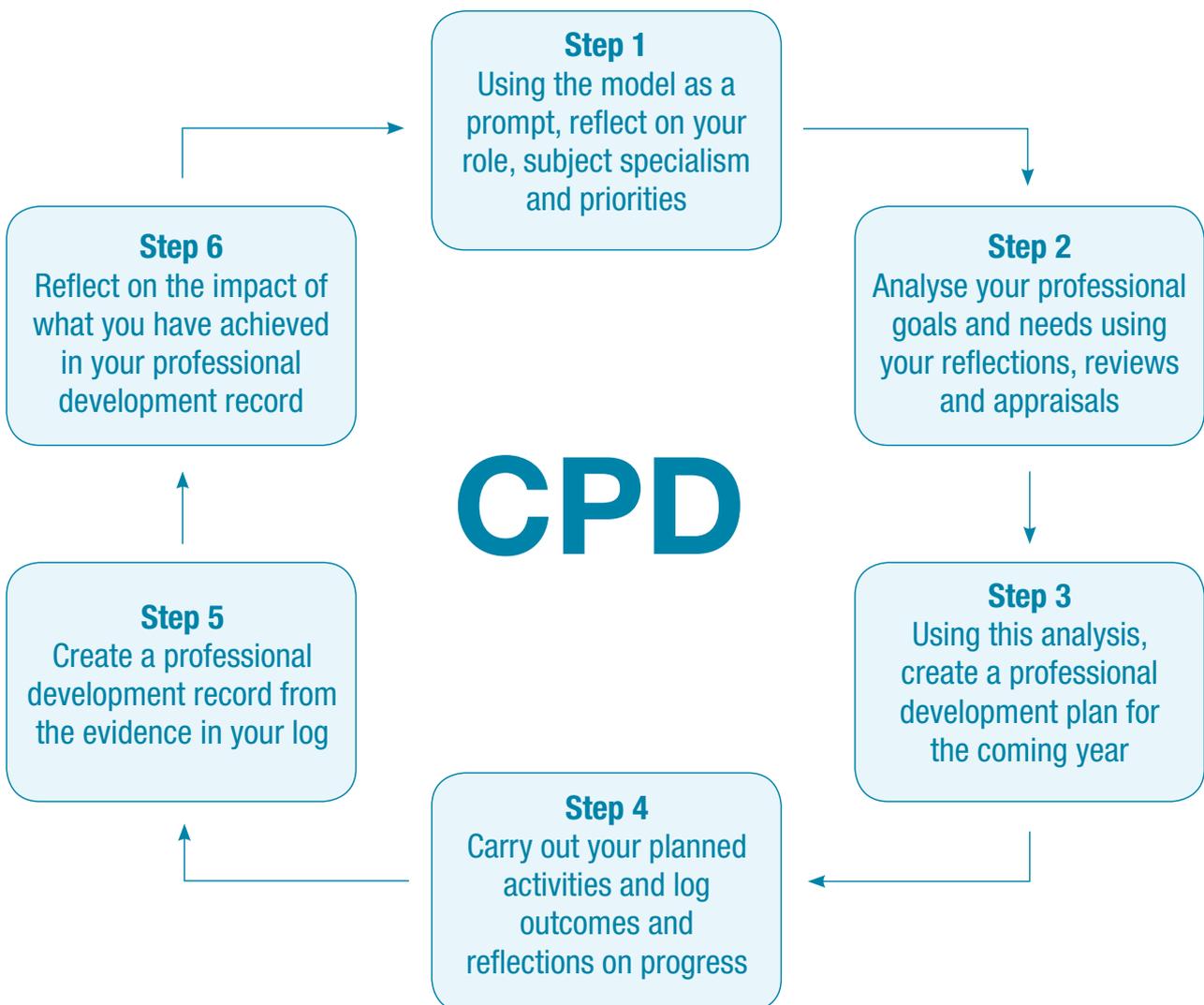


Figure 2

The professional development cycle incorporating reflective practice.

The 6 step approach to reflecting on your CPD:

Step 1 - contextual analysis:

If you are a new teacher or trainer (from September 2007) your priority is to become qualified and gain QTLS or ATLS. If you are already qualified you will need to begin reflection on the relationship between LLUK standards for teachers and the development of your professional practice (visit www.lluk.org for further details). Use the model of dual professionalism and think about the context in which you work, what the key priorities are for keeping up to date in your subject area and in your approaches to teaching and training.

Step 2 – needs and goals analysis:

Analyse your priority areas using appropriate forms of evidence, such as: learner feedback, impact evaluation, employer appraisals and teaching observations. Also make a critical self-assessment of your needs and goals for the coming year that will address identified areas for development.

Step 3 - individual development plan:

Using the evidence from this self-assessment, identify professional development activities that you think will address your needs thinking carefully about the type of activity as well as the focus or topics that are most likely to be effective for you. Create a professional development plan giving:

- a brief rationale for each activity,
- a time-line for achievement,
- outcomes and
- what you think will be the measures of success.

Step 4 – professional development log:

Carry out the activities identified in your plan, keep an account of the activities you complete with dates and some indication of time spent together with your reflections on progress and the difference the activities are making to you, colleagues and learners.

Step 5 – professional development record:

You will probably accumulate many more hours than the 30 (or pro-rata) that are required but towards the end of the cycle put together the most significant activities that have made the most impact on your practice in a record of professional development. This will evidence that you have completed the required number of hours of CPD for your teaching or training role and crucially will also show the impact of what you have achieved.

Step 6 – reflection on practice and impact analysis:

Reflect on the impact on your professional practice, and on your colleagues and learners, of each aspect of CPD you have undertaken. This will be one of the prompts for the next cycle and will also be an integral part of your learning log for the current year.



Reflecting on CPD

How do I measure the impact of my professional development?

Effective evaluation of the impact of what you have done is straightforward – you need to establish what you want to achieve at the outset of the professional development activity and then measure how far you have done this.

So in your planning stage you need to establish:

- what kind of difference do I want to make and to whom?
- by when?
- what do I think the picture, evidence and data is at the outset?
- what picture and evidence do I want to achieve?

Then in conclusion evaluate the difference you have achieved.

The evaluation measures ‘from what... to what...to so what’

Starting point statement	Impact statement
current practice/situation	changed practice/situation
current data/evidence	new data/evidence
type of measure used	changed measure proposed

You need to conclude the evaluation process with the ‘so what’ question. What difference have your professional development activities made on practice and learners.

However careful you are in the initial stages, things don’t always go to plan. Do reflect on the unintended or surprising outcomes in your evaluation stage as this can provide evidence of deep learning and prove to be a spur to more critical thinking and further action. Think about what you would have done differently and what you would change if you were to undertake the activity again.

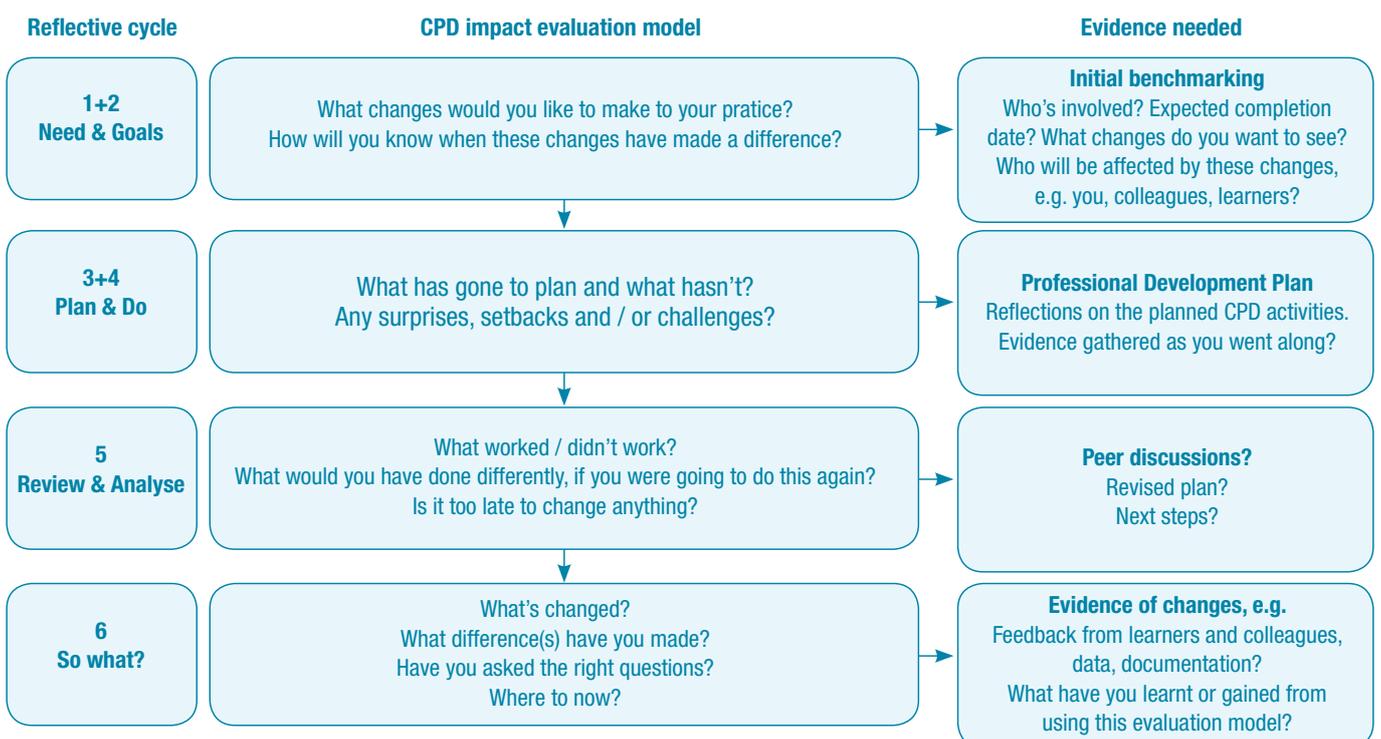


Figure 3 CPD impact evaluation model

How do I evidence reflection?

Thinking about your professional development is one thing, critical reflective practice is another and is more complex.

Reflection is about questioning the 'givens', assumptions and sometimes uncertainties of an action; critical thinking is linked with problem-solving and working towards a solution. Try to reflect through different critical lenses when you are planning or evaluating CPD. Think about the possible or actual outcomes:

- from your own perspective
- as viewed by your colleagues
- from the perspective of your learners
- from a theoretical point of view.

For added rigour, reflect on the outcomes of an activity with a colleague or group of colleagues and ask them to act as critical friends; this kind of learning conversation (even if virtual) can be powerful and support your developmental process.

How can I record my CPD?

We offer an online CPD tool, REfLECT, which you can use to help you to;

- record thoughts and activities, keeping a log over the year
- share your CPD with colleagues, peers or managers for their review and comment
- plan development activities in a structured way so that you think about next steps and resources
- count CPD hours logged giving you an updated tally of your professional development.

REfLECT is a personal learning space secure and private to you; it will enable your CPD record to be personalised and then shared with different audiences, your employer, another professional body, your colleagues. Sharing your plans and thoughts with others is evidence of peer discussion and will count as a development activity if it has an impact on your practice.

You can choose any method to plan and record your CPD and your employer may have a preferred system that you can use. For more details on REfLECT see our website (www.ifl.ac.uk), log on to the members area and click on the Reflect link.

When do I tell the IfL that I have completed my CPD record?

The deadline for you to tell us that you have completed the required number of hours each year is the 31 August. There will be a form on our website from the 1 June so that you can self-declare completion.

You will not have to do anything else unless your CPD record is selected as part of our sampling and auditing process. If you are selected, we will contact you in September and ask to see your record for analysis. The results of the sample will form part of our annual report on CPD and will also produce case studies and examples of creative and effective activities which will help all members in planning and evaluating professional development.



The opening page of REfLECT

Finally – work with others

For further information on CPD, the CPD self-declaration process and relevant FAQs visit the IfL website: www.ifl.ac.uk

IfL welcomes your views, questions and comments on professional development throughout the year, contact us at cpd@ifl.ac.uk.

CPD team
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