FAQs

CII Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Scheme

CII

FAQs – page listing

FAQs

Q1. Who is required to comply with the CII Continuing Professional Development (CPD) scheme?

All CII qualified members, whether based in the UK or outside the UK, must comply with the CII CPD scheme.

Q2. What are the CII's CPD requirements and to whom do they apply?

All CII qualified members, whether based in the UK or outside the UK, will need to complete a minimum of 35 hours' compulsory CPD in a 12 month period (**of which at least 21 hours must be structured CPD** – see Q4). This figure of 35 hours is, however, only the *minimum* required by the CII; in practice, the figure required may exceed this, as the actual requirement will be determined by an individual's development needs in any 12-month period.

It is important to note that this CPD requirement is not generally an additional requirement to development activity ordinarily undertaken in the course of an individual's employment, but incorporates this.

Q3. How was the figure of 35 hours CPD obtained?

In common with other professional bodies we believe it is important to set a minimum number of hours of CPD per year as a benchmark for qualified members. Eligibility for and use of qualification designations is not simply an indicator of study completed. It is an indication to the public that a member of a profession adheres to a Code of Ethics and keeps their professional knowledge current. CPD provides a framework for ensuring knowledge is kept up-to-date.

The table opposite provides a comparison of our minimum CPD requirement with those of a selection of other professional bodies. The requirement for 35 hours or more is common. Additionally, the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) also set 35 hours of CPD as the minimum annual requirement for retail investment advisers in the UK from 2013. For these reasons, the CII decided to adopt this common sense standard for all its member qualification holders as part of the CPD scheme rules.

Professional Body	CPD annual requirement
Association of Chartered Certified Accountants	40 units (where 1 unit = 1 hour of development)
Institute of Directors	c. 30 hours
Chartered Institute of Taxation	90 hours
Chartered Institute of Bankers in Scotland	35 hours
The Chartered Institute for Securities & Investment	35 hours
Chartered Institute of Marketing	35 hours
Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors	20 hours minimum recommended

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Q4. What is meant by structured and unstructured CPD?

To qualify, all CPD activity must address an individual's personal development needs. It is up to the individual member to determine what these are. The process by which a development need is met involves four stages:

- Identifying learning and development needs and planning activities to address them
- Carrying out activities to meet these needs
- Recording the time spent for each activity and maintaining a verifiable audit trail of these activities
- A 'reflective' statement of the outcomes achieved (answering questions like: "Did the activity meet my learning needs? How has the activity benefitted me professionally?") and including information like how you felt about the activity and the effectiveness of the learning and learning method.

Structured CPD is the undertaking of any formal learning activity designed to meet a specific development need (this is what an individual is expected to know, understand or do as a result of his or her learning). An example would be attending a technical lecture to understand the implications of the Bribery Act.

Structured learning activities include but are not limited to:

- studying for and sitting an examination
- participating in seminars (web based or in person)
- lectures
- conferences
- workshops
- courses and
- completing appropriate e-learning.

For a minority of activity, it might also include educational reading, where high quality reading material has been produced to meet the required learning objective.

Unstructured CPD is any activity an individual considers has met a **learning objective,** but has not been specially undertaken for this purpose.

This might include reading a trade publication which happens to include a technical article on a topic for which they have a development need.

Q5. What is meant by "designed to meet specific learning objectives"?

Learning objectives are what a learner can be expected to know, understand or do in their day-to-day job or a job to which someone aspires as a result of a process of learning. A CPD activity that is designed to meet specific learning objectives should deliver appropriate content to achieve the desired objectives. Typically, the learning objectives for the activity will be stated at the outset and at the end of the activity, thereby enabling the learner to review whether this activity has indeed met the learning objectives.

Q6. Is there a minimum amount of time I need to spend on any individual CPD activity?

The FCA expects individuals to spend at least 30 minutes on any individual CPD activity. The CII adopts this common sense standard for all its member qualification holders as part of the CPD scheme rules (a batch of different activities of less than 30 minutes each undertaken to meet a specific development need can be combined and recorded together – please note it is **not** permissible for structured and unstructured activities to be combined together).

Q7. I am completing a structured learning activity which indicates the time it should take to complete, e.g. 30 minutes. If it takes me either less or more time than this, what do I record, the actual time taken or the indicated time?

The starting point is to consider whether the activity has actually met your identified learning need. If it hasn't, further learning activity may be required.

In considering the time shown in respect of the CPD activity, this is only an indication or guide, as in practice the time taken to complete this will vary from individual to individual according to factors such as their abilities and existing knowledge levels.

You should, therefore, record the time that it took you to complete the activity. Due to the requirement that recorded activities must have a minimum duration of 30 minutes, only those which meet this requirement should be recorded. Different activities, of less than 30 minutes each, undertaken to meet a specific development need can be combined and recorded together.

Please note it is **not** permissible for structured and unstructured activities to be combined together.

Q8. How do I calculate the amount of CPD hours spent on an activity?

You should only count the actual time spent on the learning activity, e.g. if you attend a conference you should count only that time spent in activity that addresses identified development needs. You should always exclude the time taken for tea/coffee breaks and lunch.

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Q9. I work part time. Does this mean I still have to complete the full 35-hour CPD requirement?

Yes. The requirement to maintain your knowledge and, in turn, your competence to undertake your role requires the completion of a minimum of 35 hours CPD, regardless of the total number of hours you work.

Q10. If I take a career break (e.g. maternity leave or long-term sickness), do I still have to complete the 35 hour requirement?

The CPD requirements will be suspended for the duration of your career break. If your CPD record is selected for validation purposes, we will ask you to provide evidence confirming your break in work.

Q11. When should I start creating a CPD log?

The requirement for undertaking CPD and keeping a record starts when a member becomes qualified. However, we recognise that the timing of members' annual CPD programmes may reflect other factors, such as the annual performance reviews or the CPD requirements of other professional bodies to which they belong. In these circumstances we may, at the CII's discretion, recognise any such requirements.

Q12. Should I submit my record to the CII automatically at the end of a 12-month period?

No. You only need to submit your record if the CII requests to see it. Typically we will randomly sample about 10% of members' records each year to check these have been fully and correctly completed.

Q13. Do I need to convert CPD credit-based records from previous years into hours?

No. If your CPD record is selected for review, you will only need to provide the record for the last 12 months and therefore credit based records will not be required for CPD compliance.

Q14. If my CPD record is selected for review by the CII what will I need to provide?

You will need to provide your CPD record showing:

a. your learning and development needs

b. the activities you have undertaken

c. whether the activity was structured or unstructured

d. the time you have recorded against each activity

e. a reflection of the outcomes achieved against each activity.

It is recommended that you keep any evidence of the activity you have completed, for example, a certificate of attendance, as we may ask to see this if your record is selected for review. See Q34 for suggestions regarding suitable evidence for different types of CPD activity.

Q15. Am I able to retrospectively change items from structured to unstructured where I have incorrectly recorded them?

Yes, provided you do this before submitting your record to the CII, if requested.

Q16. Can I change an activity at the end of the year from structured to unstructured and record my 14 hours of required unstructured activity if I am top-heavy on structured activity?

There is no need to do this. Our requirement is for 35 hours of activity with a *minimum* of 21 hours of structured activity. There is no restriction on the amount of structured activity and, as such the entire 35 hours can be comprised of structured activity if that is what you have undertaken.

Q17. How do I know what development activity I should carry out?

Responsibility lies with each member individually as only they will know what development activity is required. In most cases, this will be agreed in conjunction with your employer, who will decide or advise what is relevant for your role and personal circumstances. That said, the CII provides guidance for members via such services as the Insurance Competency Framework (www.cii.co.uk/competency).

Q18. If I study for an exam which recommends for example 60 hours of study, can I count this as a full year's worth of CPD hours?

In principle, yes. However, in practice it is unlikely that a single exam subject will serve to address all your annual development needs. For this reason, during the course of any 12-month period, we encourage members to carry out a variety of CPD activities to help them keep their knowledge up-to-date. There is no maximum to the amount of CPD the member can carry out.

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Q19. Does the CII provide an online recording tool for my CPD?

Yes. We provide a free, simple-to-use online recording tool which you may use to plan and record your hours-based CPD.

You will need to enter details of all CPD planned or undertaken, including that completed through the CII, as this is not automatically recorded. The only exception being activity completed on the CII Assess systems (see Q20). We are working on including functionality that will automatically record details of your attendance on any CII Face-to-Face Training courses, CII/PFS events, etc. and will communicate details once this is live.

Q20. Do I have to use the CII CPD recording tool?

No. You can use any method to record your CPD, but it must provide all the required information (full guidance is available at www.cii.co.uk/cpd).

For example, if you are a Broker Assess, Insurance Assess, Financial Assess or Mortgage Assess user or are a CPD Essentials user (the CII's online learning and compliance systems), any CPD you undertake using this will be automatically recorded (you will still need to enter your development needs and reflective statements). You will also be able to enter details of other CPD activity undertaken outside this system.

Please note where your record is requested by the CII you will need to supply it in full as the CII cannot access these records.

If you record CPD via your employer, you can use this as your CPD record. You just need to maintain a record detailing all the required information and provide it on request by the CII.

Q21. How can I synchronise my CPD records across the various CII CPD online tools?

If you currently hold CPD records across more than one of the CII's CPD systems: the free planning and recording tool, CPD Essentials or Assess you can now combine this into one single record.

There are two main options available to you:
1. Create a combined record within the free CII CPD planning and recording tool. To do so, log in to CPD Essentials or Assess and select 'Synchronise My CPD'.

2. Alternatively, you can create a combined record by exporting and then importing your records into any one of the three designated systems: the free planning and recording tool, CPD Essentials or Assess. To do this, log-in to the system that you want to export your records from. Then go into 'View CPD log' and click on the 'Export' button where you will see a message asking you to confirm which year's records you wish to export, and follow the onscreen instructions.

   Once your record has been exported and saved, log in to the system you wish to import to. Then go into 'View CPD log' and click on the 'Import' button. Select your file from the saved location and click the import button once more. Your imported record will appear in your CPD log.

Please note that it is not possible to export and import records for multiple years simultaneously, they must be done one year at a time.

Q22. How do I log into the CII CPD app?

Log in using either your CII PIN or registered email address as your username. Your password must be the same as you use to log in to the CII website.

There is no forgotten username/password link via the app. This is available on the CII CPD planning and recording tool at www.cii.co.uk/cpd

Resetting passwords, etc is like the normal CII/PFS website www.cii.co.uk/login/forgottenpassword

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Q23. What are the key features of the CII CPD app?

The key features of the app are:
- Ability to view CPD record
- Ability to add CPD activities
- Ability to view, amend and update CPD activities
- Ability to view a breakdown of your CPD activities by unstructured and structured
- Ability to upload photos as evidence of your CPD activities
- Automatic synching with CPD planning and recording tool
- You are able to view your current CPD year's records in the app; for previous years you will need to log into the CII CPD planning and recording tool at www.cii.co.uk/cpd
- Submission of your online CPD record needs to be actioned via the CII's CPD planning and recording tool at www.cii.co.uk/cpd. The app does not contain this functionality.

Q24. Are there any CII CPD app usability issues that I should be aware of?

If you wish to change your password or the CPD year start date this needs to be done via the CII CPD planning and recording tool at www.cii.co.uk/cpd, as the app does not contain this functionality.

When adding an attachment on the app as evidence of CPD activity, these need to take the form of photos. Additionally, if you have added attachments in an alternative format (i.e. Word, PDF etc) via the CII online planning and recording tool you will not be able to open/view these attachments via the app, but will be able to see where an attachment exists.

Should you amend anything in your record via the online planning and recording tool and are simultaneously logged into the app, you will need to select 'sync now' under the 'sync status' area for these activities to appear in the app. Alternatively, these will be automatically synched the next time that you log back in to the app. Activities amended/ added in the app will only appear in the online tool once the user refreshes the page or logs out and then logs back in again.

Users of the app are assumed to be familiar with the CPD guidance document and FAQs and as such these aren't accessible via the app.

Q25. Who should I contact for any technical queries concerning the CII CPD app?

As with more general CPD enquiries these should be referred to CII Customer Service on +44 (0)20 8989 8464.

Q26. Does the online tool show how many hours I need to do to finish my CPD record?

Yes. The online recording tool will show how many hours you have completed and how many you still need to complete.

Q27. Are there any minimum system requirements for using the CPD online tool?

Yes, your PC should meet all the below minimum requirements. If you experience technical issues please make sure you meet the below requirements before contacting the CII for further assistance:

Minimum system requirements	
Web browser	Windows Internet Explorer versions supported by Microsoft
	Latest major versions of Chrome, Safari and Firefox
Browser plug-ins	Adobe Flash Player 6 or later (for some content)
	Adobe Reader 6 or later (for some content)
	Java 1.4.2 or later (for some content)
Browser settings	Cookies: Enabled
	JavaScript: Enable
Internet connection	Broadband
Screen resolution	1024 x 768 or higher

Q28. The date format on my CPD log isn't set to a UK format (day, month, year). Can I change this?

We are aware that this issue occurs if you are using Google Chrome as your web browser. You are able to change the date format within the settings functionality in Chrome. For instructions on how to change this please refer to the 'User guide', which is available on the post log-in CPD home page under 'How to use the CPD Tool'.

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Q29. If I am selected to submit my CPD record, which 12-month period do I need to provide?

You should supply your most recent annual record of CPD activity. For example, if we asked you to provide us with your record in February 2015 and your last completed plan was for the period 01 January 2014 to 31 December 2014, you should send us this record. Typically, where there is a gap of greater than one month since your last record was completed, we may also ask you to provide some more recent evidence of your CPD activity.

Q30. Does sitting an exam, test or assessment count towards my CPD?

Yes. Completion of an exam, test or assessment is eligible for CPD. See Q34 for details of suitable CPD activities.

Q31. Does attendance at Local Institute council meetings still count towards my CPD?

Yes providing they meet identified learning need(s). Please see Q34 suitable CPD activities.

Q32. Does exam invigilation count towards my CPD?

No, as there are no circumstances in which a learning outcome would be attached to the invigilation of candidates sitting their exams.

Q33. Does the online recording tool automatically record my attendance at Local Institute events?

No, not at present. We are investigating different options that would cater for this requirement and will communicate details once a decision has been reached.

Q34. What is the list of suitable CPD activities?

The list of suitable CPD activities is constantly being refined and updated to reflect evolving development activity. For the most current listing of suitable CPD activities please go to www.cii.co.uk/cpd

Suitable CPD activities

Development activity	Definition	Types of evidence you should look to keep as proof of completion*	Typically structured or unstructured?
Training courses and Workshops	An interactive, participative course provided by your employer or by an external third party which sets clear objectives and learning outcomes.	• Attendance certificate or written/email confirmation of attendance from the training provider or from your employer • Course/workshop outline or agenda which clearly shows what was covered during the session and the learning objectives • Any presentation slides sent to you • Any reflections on the outcome of the course/workshop.	**Structured** This involves activity which: • Has stated learning objectives, activity designed to address these; and some form of assessment or reflection; and • Addresses an identified learning need.
Conferences, seminars and webinars	An informative presentation, or series of presentations, on topics provided by internal or external subject experts.	• Attendance certificate, conference badge or some other written/email confirmation of attendance from event provider where possible • Event agenda which clearly shows what was covered during the session(s) and learning objectives (if applicable) • Any reflections on the outcome of the conference/seminar.	**Structured** This involves activity which: • Has stated learning objectives, activity designed to address these; and some form of assessment or reflection; and • Addresses an identified learning need.
Examination and tests	Any one examination, test or assessment offered by an examining body which is business related, including all related study and time spent in an examination sitting.	• Copy of qualification certificate or exam/test/assessment entry confirmation (if not CII) • Copy of exam /test/assessment syllabus (if not CII) • Information received from your employer (if applicable).	**Structured** This involves activity which: • Has stated learning objectives, activity designed to address these; and some form of assessment or reflection; and • Addresses an identified learning need.
Formal discussions/ meetings	Discussions facilitated by a third party (internal or external). Participation may include focus groups, research initiatives, committees or technical events. Excludes attendance at social events and client sales/ promotional meetings.	• Meeting agenda or any written details of the purpose of the discussion • Official minutes of the meeting/discussion or written confirmation of your participation by the organisers • Written confirmation of your participation by the organisers (if not CII/PFS) • Copies of research results.	**Normally unstructured** This involves activity which does not have stated learning objectives, and supporting activity and assessments designed to reinforce these. Instead these typically cover identified learning points incidentally.

*Please note: if you are selected to have your CPD record audited it is not a requirement for you to send in supporting evidence at the point of audit. However, you should keep evidence of what you have done and be able to produce it if requested to do so in support of your CPD record.

Suitable CPD activities

Development activity	Definition	Types of evidence you should look to keep as proof of completion*	Typically structured or unstructured?
On-the-job training	Interactive and participative discussion and instruction by a subject expert.	• Written confirmation from your employer that training has taken place • Broad outline of what has been covered • Any reflections on the outcome of the training.	**Structured** This involves activity which: • Has stated learning objectives, activity designed to address these; and some form of assessment or reflection; and • Addresses an identified learning need.
Internal training	Training which sets clear objectives and learning outcomes and include assessment measures, for example, an internal course and test or exam (Includes time spent completing test or exam).	• Written confirmation from your employer that training has taken place • Copies of the course outline, learning objectives and learning outcomes • Any reflections on the outcome of the training.	**Structured** This involves activity which: • Has stated learning objectives, activity designed to address these; and some form of assessment or reflection; and • Addresses an identified learning need.
Training for others	Providing interactive and participative discussion, lectures, tutoring and/or instruction for others which involves setting clear objectives and learning outcomes.	• Written confirmation from the training organisers or copies of marketing literature for the course showing you as the trainer • Copies of the course outline, learning objectives and learning outcomes • Any reflections on the outcomes of your training work in relation to your learning and development needs.	**Structured** The preparation for the training would be structured. e.g. updating your knowledge on the subjects you are training in; attending courses on developing training skills. The delivery of the training would be **unstructured** This involves activity which does not have stated learning objectives, and supporting activity and assessments designed to reinforce these. Instead these typically cover identified learning points incidentally.
Self-managed learning	Personal learning on one subject which is formally assessed by a third party subject expert, e.g. distance learning where assignments are sent to tutors for marking.	• Confirmation of enrolment (if applicable) • Course outline showing course content, learning objectives and learning outcomes • Copies of tutor marked assignments • Any reflections on the outcome of the learning.	**Structured** This involves activity which: • Has stated learning objectives, activity designed to address these; and some form of assessment or reflection; and • Addresses an identified learning need.

*Please note: if you are selected to have your CPD record audited it is not a requirement for you to send in supporting evidence at the point of audit. However, you should keep evidence of what you have done and be able to produce it if requested to do so in support of your CPD record.

Suitable CPD activities

Development activity	Definition	Types of evidence you should look to keep as proof of completion*	Typically structured or unstructured?
Elearning	Online packages which set clear objectives and learning outcomes and include assessment measures or reflection on learning (Includes time spent completing assessments).	• Confirmation of the elearning completed (these can be screen printouts).	**Structured** This involves activity which: • Has stated learning objectives, activity designed to address these; and some form of assessment or reflection; and • Addresses an identified learning need.
Examination setting, marking and moderation	Setting and moderating any examination offered by an examining body which is business related.	• Details of the examinations you have worked on (e.g. exam name, awarding body and content outline) • Written confirmation from the relevant awarding body of your participation (if not CII) • Any reflections on the outcomes of your examining work in relation to your learning and development needs.	The examination setting and marking would be **structured**, e.g. updating your subject knowledge to inform your examining work. The moderation work would be typically **unstructured** This involves activity which does not have stated learning objectives, and supporting activity and assessments designed to reinforce these. Instead these typically cover identified learning points incidentally.
Technical authorship	Writing articles, reports, books, instruction manuals, etc which are published for use by others.	• Copies of the items you've written and details of the publications they appeared in or who they were distributed to • If you have written a book please provide full details of the publication (e.g. title, publisher, year of publication and ISBN number if applicable).	**Structured** This involves activity which: • Has stated learning objectives activity designed to address these; and some form of assessment or reflection; and • Addresses an identified learning need.
Reading and watching	Technical and trade publications, fact files, bulletins/regular updates, manuals, professional briefs, journals, financial or trade press, podcasts and relevant discussions via social media, e.g. LinkedIn Use of video (DVDs, You Tube, websites, etc), TV, audio and other media.	This category does not require evidence unless you wish to claim it as structured CPD activity (see notes in next column). In which case, please provide details of the learning objectives or research reasons for undertaking this reading or use of other media.	**Structured** if your reading has been done with a specific purpose in mind, e.g. to meet a specified learning and development need or because you are researching a topic for a work-based project and the material used has been produced to meet a specific learning objective. **Unstructured** if the purpose is to keep up-to-date with what is happening in the industry at a general level or the material used has not been produced to meet a specific learning objective.

*Please note: if you are selected to have your CPD record audited it is not a requirement for you to send in supporting evidence at the point of audit. However, you should keep evidence of what you have done and be able to produce it if requested to do so in support of your CPD record.

Suitable CPD activities

Development activity	Definition	Types of evidence you should look to keep as proof of completion*	Typically structured or unstructured?
Mentoring/ Coaching/ Shadowing	Providing instruction, guidance and support.	• Written confirmation from an employer (if applicable) or the mentee • Any reflections on the outcomes of your mentoring work in relation to your learning and development needs.	The preparation for certain aspects of mentoring and coaching may be **structured**, e.g. attending a training course on developing mentoring skills. The actual mentoring or coaching is likely to be **unstructured** unless the mentor can identify specific learning they have had to undertake in their role. Where shadowing is specifically undertaken for learning purposes e.g. to understand the IT processing of an insurance policy, this would be structured.
Pro bono or voluntary work	Work undertaken (without payment) for the public good using your professional skills and knowledge. It can take different forms e.g. provision of advice, involvement in shaping policy, delivery of training, serving as a school governor or on the board of a charity, etc.	Written confirmation of your participation by the organisers (if not CII/PFS)	May be **structured** or **unstructured**. **Structured** where it is being undertaken specifically to address identified learning and development needs e.g. preparatory work to enhance technical knowledge where advice is being given or strategic leadership and management skills in the case of being a school governor.
Professional institute/PFS regional network or trade body work	Participation in meetings, focus groups, research initiatives, committees or technical events. Excludes attendance at social events.	• Written confirmation or your participation by the organisers (if not CII/PFS) • Copies of meeting agendas or meeting minutes. • Copies of research results.	May be **structured** or **unstructured** depending on the nature of your participation and the objectives of the work you have been involved in.
New product development	Developing new business products, systems or corporate strategy.	• Written confirmation from employer of your participation in projects • Documentary evidence of the development process and outcomes.	May be **structured** or **unstructured** depending on the nature of your participation and the objectives of the work you have been involved in.

*Please note: if you are selected to have your CPD record audited it is not a requirement for you to send in supporting evidence at the point of audit. However, you should keep evidence of what you have done and be able to produce it if requested to do so in support of your CPD record.