



# IMarEST Guide to Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

## What is Continuing Professional Development (CPD)?

CPD can be defined as the systematic maintenance, improvement and broadening of knowledge, understanding and skill, and the development of personal qualities necessary for the execution of professional duties throughout the individual's working life. Most people are undertaking professional development activity all the time and may not realise it.

Typical CPD activities include: attending in-house or external courses, work-based learning, distance learning programmes, self-directed private study, preparation and delivery of lectures and presentations, preparation of refereed papers, attendance at lectures, seminars or conferences, acting as a mentor, relevant voluntary work, learning a new computer application or learning a foreign language.

## CPD Requirements for Members and Registrants

The IMarEST recognises the importance of CPD and expects all of its Members to undertake appropriate CPD for their professional development. It is a requirement of the IMarEST Code of Conduct that every member develops and maintains their professional competence.

Members who are registered with the Engineering Council or Science Council are expected to keep their CPD up to date in order to maintain their registration.

- Read about the [Engineering Council policy on CPD](#).
- Read about the [Science Council policy on CPD](#).

It is not the Institutes policy to be prescriptive in what registered members are asked to do. The Institute believes registrants and, where appropriate, their employers are best placed to decide what CPD is appropriate to maintain the knowledge and skills required for their current and future roles.



Each year the Institute will contact a sample of members and ask them to submit their CPD for review by one of our Engineering or Science CPD Assessors. Therefore it is very important for all members to keep their CPD up to date and we have developed the Echo system to support that.

The Institute is committed to supporting registered members and has produced a number of tools to help them, such as [Echo](#), mentoring and specialist groups. The Institute expects registrants to be able to demonstrate, if requested, their commitment to CPD. Written evidence will be required at registration for EngTech, IEng and CEng.

## **CPD Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Why is Continuing Professional Development (CPD) so important?**

CPD is about staying up to date and competent in your field. Given the potential dangers of not staying up to date with the latest technologies, procedures and processes, being current in your job is crucial to your competence and helps fulfil your commitment to public safety. This competence will also lend you a competitive edge and mean that your employers, colleagues and the public will have greater confidence in you, affording you greater opportunities to progress your career. Keeping a CPD record with reflections on what you have learnt also demonstrates to your employers that you are committed to your profession which will also speed your progression.

All members of professional engineering, science or technology institutions have an obligation to undertake CPD, and to support the learning of others. This obligation underpins the value of Technician, Incorporated/Registered or Chartered statuses, as well as serving society and enabling it to have confidence in the engineering, science and technology professions.

### **What is CPD? What types of activities constitute CPD?**

CPD activity can take many different forms. It could be informal learning through working life and interaction with other people, or structured activities such as courses, distance learning programmes, private study, preparation of papers and presentations, mentoring, involvement in professional body activities, reading, watching IMarEST TV or volunteering. But really, any activity that you have found valuable in maintaining and enhancing your competence can be considered as contributing to your CPD."

### **Is CPD mandatory?**

Yes, anyone with a professional qualification (Technician, Incorporated/Registered or Chartered status) has made a commitment to engage in CPD and, as a member of a professional institute, this is also stated in your Code of Conduct.

Each year we will select a random sample of members who will be asked to supply their CPD for the year, which will be reviewed by our Assessors. Therefore it is important all members keep their CPD up to date.

### **Does this apply to retired people too?**

Maintenance of CPD is required for each member throughout their professional career but there is no requirement to engage in CPD once you are no longer professionally active within the industry. Likewise if there are other extenuating circumstances, such as a career break.

## How much CPD should I be doing?

CPD requirements from both the Engineering Council and Science Council will vary according to your discipline and what stage of your career you are in. We do not specify a minimum amount of time to be spent on CPD each year. Instead, we focus on what you have learnt from your CPD activity and how it specifically enhances your competence in your particular role. The most important part is the reflective analysis following the activity, where you explore what you have learnt or achieved and how it contributes to your learning plan (something you will have developed either independently or with your employer). This learning plan should be reviewed regularly following reflection and assessment of future needs.

- Read about the [Engineering Council policy on CPD](#).
- Read about the [Science Council policy on CPD](#).

## How can CPD be recorded?

We ask IMarEST members to use Echo to maintain and submit their CPD if requested. [Click here](#) to find out more about how to use Echo.