

STANDARDS AND CRITERIA FOR CPD ACTIVITIES

A FRAMEWORK FOR ACCREDITATION

JANUARY 2012

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Directors of Continuing Professional Development (DoCPD) of the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges (AoMRC) Committee comprises representatives from all the 20 Colleges and Faculties, the General Medical Council (GMC) and the Royal Society of Medicine (RSM). Since 2008 the DoCPD Committee has been reviewing Continuing Professional Development schemes to harmonise them across all Colleges and Faculties in preparation for the introduction of revalidation. A set of core guidelines for CPD schemes has been agreed and published.

1.2 Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is a continuing learning process, outside formal undergraduate and postgraduate training, which enables doctors to maintain and improve their performance across all areas of their practice through the development of knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours. It covers all learning activities, both formal and informal, by which doctors keep up to date. (GMC: Principles of Continuing Professional Development 2011¹). The CPD process is a major component of the medical appraisal system and hence of revalidation. CPD that is relevant to doctors' individual job plans should (in most cases) be anticipated and planned via a Personal Development Plan.

1.3 The majority of doctors will attend or participate in accredited CPD activities run by a variety of providers, although many individual and group CPD activities will be selected and adjudged appropriate by the doctor (and which judgement will be confirmed by the appraiser).

1.4 External accreditation of these activities will help doctors to recognise that the activities are likely to be of sufficient quality and free from bias or competing interest. The Academy is the National Accreditation Authority recognised by the EU, which sets out standards: DoCPD is a sub-committee of the Academy. The devolved accrediting bodies in the UK are the Medical Royal Colleges and Faculties, and the Royal Society of Medicine. In general, Colleges and Faculties should consider for accreditation those CPD activities that are relevant to doctors practising in their own specialty: a fee may be charged to providers.

1.5 **Reciprocity:** Because of the wide range and variety of medical practice it is recognised that doctors working in one specialty may find it helpful to undertake CPD activities that are more usually appropriate for a different specialty. To facilitate this, a CPD activity approved by one College or Faculty may be accepted as part of the CPD for a doctor from a different College or Faculty without the need for a second accreditation process. Reciprocity is not for the purpose of encouraging Colleges and Faculties to accredit activities in specialties that are not their own.

1.6 **Scope of Document:** Standards and Criteria are needed to assist the accreditation process. Issues which need consideration include: accreditation of individual activities from many providers; how doctors can tell whether the accredited activity is suitable for them; how appraisers can tell whether a doctor's attendance at an accredited activity supports the requirements of that doctor's personal development plan. Evidence of learning is also required to complete the information for appraisal.

¹ Definition to be finalised following GMC consultation.

2. ACCREDITATION - DEFINITION AND AIMS

2.1 The term accreditation is used only for the purposes of this document, and its use should not be confused with university/academic accreditation. Colleges and Faculties may use alternative terminology such as approval, recognition, acknowledgement of standards.

2.2 The accreditation process is based on the following aims, which are reflected in the standards and criteria:

- To ensure that the content of the event is relevant to the CPD of career grade doctors
- To increase the learning to be gained from CPD activities
- To minimise bias and conflicts of interest
- To encourage the appropriate evaluation of educational activities
- To maintain a published list of accredited activities to aid the completion of CPD portfolios
- To provide a transparent process open to scrutiny
- To provide a thorough but also administratively simple and flexible process.

3. ACCREDITATION STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

The standards and criteria that have been developed by DoCPD are set out below:

3.1 The *standards* are qualitative characteristics which define the evidence required from activity organisers and against which provision or performance can be evaluated.

3.2 Under each standard are a number of *criteria*. The criteria describe what is required from activity organisers to meet a *standard*.

Educational and Competence Standards

3.3 Target Audience

There should be a clearly defined target audience.

Criteria:

- The event should be appropriate for trained (career grade) doctors²
- The intended audience and content level must be clearly specified
- The target audience or subject matter of the activity falls within the remit of the accrediting body.

3.4 Learning aims

There should be clearly defined learning aim(s) which reflect the overall purpose of the activity.

Criteria:

- There should be a clear statement of what a participant is expected to learn and of how the learning is to be demonstrated
- The learning aims must be specifically defined to indicate what knowledge or skills the participants are expected to obtain as a result
- The learning aims should be measurable.

3.5 Programme content and structure

There should be a detailed statement outlining the content and structure of the programme.

The content of the event must be relevant to the CPD of career grade doctors.

² This would enable other health care professionals to be included if necessary

Criteria:

- All topics addressed should be listed together with any materials/products/ technologies to be used
- The activity should have a scientific or educational purpose only
- Educational content should aim to be authoritative, accurate, based on balanced evidence and free from unjustifiable claims or bias
- Clinical content must follow all appropriate patient consent and confidentiality policies and the principles outlined in the GMC's Good Medical Practice guidelines
- The event/course should be structured with appropriate breaks for delegates
- The event/course should be awarded a maximum of 6 credits per day.

3.6 Delivery methods

Delivery methods should be appropriate to the learning aims that were set for the participants.

Criteria:

- There should be a clear statement about what delivery methods are used (lectures, presentations, discussions, master-classes, etc)
- The subject information should be up-to-date and accurate, with appropriate language, style and pace
- The teaching methods used should be relevant to the defined learning aims
- There are processes in place to encourage self-reflective learning, for example, using keypads.

3.7 Supporting information

Supporting information and material should be clear, relevant and accessible.

Criteria:

- The supporting materials should be up-to-date and accurate
- If content is shown, the name and contact details of the publisher/copyright owner of the content, the country of publication and the date of the activity or production should be clearly identifiable
- Any sponsoring company must be acknowledged on supporting materials as having provided sponsorship (see also para 3.11).

3.8 Faculty staff expertise

Organisers should demonstrate that the teaching staff qualifications and experience are appropriate to deliver the educational programme.

Criteria:

- The presenters/teachers/facilitators should have relevant expertise, knowledge and skills to deliver the education programme within the specific subject [s] identified.

3.9 Evaluation and quality assurance

A defined quality assurance process is an integral part of accreditation of activities for CPD purposes. It should include an assessment process that evaluates the intended learning.

Criteria:

- There should be a clear statement outlining how the organiser will conduct an evaluation of the activity. If an organiser is applying for the accreditation for the first time, a detailed description of the evaluation process should be included. Subsequently if the same organiser is applying for the accreditation, the results of previously conducted evaluation should be included in the application.
- Any form of assessment used within the educational programme of the activity should be stated and clearly described.
- Each attendee should be asked to evaluate the course/event and speaker:
 - Were the printed learning aims and outcomes of the course met?
 - Was there any bias or conflict of interest evident in the course?
 - Was the instructor/speaker organised and knowledgeable?

Organisational Standards

3.10 Organiser's details

Organisers should have relevant expertise and facilities to conduct the activity.

Criteria:

- The planning group/applicant and developers should have relevant professional and/or clinical work experience
- There should be a clear statement indicating the organiser's experience in conducting educational/scientific activities, frequency of educational activities conducted, number of similar activities conducted in the past
- There should be a clear statement providing information regarding facilities and organisational arrangements made for the activity
- Information regarding administrative/secretariat support and contact details should be provided
- Details of the organiser's address and invoicing address, if different, should be provided.

3.11 Commercial sponsorship

The educational programme should not be influenced or biased by commercial organisations.

Criteria:

- Any commercial sponsorship of the activity must be clearly stated and should not influence the educational programme content or structure
- Any sponsoring company must be acknowledged on supporting materials as having provided sponsorship
- No product advertising or promotional material should occur within the educational product or within the area in which the education is delivered
- The organiser must confirm that 'Declaration of Interest' forms have been/will be completed by individuals involved in developing or presenting the educational product.

3.12 Administrative arrangements

Organisers should have in place an efficient and transparent administrative process.

Criteria:

- The organiser should normally apply for approval at least eight weeks prior to the meeting date
- A list of accredited activities should be maintained and published
- An attendance register for each activity should be maintained and retained for a period of at least 24 months. The attendance register should be provided on request.

3.13 Legislative and policy compliance

Organisers should comply with current regulatory and legislative requirements.

Criteria:

- Clinical content should follow all appropriate patient consent, data governance, confidentiality policies and GMC guidelines.

ANNEX A

EXAMPLE APPLICATION FOR CPD APPROVAL

Please complete the following sections of the form referring to the guidance 'Standards and Criteria for CPD Activities – A Framework for Accreditation', and providing evidence to support your answers where applicable.

Organiser's Details	
Activity Organiser	
Professional Address	
Address for correspondence	
Invoicing address, if different	
Contact name and details of person responsible for application	
Type of Organisation (tick one box)	<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial organisation <input type="checkbox"/> Non-commercial/non-profit organisation
Telephone number	
Email	
Website	
If you have applied for accreditation previously, please quote the accreditation reference number	
Activity Details	
Title of activity	
Date of activity	
Venue / webpage URL	
Attendance Fee (s)	
Number of attendees expected	
Details of programme structure, content and timetabling. Please tick to confirm finalised programme is attached	<input type="checkbox"/>
Educational Content of Activity	
What is the target audience?	
What are the key learning aims?	
What delivery methods are being used?	

Provide the name(s) and title[s] of presenter(s). Provide evidence to demonstrate that they have the expertise to deliver the educational content of the activity.	
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Sponsorship and Conflict of Interest

<input type="checkbox"/>	Tick this box to confirm that there is no conflict of interest on the part of the sponsor or other commercial interest, OR where this is the case, full details are provided below
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<input type="checkbox"/>	Tick this box to confirm that the educational content is not biased by a sponsor or other commercial interest, OR where this is the case, full details are provided below
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Please state the form in which the sponsorship has been provided – this should be in the form of an educational grant.

Evaluation, review and feedback

What process will be used to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning provided? Attach any feedback/evaluation form used.	
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What processes are in place to encourage self-reflective learning and relating learning to practice?	
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Confirmation of Application

<input type="checkbox"/>	Tick this box to confirm that the information provided in this form is accurate and that the responses given represent those of the applicant organisation.
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Name

Job Title

Date



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