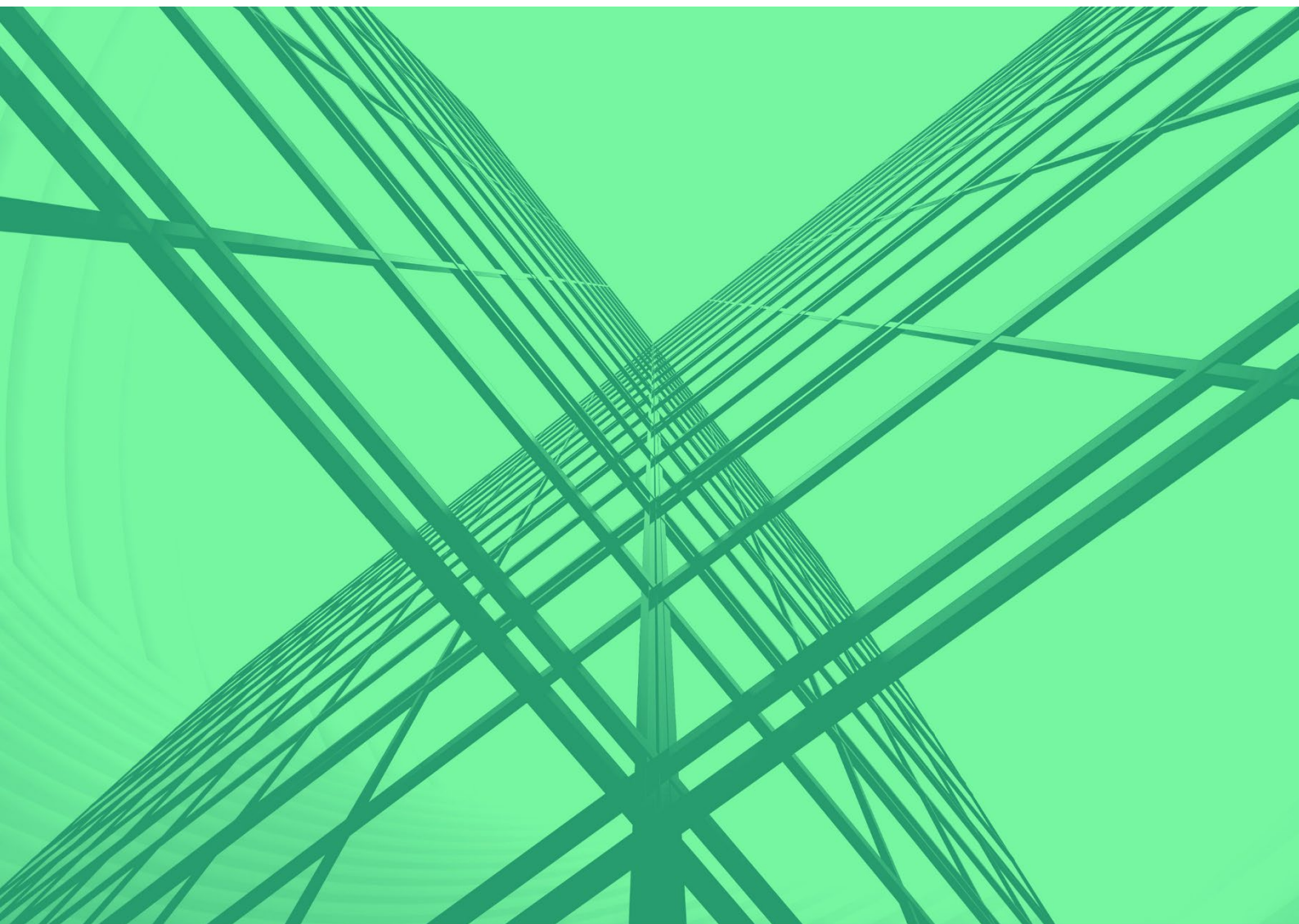


# Mandatory Reporting of Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

---

Version: 2023



## Introduction

CPD is becoming progressively more important globally and within an ever-growing number of professions. Structural engineering is no different. The highly competitive nature of the industry means that it is of fundamental importance for structural engineers to maintain and develop their skills and abilities in order to advance their careers.

Clients and employers increasingly expect engineers to undertake appropriate CPD on an ongoing basis, and, although support may be offered by your employer, the onus for development remains on the individual as the primary interface between the industry and the general public. Working within such a high-profile industry, and especially one so closely concerned with health, safety and risk on a variety of levels, places a number of obligations on members of this Institution; not least amongst these is the duty to maintain and extend their knowledge, expertise and experience.

## The Institution's CPD Policy

The Institution defines CPD as “the systematic maintenance, improvement and broadening of knowledge and skill and the development of personal qualities necessary for the execution of professional and technical duties throughout the practitioner's working life”. Attaining a professional qualification is not the end of the road, merely one stage in the process of lifelong learning. Structural engineers need to change and develop in order to remain competitive in an evolving industry.

To further this ethos the Council of the Institution, at its meeting on 23 May 1996, approved the introduction of an additional Rule of Conduct to clarify members' obligations to the profession in respect of CPD: members of the Institution shall have a duty to update and broaden their professional knowledge and skills on a continuing basis. The current code of conduct reinforces this requirement and states that members shall “maintain and broaden their competence and assist others to do so.”

It is the Institution's intention to ensure that its members remain at the forefront in maintaining and developing their professional competence for their own benefit and for that of society. Members should also assist in furthering the formation and professional development of other members and prospective members of the profession.

In 2014, it was agreed that those who do not comply with the Institution's CPD policy can be removed from membership. This Bye-law was enforced from 2015 onwards. A proportion of the membership each year and only those explicitly requested to MANDATORILY submit a CPD record will be required to comply. Members can be expected to be contacted once in every 3-5 years for submission of their CPD records.

This means that any member receiving a request to submit their CPD record must do so before the deadline of 31st March. Failure to comply or engage with the request will result in removal from membership of the Institution. Any such action will not be automatic; there will be a period of communication with the member so as to offer assistance in complying with the Institution's CPD policy. Extenuating circumstances which may prevent a member from undertaking the recommended minimum amount of CPD per year (30 hours) will be taken into account.

## Benefits of CPD

### Benefits to the individual

- ▶ Maintaining and improving knowledge and abilities will lead to enhanced work performance and confidence.
- ▶ Career prospects will be widened and improved.
- ▶ Focuses the individual's career development, allowing for specific targeting of activities.
- ▶ Individuals will be able to more readily react and adapt to a changing profession and world.
- ▶ Demonstrates a commitment to the profession and continued competence.
- ▶ CPD records are required when transferring to the grade of Fellow.
- ▶ Up to date CPD records are normally required when applying to join other professional organisations and in jurisdictions where professional registration is required in order to practice.

In an increasingly litigious world, it makes obvious sense to take precautions against possible legal action. It is not beyond the realms of possibility to imagine an enterprising lawyer capitalising on the lack of CPD approval in order to undermine or cast doubt on an individual's professionalism. An easy way to potentially mitigate against this eventuality is simply to ensure that your CPD record is approved.

Although graduates are not requested to complete the Activities Record, they are required to demonstrate a commitment to CPD during their Professional Review Interview and need to gain the support and signature of a Fellow for their application to Chartered or Associate-Membership – this can be easily achieved by attendance at Regional Group evening meetings and seminars.

### Benefits to the employer

- ▶ Better skilled and more efficient workforce.
- ▶ More adaptable staff.
- ▶ Employers who support CPD can expect greater staff retention and motivation.
- ▶ There may be a potential impact, through non-submission of CPD, on P.I. Insurance and liability under CDM regulations.

## Mandatory reporting of CPD

### Why is the reporting of CPD mandatory?

- ▶ Many well-respected professions already have mandatory reporting of CPD, e.g. lawyers, medical practitioners, etc., and there is a growing awareness of CPD, its relevance and importance amongst the public;
- ▶ Increasing numbers of engineering organisations throughout the world are moving towards compulsory reporting of CPD often directly related to practise licences – if they are not there already. This Institution is therefore out of step with other professions and similar institutions/organisations;
- ▶ With the advent of the Structural Engineers Register (SER) in Scotland and the proposal to introduce similar schemes in England and Wales over the coming years, it is clear that progression to mandatory reporting of CPD will become inevitable across the UK and the Institution should be at the forefront of any such proposal, not following the edicts of any other organisations/bodies.

### Who is required to comply with the scheme?

- ▶ This applies to all Technicians, Associate-Members, Associates, Chartered Members and Fellows who are engaged in engineering, or who are participating in governance and/or activities that fall within the remit of the Institution's licence from the Engineering Council.
- ▶ Retired or not practising as an engineering are not required to undertake CPD and the scheme will not apply, unless they are participating in governance/and or licenced activities, as above.

---

**An annual requirement to declare a commitment to the Institution's CPD policy. The Institution believes that the simplest way for members to declare their commitment is via a short statement on the Subscriptions Notice. This declares that upon paying your subscription you have satisfied your CPD obligation and will undertake at least 90 hours of relevant CPD activities over a three-year period.**

---

### CPD hours per year

Individuals are expected to undertake at least 30 hours of CPD per calendar year. As this scheme operates on a rolling basis over three years, it is possible to have a year where less CPD activities occur and for this shortfall to be overcome in subsequent years. However, this should only occur in exceptional situations and reason(s) for the shortfall must be indicated on the Activities Record or other submitted document.

It is the Institution's view that all engineers should easily be able to attain 30 hours of CPD per year.

## **Non-technical CPD**

Those who have moved away from the more technical aspects of engineering must nonetheless submit CPD details on request. If the CPD activities are not of a technical nature, then the member should state their current position so that when their CPD is assessed it is clear why activities fall under non-technical headings.

## **Structural Safety**

Individuals should demonstrate a commitment to structural engineering safety and should aim to gain at least six hours of health and safety CPD each year. This reflects the importance on health and safety by our industry to ensure that individuals continue to maintain their competence in this area.

The Institution strongly encourages individuals to engage with the activities of Structural Safety (<https://www.structural-safety.org/>) which includes CROSS updates (or the equivalent). This element of CPD will be measured as part of the annual CPD submission cycle and feedback will be provided to any individual who does not demonstrate the expected level of commitment.

Examples of Structural Safety activities may include:

- Reading SCOSS newsletters and reports as well as signing up to alerts
- Reading CROSS reports
- Reading structural failure investigation papers and articles
- Reading structural safety papers and journals
- Structural robustness learning
- Disproportionate collapse learning
- Structural reliability learning
- Structural inspections, monitoring and maintenance learning

The above is only suggestive and any other activities relevant to Structural Safety that you include to demonstrate commitment will be welcome.

## **Mitigating circumstances**

Examples where a smaller quantity of CPD may be acceptable include career breaks; pregnancy or caring for young children; or illness. There may be other situations that would provide valid reasons for a lower amount of CPD being reported – these can be detailed in the appropriate section of the Activities Record.

However, not every reason for failing to report or accrue sufficient CPD will be valid. Lack of time, for instance, would not be considered an appropriate explanation; neither would be stating that there are no courses in the local area or that one's employer refuses to pay for courses.

## **Consequences of non-compliance**

If a member does not comply with Institution's CPD policy, i.e. does not submit an appropriate CPD record, they may ultimately be removed from membership.

However, in such cases members will be given the opportunity to explain why they have been unable to comply.

It is only where a member does not respond at all or provides inappropriate reasons, e.g. insufficient time,

too expensive to attend courses, refusal to comply on principle, etc. that they will become subject to the non-compliance procedures, which comprises:

- ▶ After the deadline of 31 March non-compliant members will be reminded of their obligation to submit a CPD record as per the Institution's Bye-laws.
- ▶ If they do not comply, their name and membership number will be reported to the Institution's Membership Committee. The member will be informed of this and again requested to submit a CPD record.
- ▶ If the member does not, then submit a CPD record they will be reported to the next meeting of the Membership Committee where they will be removed from membership of the Institution.

---

**Please note that as the Membership Committee meets every 3-4 months there will be a significant period of time in which the member will be able to prepare and submit their CPD record.**

---

## **CPD activities**

The Activities Record is split into four sections.

Members should complete all applicable sections but should not feel compelled to enter information into an area where they have no activities to report.

It should be noted that CPD is not just about attending courses – there are many ways of undertaking CPD.

These include (but are in no way restricted to):

Work-based learning:

- ▶ relevant learning from practical experience
- ▶ teaching/mentoring of members and prospective members
- ▶ project specific research
- ▶ IT skills development

Self-directed study:

- ▶ preparation and delivery of lectures
- ▶ preparation of articles and refereed papers
- ▶ reading of journals/technical papers
- ▶ post-graduate study

Courses/events/seminars:

- ▶ Institution
- ▶ in-house
- ▶ external (for example, supplier-led seminars)



- ▶ attendance at lectures, seminars or conferences

Horizon broadening activities:

- ▶ Institution work (e.g. Regional Group and Institution committees, informal study groups, Professional Review Interview Reviewer, examiner, etc)
- ▶ community and public service involvement (e.g. school governor, business and community involvement, etc).
- ▶ appropriate TV programmes

As far as possible members should avoid using vague, unsubstantiated terms. Although those Professional Development Panel members reviewing the forms are not asking for reams of information, they will want to understand what CPD has been undertaken and gain a 'flavour' of the development of the individual. Terms such as 'various seminars', 'research related to numerous projects' and so forth would not be considered acceptable. This is not to say that the necessary CPD remains unfulfilled, merely that, as the details have not been included, it cannot be appropriately gauged. Hence, wherever possible, the member should indicate what the seminar was about, or what research was undertaken, and the benefits gained. Again, this does not require an exhaustive description, one simple line stating the title of the course or the name of the paper read, etc, plus the development gained will usually be sufficient.

Do not simply list work responsibilities – ensure that the learning you have undertaken is clearly stated. Similarly, it is not enough to give details of projects worked on, unless they also state how the member has undertaken research/learning related to those projects and what developmental benefits were gained.

## Completing and submitting a CPD record

### The online facility

This facility is accessed via the 'My Account' section. It is a web-based resource that allows members to enter details onto an electronic version of the CPD Activity Record at any point during the year and save the information for future reference. This means that, come submission time, members will only need to update the form – if necessary – and click the 'submit' button. In addition, there is the ability to archive the online CPD Activity Record. This will automatically occur when a member submits their CPD online, and this archive will remain accessible to the member should they wish to see a previously submitted version.

---

**Please note that as the online facility is contained within the secure 'My Account' section it is only possible to view and amend your own details.**

---

Completing the online version of the Activities Record is not the only way in which this resource can be utilised. Members can also upload and submit any standard format document they wish via this facility.

### Other ways to submit

The Institution will accept forms from other organisations. This means that if you have already completed a record for another institution (for example, ICE, HKIE, Engineers Australia), or prepared a record for your employer or personal use, you can simply submit a copy of that document to the Institution as it is the content that is important not the type of form. This is also the case where you are required to submit a record as part

of the legal requirements of practising in your locality. Consequently, there is no need to copy and paste information from one form to another. The only thing we would ask is that you ensure that the following are included:

- your name
- Regional Group
- membership number
- number of hours spent on each activity
- benefits gained from each activity

Give details wherever possible (including dates)

**Acceptance of other organisations’ CPD requirements**

Some organisations have CPD programmes which are broadly in line with this Institution’s policies and members of those bodies who have satisfied the CPD obligations within that organisation are not therefore required to submit CPD details; the relevant organisations are given in the table below.

Members who fall into this category must however either submit written confirmation stating:

*‘I hereby certify that I am professionally registered with {insert name of relevant organisation} and have satisfied their requirements for Continuing Professional Development.’*

or

*an official notification from their ‘host’ organisation comprising a list of compliant members must be received by the Professional Review and CPD Executive.*

In either case the membership number of the ‘host’ organisation must be provided.

**Arrangements with other bodies whose CPD schemes that are recognised by the Institution:**

Country (Host Organisation)	Number of CPD Hours	Consequence of non-compliance in country
Australia (EA)	150 hours over three years.  Normally audited not less frequently than every five years	Failure to comply means the member cannot register with the National Professional Engineers Register (NPER)
Barbados (BAPE)	Five CPD activities where a minimum of three of them must be technical activities based on a three-year moving total.  Therefore, a shortfall in any year can be made up in the following years, and any extra activities can be carried forward for up to two years. The three-year total must not be less than 15 activities.	Graduate members must complete the minimum CPD requirements to transfer to Corporate membership.  Corporate members who fail to meet the minimum CPD requirements will be invited to an interview with the CPD sub-committee and an interim arrangement will be designed specifically for that member. Interim arrangements will be designed on a case by case basis.



Country (Host Organisation)	Number of CPD Hours	Consequence of non-compliance in country
Canada (EGBC)	90 hours over three years.	<p>Corporate members who blatantly reject the CPD program will be recommended to the Engineers Registration Board for de-registration.</p> <p>Revocation of the StructEng designation will be considered if CPD levels are low for three consecutive years. An interview with a member of the Structural Qualifications Board will be held with the StructEng member, to determine if there are extenuating circumstances that justify continuing the member's StructEng designation for another year.</p> <p>StructEng failing to submit reports, submitting fraudulent reports, or failing to correct deficiencies as directed, will not be entitled to maintain their StructEng designation beyond the date determined by the Association.</p> <p>Audits may be conducted at random; or as the result of focus on specific practice areas; or following a complaint, practice review, or investigation.</p>
China (PQRC)	<p>60 hours over three years</p> <p>Compulsory and optional courses with some examinations.</p>	<p>Failure to comply means the member cannot register and therefore cannot gain a license to practice.</p>
Hong Kong (HKIE)	30 hours per year; 1% random sample	<p>Warning letters sent in first and second years of non-compliance. CPD committee follow up asking for reasons for non-compliance;</p> <p>Failure to comply in third year results in member being invited to an interview with CPD committee representative(s);</p> <p>Failure to comply for fourth year will result in those members having their names published in Hong Kong Engineer.</p>
Scotland (SER)	20 hours technical CPD directly relevant to their certification activities each year.	<p>Failure to submit an approved CPD return may result in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notification that CPD is inadequate and that failure to rectify the</li> </ul>

Country (Host Organisation)	Number of CPD Hours	Consequence of non-compliance in country
Singapore (PEB)	Total 40 (20 each from structured and unstructured courses).	<p>situation by the next year could lead to suspension from membership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-approval of the submission with a recommendation that the Certifier is suspended from membership for a recommended period which shall not be less than 12 months.</li> </ul> <p>No Professional Engineer is allowed to provide professional services without a valid Practising Certificate for the year (e.g. 2014).</p> <p>A Practising Certificate is issued for the year (e.g. 2014) to Registered Professional Engineers, provided a return is made satisfying the minimum number of PDUs (Professional Development Units) in the preceding year (e.g. 2013).</p> <p>A member of this Institution, who is also a registered Professional Engineer, qualifies for the Institution's CPD notation once the return is verified by the Singapore Division Co-ordinator and confirmed/accepted at HQ.</p>
South Africa (ECSA)	<p>25 credits over five years (minimum of three per year).</p> <p>Credits are weighted according to activity with some activities gaining more credits than others.</p> <p>Renewal of ECSA (Engineering Council of South Africa) registration every five years.</p>	<p>If a member does not comply, they cannot renew their registration with ECSA.</p>

If you believe that your organisation meets this Institution's CPD requirements, please contact the Professional Review and CPD Executive who will investigate accordingly.

## Mandatory reporting of CPD: FAQs

### 1. Who does the scheme apply to?

Applies to practising, non-retired engineers from all the professional grades of membership:

- Technician
- Associate-Member
- Associate
- Chartered Member
- Fellow

The Institution is happy to accept CPD submissions from Graduate or Student members who wish to provide CPD information in anticipation of doing so mandatorily in the future though submission is not mandatory for these two non-professional grades of membership.

The scheme does NOT apply to retired members or those not practising as an engineer.

### 2. How many hours of CPD am I expected to complete each year?

- 30 hours per year is the expectation. However, in designing this scheme the Institution has recognised that
- some members may have periods where they need not undertake their normal level of CPD. The proposal is
- therefore 90 hours over a period of three years.

### 3. 30 hours per year? That's an awful lot of courses to attend – how can I possibly afford the time or the expense?

It is a surprisingly common misconception that CPD = courses. This is very far from the case. The Institution has acknowledged that CPD can be accrued in a myriad of different ways which can include, but is not restricted to:

- teaching/mentoring of members and prospective members
- attendance at branch/division/group events
- viewing an increasing range of Institution webinars that can be downloaded from the website
- project specific research
- IT skills development
- preparation and delivery of lectures
- preparation of articles and refereed papers
- reading of journals/technical papers
- post-graduate study

### 4. I don't have to attend dozens of courses each year, but what if I am severely ill or decide to take a career break?

If there is a valid reason why you cannot gain 30 hours of CPD in a given year – or you do not manage to gain 90 hours over three years –this will be taken into account during assessment.

Examples of valid mitigating circumstances would be:

- career breaks
- long-term illness
- maternity/paternity leave

There may be other situations that would provide valid reasons for a lower amount of CPD being reported – these can be detailed in the appropriate section of the Activities Record. However, not every reason for failing to report or accrue sufficient CPD will be valid. Please contact the Professional Development Officer for any assistance if you feel you cannot account for 30 hours.

**5. What will we be expected to submit each year?**

Simply paying your subscriptions means you are stating that you have satisfied your CPD obligation. However, the Professional Development Panel encourages members to submit their Activities Record on an annual basis as those who submit approved CPD each year will not be subject to auditing as they will already be compliant having had their records reviewed and approved.

**6. And if I am selected for audit?**

You would need to submit the Activities Records or a similar document; nothing else is required.

**7. I am member of a number of professional institutions, some of which already have a mandatory reporting scheme. Do I have to submit information to this Institution as well?**

Not necessarily. The Institution has entered into agreements with a number of other organisations with regard to CPD requirements which allows those who have joint membership to submit via a simplified procedure. If you are a member of the following:

- SAICE (whose members are registered with ECSA) – South Africa
- PEB – Singapore
- EA – Australia
- APEGA – Canada, Alberta
- EGBC – Canada, British Columbia
- BAPE – Barbados
- HKIE – Hong Kong
- PQRC – China

and comply with their CPD requirements you need only state via email or in writing: *“I hereby certify that I am professionally registered with {insert name of relevant organisation} and have satisfied their requirements for Continuing Professional Development.”*

If you are a member of an organisation whose CPD requirements are similar to this Institution but not included on this list, please contact the Professional Review and CPD Executive at the Institution who will investigate whether they can be included.

You may if you wish submit your CPD information in a different format to the Activities Record but you must ensure that the necessary information is included, namely details of the activities, the benefits gained and the number of hours per CPD activity. This can be done via the CPD section of My Account on the Institution’s website.

Please note that the following is an example only and is included to better espouse the Institution's philosophy as to how the Activities Record should be completed.

In this example, the number of hours have not been stipulated as the Institution does not wish to provide examples which may be seen as indicative of the amount of time a particular activity should take; it is very much up to the individual member to assess the number of hours spent on an activity and this information must be included against all activities.

The benefits gained from each activity have been included as it is recognised that some members may have difficulty in understanding what is expected of them in this regard and some guidance may therefore be necessary.