

Continuing Professional Development Guidelines



PLEASE NOTE YOUR COUNSELLING MEMBERSHIP IS AT RISK IF YOU FAIL TO COMPLETE THE REQUIRED NUMBER OF HOURS OF CPD APPLICABLE TO YOUR MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY.

CPD is a condition of membership of ACC. CPD can be checked at renewal and is assessed as part of ACC's audit process. We will always attempt to work with you to redress issues and to assist your professional development. However, if a commitment to CPD fails to be understood and respected, then ACC reserve the right to withdraw your membership.

What is Continuing Professional Development?

Continuing professional development is the term used to describe the on-going acquisition of skills, knowledge and experience by counsellors, supervisors, trainers and managers beyond their initial training. CPD can be focused any of the following:

- improving and deepening an understanding of existing skills set and approach
- gaining new knowledge and skills
- demonstrating advancement through accreditation or higher-level qualifications
- deepening awareness of self in relationship with others
- developing further insight into the integration of personal faith & spirituality with therapeutic practice

CPD is an intentional activity, which is to say that it involves the activities of appraising and planning, doing and reflecting.

What are the Benefits of CPD?

The benefits of CPD for counsellors, supervisors, trainers and managers include:

- making connection with others through attending peer group and other networking opportunities
- filling gaps in/ extending knowledge and awareness
- providing safe opportunities to practice new skills
- keeping up to date with current thinking relating to mental health and wellbeing
- demonstrating professional commitment to the various people we serve according to our roles and responsibilities (clients, students, supervisees, counsellors and the wider counselling community)
- building confidence and credibility
- growing holistically - professionally, personally and spiritually

- increasing the effectiveness and safety of the service provided to clients, students, supervisees and counsellors

What are the responsibilities of ACC members?

1. ACC members are responsible for **actively managing their own CPD**. This means setting aside time periodically to review and assess your practice and consequent developmental needs and aspirations. We encourage you to discuss these with your supervisor.
2. ACC members are also responsible for undertaking **CPD that evidences clear relevance to their role**. This means that the topics chosen for further study overtly relate to counselling or psychotherapy, or if ancillary to counselling, their relevance can be reasonably demonstrated. For example, a workshop on coaching, mentoring or aspects of spiritual direction could bring valuable learning relevant to counselling. Similarly, a workshop on risk management, budgeting or marketing could bring valuable learning to those engaged in managing a counselling or training centre.

Personal and spiritual development and self-care are vitally important aspects of CPD, and we recognise that sometimes activities in this area will not always have an overt reference to counselling. Defined events such as a retreat or a pilgrimage demonstrate a specific intention to serve this more intangible element of professional development as a Christian counsellor.

3. ACC members are responsible for **maintaining a log of CPD activities and retaining certificates or other evidence of attendance** and for submitting the log and copies of certificates to ACC as part of the renewal of membership and/or of our audit processes. Templates relating to CPD are available on the website and are part of ACC's audit process.

How much CPD do I need to do to maintain my Registered Membership?

- A minimum of 25 hours per annum for registered or overseas counsellors and accredited counsellors
- A minimum of 30 hours per annum for registered or overseas accredited supervisors or managers. For accredited supervisors the additional 5 hours must be related to the practice of supervision.

Trainee counsellors (student members of ACC) do not need to evidence CPD hours as they are in the process of completing their core basic training. However, CPD is valuable as an enrichment activity and it is good practice to begin logging all CPD activities using the templates provided.

What if I cannot meet the annual minimum requirement?

If you are experiencing unexpected or challenging life events that are putting at risk your ability to complete the minimum of your CPD requirements, please contact our Registrar at the earliest opportunity by emailing registrar@acc-uk.org. Please do not leave this till your renewal.

What happens if I am on a practice break?

Maintaining your CPD responsibilities is recommended even when you are on a practice break. However certain circumstances relating to bereavement, ill health or other adverse life events may make this difficult. If you want to discuss reducing your CPD commitment whilst on a Practice Break please contact our Registrar by emailing registrar@acc-uk.org.

What type of activities are recognised by ACC as CPD?

CPD must be a planned and intentional activity, the purpose of which is to enhance your counselling, management and/or supervision practice. Therefore, it is an *additional* activity to the normal professional ancillary/support activities associated with counselling such as supervision. Similarly, the on-going activities that form part of your Christian life in community and in spiritual formation should not be counted towards CPD.

ACC value our counsellors being involved in a broad range of CPD activities and having freedom to shape their development over time. For example, a counsellor undertaking a higher diploma or MA in a Counselling related subject may have very little time and opportunity to engage in other CPD activities for the duration of their course. In subsequent years however they may be able to demonstrate a varied mix of activities that demonstrate breadth and depth of learning.

Unlike initial counselling training on-line courses are OK for CPD purposes.

If you remain unsure after reading these guidelines about whether a specific activity can be classified as CPD, please contact our Registrar by e mail registrar@acc-uk.org

The following activities can form the total of the required annual CPD return

- Participation in further or higher-level training and education in counselling related topics
- Delivering a variety of lecture style training, workshops, conference presentations, seminars relevant to different areas of counselling, supervision or management of counselling services
- Preparing and delivering **new** training, workshops, seminars relevant to counselling or supervision
- Attending in person CPD training days (please retain your certificates)

The following activities can form a proportion of the required annual CPD

- Applying for Accreditation with ACC or another professional counselling body
- Developing or reviewing Agency or Private Practice documents / policies, worksheets for clients and supervisees.
- Reading or writing books and journals that relate to counselling or supervision issues
- Watching a programme, DVD or similar specific to counselling or supervision,
- Attending a guided retreat, quiet day, or Christian spirituality-based course [NB: not including regular church services, home groups etc.]
- Time spent in personal learning and reflection specific to your counselling practice, resulting from activities such as personal counselling, supervision or spiritual development [NB: not including the scheduled activity itself]
- Taking a governance role for a counselling organisation, e.g. Chair or member of a committee
- Serving in a support role for a counselling organisation e.g. taking minutes
- Attendance at peer group/networking events

Summary

You can feel confident of your CPD if you have

- a. Undertaken a process of reflection, selection, planning, doing and evaluation
- b. Participated in a range of activities over time that have relevance for professional, personal and spiritual development in the service of clients and fellow counsellors
- c. Integrated learning from these activities into your practice
- d. Kept records and certificates

Templates available on ACC's Website

1. Template for recording all your CPD from the time of your qualification (required for accreditation)
2. Template for submitting your annual record of CPD for ACC membership renewal (and required if audited)
3. Template for CPD Planning (required if audited)
4. Template for CPD Reviews (required if audited)

The templates are provided to assist you in the planning and recording of your CPD. They can be downloaded from ACC's website in the Professional Development Documents area which is accessible to members only.

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