Policy

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Guidelines

Definition of CPD

“The essence of personal and professional development is an ongoing learning process about aspects of the self in relation to others ... Without a good understanding of the self, the therapist is more likely to participate in habitual patterns of responding developed in the client’s or his or her own life histories.” (Scaife, 2009, p50)\(^1\)


ACC considers CPD to be an important ongoing requirement for safe, legal, and effective practice. As such, CPD forms an essential requirement for acceptance onto the ACC Accredited Register and is part of the criteria for Accreditation, Re-accreditation and Membership renewal.

The terms ‘counsellors’ and ‘counselling’ are taken to cover all forms of psychological therapeutic practice represented within ACC’s Framework for Ethics and Practice.

CPD is as referred to in ACC’s Framework for Ethics & Practice, particularly in section “Good Practice in Christian Counselling and Related Fields”, fundamental premise 3 “All Clients are entitled to high standards of practice and care from members” and fundamental premise 4 “Counsellors and those offering related services should be competent”

All ACC members are therefore encouraged to reflect upon their requirements for CPD on a regular basis and to select appropriate activities to meet their professional and personal development needs (including spiritual growth as a Christian) in relation to their counselling practice.

Accredited members are required to commit to a *minimum* of 25 hours CPD per year (30 hours for Accredited Counselling Supervisors and Accredited Counsellor Managers). This is also one of the criteria for re-accreditation. It is expected that a broad range of CPD activities would take place and that the total amount of CPD submitted would reflect this variation over the course of one year or across subsequent years. For example, 25 hours CPD obtained in the form of a single training event or training module could form the basis of the CPD reported for a single year. Alternatively, several activities of a few hours duration could be used to demonstrate that the minimum criteria for CPD has been met during that year. It is important to be able to demonstrate:

(i) A process of reflection, selection, and evaluation has taken place in relation to CPD;
(ii) Participation in a range of activities over time that will contribute to professional, and personal development (including spiritual growth as a Christian);
(iii) Variation of CPD activities across the year or across subsequent years;
(iv) Learning from these activities has been integrated into or contributed to the development of counselling practice.

A record of activities should be recorded on the CPD Form provided.
ACC will also be passing some of the responsibility for signing off CPD portfolios to supervisors when it comes to maintenance applications for accreditation.

There will be an annual audit of a sample of up to 20% of accredited members’ renewal applications each year. Those selected will be required to present the rationale for choosing a particular type of CPD and their applied learning.

ACC is committed to providing opportunities for CPD through a range of events, including Network training activities, the National Conference, Summer School, and the publication of the Accord Journal etc. For more information on these and other CPD opportunities, please refer to the Training section of the ACC website and/or UK Diary and In Touch sections of accord. ACC also endorses a variety of external CPD activities, some of these are listed on the ACC website.

Examples of typical CPD activities are presented below.

- Lecture style training, workshops, conference presentations, seminars relevant to counselling
- Delivering training, workshops, seminars relevant to counselling
- Reading books and journals that relate to counselling issues
- Watching a programme, DVD or similar specific to counselling
- Attending a guided retreat, quiet day, or Christian spirituality based course
- Learning derived from personal counselling or spiritual development activity
- Taking a governance role, e.g. Chair or member of a committee
- Serving in a support role e.g. taking minutes

If you are unsure about whether a specific activity can be classified as CPD, please contact the ACC office (office@acc-uk.org; Tel. 0845 124 9569).
Section 2

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Activity Audit Form

Please provide a description of your CPD activities carried out over the past 12 months. List each CPD activity separately, providing the information requested under each of the column headings. If you prefer, you may provide the information for each selected CPD activity on a separate page, using the column titles as separate headings to explain the ‘CPD cycle’ for that particular activity.

You may include any activity related to counselling and/or psychotherapy that has impacted or informed your practice over the last year, e.g. seminars, workshops, training, committee meetings, reading (e.g. books, professional journals including accords - please give titles and authors). For further information on CPD requirements, please see the accompanying document, *ACC CPD Guidance*.

Please ensure you list sufficient activities to cover the *minimum* annual CPD requirement for your level of Accreditation (i.e. 25 hours CPD per year for Accredited Counselling Practitioners & Accredited Counsellors; 30 hours CPD per year for Accredited Counselling Supervisors & Accredited Counsellor Managers) and to show how those activities have had an impact (or not) on your practice. If you have carried out more than the annual requirement for CPD, it is not necessary to list all the activities you have engaged in only sufficient to show you have met the relevant requirement for your level of accreditation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CPD Activity (and Provider if applicable)</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Reason for selecting the activity</th>
<th>How the activity has benefitted your professional, personal and/or Christian spiritual development</th>
<th>How learning from the activity has been integrated into or influenced your practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Please copy page or continue on a separate sheet as necessary.*

Practitioner’s Signature: 
Date:

Supervisor’s Signature: 
Date:
For training courses, please remember to include copies of your CPD certificates (NOT originals) with your renewal.
What if I haven’t or am unable to complete the annual CPD requirement?

If you think you are unlikely to be able to complete the annual CPD requirement for your membership category, please review ACC’s CPD guidance and the activities you have undertaken during the qualifying period. If you are unsure whether a particular activity qualifies as CPD, please contact the Registrar, Dawn Sherry, in the first instance, for clarification.

If after reviewing the guidance and seeking clarification about the type of activities that qualify as CPD, and you are sure you will be unable to complete the requirement in the allocated time, please inform the Registrar at the earliest opportunity. The Registrar or another member of ACC staff will advise you on what you need to do next. If you believe there are extenuating circumstances that have contributed to an insufficient amount of CPD, please let the Registrar know so that this can be taken into account in deciding an appropriate course of action.

If there are no extenuating circumstances, it is likely that ACC will not be able to renew your membership until the minimum CPD requirement has been met. An immediate consequence of this is that your membership record will be temporarily kept in the ‘holding area’ of the membership database and as a result your practice details will become temporarily inaccessible through either the ‘Find a Counsellor’ or ‘Accredited Register’ facilities, until the conditions of membership have been fulfilled and your membership record can be released. In some circumstances, disciplinary action may be taken against a member for non-compliance with CPD requirements (more information about ACC’s complaints procedure and indicative sanctions policy can be found by following this link: http://www.acc-uk.org/find-a-counsellor/how-do-i-complain.html).

In summary, a regular undertaking to improve practice through engagement in a variety of CPD activities is an important aspect of a practitioner’s professional development and commitment to public safety. It forms an important part of ACC’s membership requirements and working under Ethics and Practice guidance that each counsellor signs up to when taking up and renewing membership. If you are unable to maintain your CPD commitment, please contact the ACC Registrar, at the earliest opportunity (Email: dawn@acc-uk.org; Tel. 0845 124 9569 Ex. 24).