

# CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

June 2025



**CIEEM**

Chartered  
Institute of  
Ecology and  
Environmental  
Management

[www.cieem.net](http://www.cieem.net)

# Continuing Professional Development

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is how ecologists and environmental managers, and those aspiring to be, maintain and improve their knowledge and skills, and develop the personal qualities required in their professional lives. CIEEM aims to promote high professional standards and to ensure public confidence in the professional service offered by all its members. CPD is an important part of this both for you as an individual member and for CIEEM.

*“CPD refers to the process of tracking and documenting the skills, knowledge and experience that you gain both formally and informally as you work, it’s a record of what you experience, learn and then apply. The process of CPD can aid you in reviewing where you are now, where you want to be, what you have to do to get there.” (Jobs.ac.uk)*

Maintaining your CPD record provides evidence that you are fulfilling the needs of your employment role as well as meeting the requirements of your CIEEM membership grade. Our sector is subject to many changes: laws and policies are being updated, existing tools are being replaced by new technology and new approaches. To remain employable in a changing world it is essential that practitioners review their current competencies and identify what CPD they need to develop. Planning your future CPD requirements, assessing the gaps in your current CPD record and identifying relevant areas of skill and knowledge that need enhancing, helps you identify new work opportunities, achieve your career goals and aspirations and support your progress as a CIEEM member.

## What are CIEEM’s CPD requirements for members?

All CIEEM members at Fellow, Full, Associate and Qualifying grades need to complete a minimum of 30 hours relevant CPD per annum, of which a minimum of 20 hours must be structured CPD. The relevance of CPD undertaken should be guided by reference to [CIEEM’s Competency Framework](#).

Part-time workers must meet the same requirement as those working full-time. Some members have the option to request placing their membership into abeyance. The most common reasons for requesting an abeyance agreement are maternity/paternity leave and childcare; issues related to long-term/chronic illness; or a temporary career break. Members in abeyance have declared that they are not working and are therefore not required to complete CPD. However, they will continue to receive selected member benefits to enable them to keep in touch with developments in the sector and undertake some CPD should they choose. CPD courses can also be undertaken at a membership discounted member rate where applicable, or at CIEEM’s low-income rate (if eligible).

You will also need to meet the minimum CPD requirement if you are an existing member at the Qualifying grade or above, and if you are submitting an upgrade application including if you are applying for Chartered status.

## Annual CPD Audit

CPD should be recorded annually using the online [CPD tool](#) (please note that we no longer accept the previous spreadsheet format). There is a CPD Planner built into the tool to help you to review your current CPD needs and then design a plan to help you meet these needs effectively. Failure by a member to undertake CPD (or be able to provide satisfactory evidence of doing so) constitutes a breach of CIEEM’s Code of Professional Conduct.

CIEEM conducts an annual review of a randomly selected sample of 5% of its members including 10% of members with Chartered status. CIEEM requests and assesses the previous year of CPD from those selected. Each record is assessed by CIEEM’s Training Education Development and Careers Committee, who provide feedback to each member on whether they have completed sufficient CPD, and if there are future improvements that could be made.

## CPD Limits

There are maximum annual limits set on some types of CPD in order to encourage members to engage in a range of CPD activities and avoid repetition between years where it does not appear to aid development of skills. There may be circumstances when you go beyond a maximum limit for a type of CPD, CIEEM will, however, endeavour to be flexible where possible when reviewing members CPD records. Please indicate on your CPD record the reasons for different CPD limits and explain the reasons why and these will be considered by our Training, Education, Development and Careers Committee. Full details of the limits can be found below:

### Structured CPD (minimum 20 hours out of the 30 required)

Type of CPD	Maximum Hours	% of Requirement
Distance learning programmes and webinars	20 hours	100%
Attending face-to-face training courses	20 hours	100%
Attending conferences, workshops, seminars, technical events, talks and site visits (including member network events)	20 hours	100%
Designing, running and assessment of new teaching/ training courses or where the material has been significantly amended	15 hours	75%
Design of new education materials such as workbooks, online or face to face and new public engagement/outreach	10 hours	50%
Presenting papers/giving talks	10 hours	50%
Mentoring scheme participation (as a mentor or mentee)	10 hours	50%
Work shadowing to develop your role, knowledge and skills	20 hours	100%
Involvement in technical working groups and committees	10 hours	50%
Supervised research where there is evidence of progression and development (includes supervising research where this is not a core part of your job)	20 hours	100%
Volunteer work where you are learning new skills	10 hours	50%
Secondment/staff exchange	20 hours	100%

### Unstructured CPD (maximum 10 hours out of the 30 hours required)

Type of CPD	Maximum Hours	% of Requirement
Online research and engaging with online discussions	5 hours	50%
Reading technical publications and listening to podcasts	5 hours	50%
Networking professionally	4 hours	40%
Maintaining a blog or website	5 hours	50%
Involvement in new project work that develops your role or is outside of your normal role	10 hours	100%

## Why is CPD important?

Ecology is a rapidly advancing subject – so it is important that you make sure that you can show you are up to date with professional developments. CPD can help you to gain the skills and knowledge to perform well in your current employment role. It can also support your development of the competences that might be needed in the future as the nature of your work and the profession changes. Relevant, planned CPD can increase your sense of job satisfaction, improve confidence in your performance and increase your personal effectiveness. It can also help you to progress towards a role or career path that you aspire to.

## How can I effectively record my CPD?

Maintaining your CPD record on a regular basis is not too onerous once you get started. For example, did you attend a CIEEM or other relevant conference recently? Have you participated in a training course or an online webinar, or delivered a presentation to colleagues? Have you read an article in a publication such as *In Practice* or reviewed a CIEEM Sector News e-Briefing? By using the planner tool and updating your record frequently you will soon discover that you are undertaking CPD more often than you think, and it will be easier to record whilst still fresh in your mind.

[CIEEMs online CPD tool](#) is designed to make planning and recording your CPD easier by:

- implementing an online format with hover-over prompts for each area needing completion;
- automatically recording your annual accumulation of CPD hours towards achieving the CIEEM requirement for structured and unstructured CPD activities;
- allowing you to review your annual CPD records on one page as well as the option to view different years separately;
- providing a list of CIEEM Competence Themes to demonstrate the relevance of your CPD (which you can examine in more detail by accessing the Competency Framework whilst completing your form);
- helping you to make the most of your learning by asking you to reflect on how you apply it
- allowing you to flag when areas of CPD may need reviewing, such as the expiry of a certificate, or a date when relevant legislation is due to be updated.
- providing the facility to indicate where further CPD for a particular area is needed and should be included in future CPD planning.
- You can also use the online CPD tool as evidence for your own annual review with your employer.

## Top tips for recording your CPD

1

### Make sure you do enough CPD

Members must complete a minimum of 30 hours of CPD annually, at least 20 hours of which must be 'structured' activity. In the 2022/2023 audit just 3% of received submissions, had not completed sufficient CPD hours. CIEEM accepts a very broad range of CPD activities, so there are many ways to complete CPD, even if you have limited time, limited funding or accessibility issues. Also, do not forget that there are additional concessions on CIEEM 'charged for' CPD activities for those on low incomes.

2

### Repetition is not necessarily the key to CPD success

Maintenance of knowledge and skills is an important part of CPD, but there is concern that some members are repeating the same CPD activities year after year. Undertaking a particular training session may have developed your skills the first time, but the benefits are likely to lessen if the same training is undertaken year after year. Utilising the 'Learning' section of the CPD record may help to address this.

3

### Provide a good 'Description' of the activity

Reviewers provide feedback on the relevance and breadth of CPD activities, this is guided by [CIEEM's Competency Framework](#). You should provide a good description of the activity undertaken. For example, reading technical publications (a common type of unstructured CPD) should be accompanied by specific references to books, journals and articles.

**4****Explain what you learnt**

CPD is not just a box ticking exercise listing what training you did, CPD allows you to reflect on the conferences you have attended, the training you have done and what you have learnt, and sometimes what gaps this has identified and what future CPD you need to do. CPD is an activity where you develop skills and broaden your knowledge that you can then apply in your professional life. Some activities, to be meaningful CPD, require reflection and evidence of putting it into practice. When recording CPD you are asked to record 'Learning'. This is where you should record how you have applied, or will apply, this learning. What did you learn? How has it impacted you? How could it benefit others?

**5****Less may be more**

Some members record far more than the required 30 hours. There is no restriction on the amount of CPD you can undertake, but reviewers have noted that when hundreds of hours are recorded, they often lack detail and have no, or very limited, reflection on learning outcomes. Also, tasks which appear to be a routine part of the person's job or study are often included - this does not constitute as CPD.

There are maximum annual limits on different types of CPD in order to encourage members to engage in a range of CPD activities and avoid repetition where it does not appear to aid development of skills.

**6****Record your CPD regularly**

CPD should be recorded using CIEEM's online CPD planning and recording tool. We recommend you do this regularly, ideally soon after each activity is completed whilst it's still fresh in your mind.

## An example of a CPD Activity

Below you will see an example of a CPD activity. This has been recorded on the CPD tool which can be accessed through your MyCIEEM portal.

**Title: Reading:** DTA Habitat Regulations Assessment Journal

**Activity:** Unstructured: Reading technical publications and listening to podcasts

**Description:** Reading DTA Habitat Regulations Assessment Journal. I also wrote an article.

**Learning Objectives:** Keeping informed of News updates, new guidance and good practice

Learning what other HRA practitioners are doing

**Profile(s):** CPD CIEEM Competency Framework

**Competencies:** A2 S4

**Reflection:** This issue included articles on aerial imagery which were of interest as I have been investigating this as a use for monitoring and assessing European sites, including compensatory habitat. I realised that some of our staff are trained as drone pilots so could be a way forward. I wrote an article for this issue but have not claimed CPD hours as it was not really development towards my CPD.

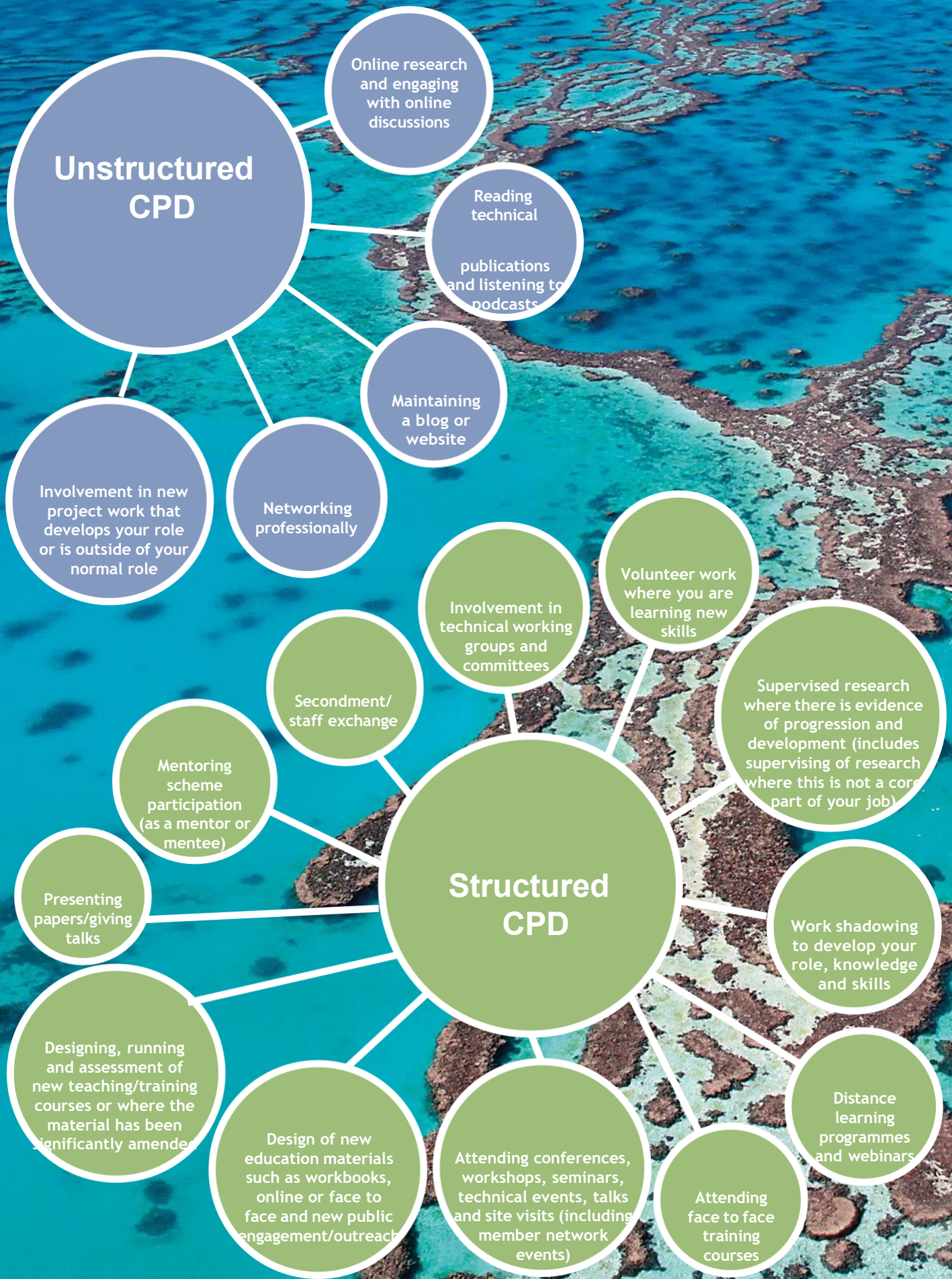
**Structured Hours:** 0

**Unstructured Hours:** 3

**Provider:** DTA Publications

**Starts Date:** 11/06/2020

**End Date:** 30/06/2020



## How can I meet the costs of undertaking CPD?

Your CPD activities, and any action which you need to take to maintain your professional competence, is your responsibility, as a member of CIEEM. CIEEM takes the view that the professional competence of our members is very much in the interest of all employers, and that employers should offer as much support as they reasonably can. By carefully planning your CPD to target the areas where gaps have been identified, and taking time to research the available resources, high costs can be avoided. You may also want to share your CPD with your employer as evidence to support your professional competences.

## How does CIEEM's Competency Framework support my CPD?

Competences are the skills, knowledge, abilities and personal attributes that are essential to perform certain professional functions. [CIEEMs Competency Framework](#) sets out the range of competencies relevant for people working in our sector and sets of the levels of competency required for different roles and grades.

This enables you to identify the competences required for specific roles so that you can plan your CPD to fulfil your current employment role and develop your career progression. The framework will also be used to inform competence-based assessment of the CIEEM membership eligibility at different grades, including Chartered status, as a means of promoting standards of practice.

## How do I plan my CPD and what tools can help me?

CIEEM's Training and Professional Development Programme provides members with discounted short courses, conferences and other formal and informal events designed to support the development of your professional competences. Careers guidance including job profiles, case studies and sector-based information is also available on our website to help you plan your CPD activities into the long-term.

Planned CPD is good for you, your employer and the Chartered Institute. The [CIEEM online CPD Planner](#) is designed to complement the CPD recording tool which when used together will help you to identify gaps in your professional competences and plan ahead to meet your CPD needs.

## FAQ'S regarding CPD and the online CPD tool

### **I'm about to go on maternity leave/paternity leave, what should I do?**

Contact our membership team on [membership@cieem.net](mailto:membership@cieem.net) to request an abeyance agreement and suspend your membership whilst you take a career break. If you need any further advice or if the above isn't an option for you, get in touch with us.

### **I work part time; do I still have to meet the same CPD requirements?**

Part time workers still have to maintain and develop their competency. There are plenty of ways to complete CPD with limited time and funding. These include: attending free webinars, volunteering and reading In Practice or journals. CPD doesn't necessarily need to be technical, you can also use transferable CPD such as; problem solving, negotiating, giving presentations, committee work.

### **Can I still log my CPD from previous years on the online CPD tool?**

Yes, you will just need to enter the date which each activity was completed on, and the tool will automatically file this into the appropriate year.

### When do I need to 'submit to CIEEM' on the online tool?

There is no need to formally submit your CPD to CIEEM unless you are asked to do so in the annual audit or for a membership upgrade.

### What do I do if I'm not working due to sickness or thinking about taking a sabbatical?

Please contact [cpd@cieem.net](mailto:cpd@cieem.net) or [membership@cieem.net](mailto:membership@cieem.net) if you are experiencing sickness, personal issues, thinking of a career break etc. and we can advise you on the most appropriate solution.

### 'I'm not sure I can renew my membership as I can't fulfil the CPD requirements'

Please email [cpd@cieem.net](mailto:cpd@cieem.net) and speak to the Professional Development Team for further guidance, before making a decision.

## The following questions may help you plan your CPD:

1

### What CPD did I undertake last year?

- What gaps did this CPD identify?
- Are there any areas of CPD which I would like to further develop?
- Does any of my current CPD lapse or need reviewing this year?

2

### What are my professional and personal goals for the year ahead and in the longer term - what do I need/want to learn?

- Are there any formal requirements I must meet? (e.g. as specified by my employer to count towards a qualification or maintain a license or skill).
- What about my own career aspirations and personal development – what competences do I need to develop to help me progress?
- Which areas of the [CIEEM Competency Framework](#) do I need to maintain or develop to a higher level to support my CIEEM membership application, upgrade, or Chartered status application.

3

### How will I achieve my goals?

- What will be the best way to acquire the skill, knowledge or experience I need?
- How can the learning be delivered – will it require a structured approach (like a training course) or would an unstructured more informal approach be just as beneficial (e.g. reading In Practice).

4

### When and how will I review my progress?

You can set yourself reminders to review your CPD plan/record every 3 or 6 months to make sure that you are keeping up to date with the plan that you have set yourself and with CIEEM's requirements.

**These CPD requirements are effective from June 2025 and supersede any previous CIEEM CPD requirements/guidance.**



Raising the profile of professional ecological and environmental management and promoting the highest standards of practice for the benefit of nature and society.



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