



# Organising Training Courses

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Professional Guidance Series  
PGS2

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## Introduction

It is in the interests of all professional people to systematically maintain, improve and broaden their knowledge and skills. This is necessary for the execution of professional and technical duties. Formal training to assist such Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is widely available and provided by a range of private organisations and academic institutions. However, much of this training is residential in nature and can be sufficiently expensive to preclude take up, except on a restricted basis.

This leaves a gap in the provision of training. This gap can be partially filled if professionals themselves are able and willing to organise low-key, inexpensive events where they can exchange their own knowledge and skills with others.

Disciplines within the profession have specific training needs and therefore a limited target audience. Organisation of training by professionals for fellow professionals makes sense in both organisational and cost effectiveness terms. It is therefore an active policy of CIEEM to organise training courses on aspects of work that are directly relevant to ecologists and environmental managers.

## What is a Training Course?

Training courses are:

- Specifically designed to meet the training and CPD needs of the participants
- An opportunity to meet and to network with other professionals with similar interests
- Inexpensive and straightforward to organise
- Inexpensive to attend, and
- Practical, interactive and useful.

Training courses provide new or enhanced knowledge to participants. In many cases this is based on sharing the experiences of both the organiser and the participants. They cannot be expected to provide:

- Formal training (i.e. leading to a qualification)
- Sophisticated literature or detailed handouts summarising presentations or field sites.

This does not mean that training providers cannot choose to provide extra information if they wish to!

## The Role of the CIEEM Secretariat

The CIEEM Secretariat does the following:

- Encourages people to organise training courses on suitable subjects and in appropriate locations;
- Liaises with, and advises, training providers
- Liaises with other networking partners
- Compiles the Professional Development Programme
- Organises the circulation of the Programme and ensures that the workshops are listed in the *In Practice* diary and on our website
- Sends the training providers any relevant documentation (copies of the Fee Claim Form, Feedback Summary Form, Participant Feedback Form, Training Providers Expenses Claim Form and Risk Assessment Form)
- Accepts bookings
- Sends the joining instructions to all registered participants via email for their particular training 3 weeks prior to the course.
- Analyses training feedback forms
- Reports on the training programme to the Training, Education and Career Development Committee of CIEEM
- Issues CPD Certificates to attendees.

## The Training Provider

Who Can Organise a Training Workshop?

- One, or several, people who have specialist knowledge and skills in a discipline relevant to professional ecologists and environmental managers who are willing/able to impart their knowledge to others

- One, or several, people who are able and willing to facilitate a training course and able to pull together other people who will be able to impart the necessary knowledge.

### **Training Proposals**

The training provider should fill out the New Course Proposal Form and submit it to the Secretariat. This proposal form gives contact details, an outline of the learning outcomes, a summary of the content and delivery methods, and experience of the training provider. A 'Guidance for Training Providers' document is available to help. This is the basis on which potential participants will decide whether or not the training is appropriate for them.

### **Risk Assessment**

The training provider is required to carry out a simple risk assessment of the training location(s) and activities, if there is a field element. A copy of this assessment must be sent to the CIEEM Secretariat along with the contract and training information. Any risks and hazards which are highlighted in this Risk Assessment need to be included in the workshop information sent to the Secretariat.

### **Training providers' checklist**

A detailed checklist of items that need to be considered by training organisers are given on page 5-6 of this leaflet.

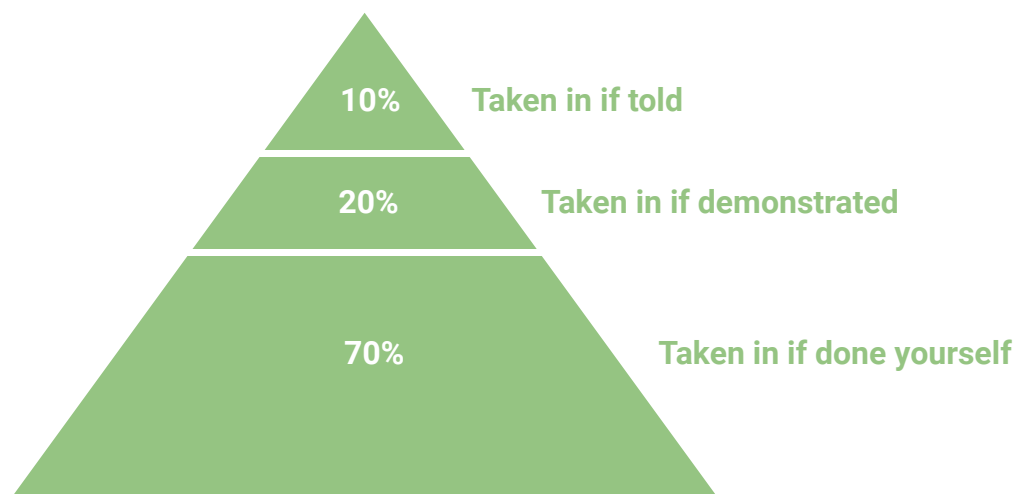
## **Methods of Conveying Information**

The best training workshops are those where a mix of presentation methods are used. These might include:

- Presentations
- Active participation of the participants
- Use of appropriate visual aids (such as flip charts, slides and/or PowerPoint presentations)
- Role playing using real examples (e.g. for personal skills or management training, or subjects where communicating information is a key feature)
- Case studies
- Practical demonstrations
- Field visits.

If possible avoid lengthy lectures or straight presentations by one or two people. An informal, discursive style is more effective and at all times the participants should be able to interject with questions or comments.

Successful training needs a variety of approaches if the information is to be absorbed.





## Budget and Expenses

Be aware of the restricted budget that is available. Training course participants pay a set delegate fee to CIEEM. Out of this income, CIEEM will pay a set fee per paid up participant to each training provider to cover all contingencies. In 2019, a training provider will receive £50 for each of the first ten paid up participants and £25 for each additional person above ten. This would put each course budget in the range of £500 - £750 on the basis of between 7 and 20 participants. CIEEM cannot subsidise those who overshoot the budget.

## How Many Participants?

The maximum and minimum number of participants will depend on the individual training course and how it is organised. Generally, courses will be small gatherings of no less than 10 but no more than 20/25 participants. Courses aimed at developing identification skills may be more effective with a ceiling of about 12. Some courses have been in such demand that a second (or even third) day has been added by agreement of the organiser.

## Practical Tips to Keep Costs Down and the Organisation Simple

### **Venue**

To minimise costs most workshops tend to use venues that can be provided for free, for example a meeting room provided by a member's employer. If you have difficulty finding a room, contact the CIEEM Secretariat for advice.

### **Lunch**

Try to avoid going to the expense and organisational hassle of organising lunch for participants and ask them to bring their own packed lunches. In some circumstances a suitable canteen or pub may be close at hand but remember that the time for lunch will have to be restricted if it is not to eat into the limited time that is likely to be available for the training sessions. You will of course need to organise teas and coffees at suitable intervals (unless using self-service canteen facilities for which participants should not be charged).

### **Speakers**

Be particularly careful of inviting speakers who then expect either fees or expenses to be paid. The training courses are meant to be informal and hopefully, professionals who make a major contribution to the day will participate without asking a fee or any significant expenses (but would, in turn, not be expected to pay the training course fee). If you do ask individuals to help out, make it clear from the outset the terms upon which they are to contribute and the expenses situation.

## Training Fellow Professionals

In order to both expand the potential range of training courses available and to reach a wider audience, CIEEM may link with other organisations providing similar, relevant, informal training courses.

## Want to Organise a Training Course?

Training courses can be fun as well as an excellent opportunity to meet fellow professionals! Many organisers have reported getting a real buzz from the day. If you are interested, please contact the CIEEM Secretariat at the address or telephone number at the end of this document.

## Acknowledgement

We are very grateful for the help of members of the Training, Education and Continuing Professional Development Committee and Professional Affairs Committee, in the development of these guidance notes.



## Training Provider's Checklist

A successful training course, even though it may be informal in style, still needs careful planning. With this in mind the following checklist has been devised to help organisers plan their own training course. Please use this document as an aide memoire and use as appropriate for each training course. A timetable is included below but current experience is that participants are increasingly reluctant to commit themselves well in advance of the workshops. This means that some flexibility will need to be exercised over whether to run a workshop or not if the numbers seem low a month before the start - the last few days can sometimes make a real difference!

### 12 Months Before

- Decide to offer training course(s) and draft an outline for it
- Identify suitable venue/check availability (visit if possible) and terms of hire (if applicable)
- Select provisional date
- Liaise with CIEEM Secretariat regarding topic, date and venue (check no overlap with similar programmed events)
- Determine the budget and how to work within it
- Send outline to helpers and check their availability
- Confirm and book venue
- Book guest presenters/helpers and clearly explain expenses situation
- Modify outline if necessary and send final text to CIEEM Secretariat. This should include details of the course title, level and type of training, maximum numbers, date, venue, time and length, and 50 word summary of what the course aims to cover and achieve.

### 6-12 Months Before

- Consider and plan the schedule for the day in more detail. Fill out the Course Information Form and return to the CIEEM Secretariat.
- brief guest speakers/helpers and allocate roles
- sign and return contracts
- Carry out risk assessment for field sites.

### 3 Months Before

- Book equipment (Projector etc);
- Arrange access to sites if necessary
- Arrange transport if necessary
- Send the following information to the CIEEM Secretariat:
  - map and directions\*
  - parking details/collection from station/other point\*
  - start and end time\*
  - footwear/dress requirements\*
  - detailed timetable\*
  - other background information
  - suggestions for pre-training reading or preparatory work
  - contingency plans for bad weather.\*

\* Asterisked items must be included where they are relevant, others are optional.

### 1 Month Before

- Check number of bookings with CIEEM to confirm booking numbers
- Decide whether to run workshop based on current numbers
- Check venue and equipment is booked
- Check helpers
- Confirm site access
- Do planning for your script/slides/examples etc.

## 1 Week Before

- Plan the schedule in detail with helpers
- Arrange name badges (sticky labels will do) and any last minute equipment
- Check venue/site and rehearse if necessary
- Check access to venue, chairs, equipment, screen, cups, toilet facilities etc.
- Prepare other handouts where appropriate
- Print participant feedback forms
- Organise any materials/displays for participants to browse through on arrival
- Check contingency plan.

## On the Day

- All training providers should have regard for Health and Safety and for arrangements for the comfort of participants during the day
- Activate contingency plan (?)
- Set out room/site/display/equipment
- Co-ordinate arrival/welcome
- Run training course
- Get participant feedback forms filled in by individual participants
- Clear up, thank helpers, return equipment, keys etc.

## After Workshop

- Debrief helpers and note lessons for next time
- Send collated assessment, plus your own comments to CIEEM Secretariat
- Submit Training Providers Fee Claim Form
- Pay expenses to helpers/guest presenters and settle any bills

And don't forget to enjoy yourself and have a great day!



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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