

Continuing Professional Development – Policy and
Guidelines
RICS Accreditation Standards Body – South Australia

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Section One – Purpose of this document

The purpose of this document is to set out the Continuing Professional Development requirements for applicants seeking a Certificate of Accreditation, awarded by the RICS Building Industry Accreditation Authority in South Australia.

Section Two – What is CPD and why is it beneficial?

What is CPD?

Continuing Professional Development is the systematic updating and enhancement of skills, knowledge and competence that takes place throughout your working life. It should be closely linked to your current work.

As part of the application or re-application process for gaining a Certificate of Accreditation, applicants are required to demonstrate that they have carried out, recorded and have evidence of - an annual program of learning activities designed to maintain competence and improve professional knowledge.

Why is it beneficial?

While it is a requirement to undertake professional development in order to maintain your license as a Building Certifier, there are many benefits to undertaking CPD. For example;

- To remain competent for the benefit of your clients
- To remain competent for the benefit of your employer
- To gain knowledge needed to move into a new area of business
- To develop a skill needed for promotion, such as management expertise
- To remain up-to-date with new developments in your area of expertise
- To keep abreast of new advances in technology
- To protect the public from negligence

Section Three – How much CPD is required?

RICS will assess applicants' continuing professional development when applying and re-applying for a Certificate of Accreditation. In doing so RICS will seek to ensure that the professional development is sufficient, relevant and that there is an appropriate mix of activities and learning methods.

It is important to consider the quality of learning, as well as points or hours. Spending all day in a seminar is of little use if only one speaker or topic was relevant or of use to you. Equally, an activity which takes up little time, for example an hour-long breakfast briefing may be very useful in meeting your learning needs. Undertaking relevant learning that achieves your objectives is the key to personal advancement and that of the profession. In assessing your CPD for the award of a Certificate of Accreditation RICS will take into account the nature of your CPD undertaken and how it relates to you specifically.

As a benchmark, there will be an ongoing expectation that existing licensed certifiers complete 90 hours of professional development in any three-year period. This will be assessed upon re-application for a Certificate of Accreditation. (Applicants seeking to gain a Certificate of Accreditation for the first time have slightly different requirements – please refer to the 'Applicant's Guide.')

Section Four – What type of CPD is required?

RICS recognises that many different activities can qualify as CPD. Deciding on what is "relevant" is up to the individual professional because a person's professional development is based on personal circumstances, differing competence and specific aims and objectives. Professionals shouldn't restrict learning to formal training courses, seminars and workshops. RICS recognises there are many other relevant methods of learning.

This section below provides examples of activities from which you may be able to obtain a learning outcome. RICS does not expect applicants to undertake CPD from every category but a minimum of 20 hours of formal courses/seminars (Category 6) should be undertaken over any three-year period.

The sources of CPD can be grouped into six categories:

1. Professional work-based activities
2. Professional Body Working Groups or Assessment Panels, CPD Technical Discussion Groups
3. Presentations and Publications
4. Self-directed and informal learning
5. Personal activities outside work
6. Courses, seminars and conferences

A breakdown of how many hours can be claimed from each category is also set out below.

Work-based activities (on-the-job development) (Maximum 10 hours over 3 years)

- business management skills
- coaching/mentoring
- personnel management skills
- planning and running an in-house training event
- adviser/consultancy positions
- arbitrator/expert witness/adjudicator
- professional interviews
- voluntary (professional) work
- special project work
- staff training
- study of a foreign language may be relevant if you work in an international context
- information technology
- secondment - transfer to another department

Professional Body Working Groups or Assessment Panels, CPD Technical Discussion Groups (Maximum 30 hours over 3 years)

- professional body technical work
- course accreditation exercises
- professional body assessor training and assessments
- university external examiner positions
- internal/ external technical CPD discussion groups

Presentations and Publications (Maximum 15 hours over 3 years)

- research for publications and papers
- preparation for presentations to colleagues, clients, conferences, professional bodies
- participation in public meetings
- lecturing/ guest lecturing

Self-directed and informal learning (Maximum 15 hours over 3 years)

Private study in the form of structured reading is one of the most efficient and cost effective ways for professionals to broaden their knowledge in areas of general professional interest and also in more specialised areas. There are savings to be made from using this method both in terms of time and money. Suggested sources of information are:

- books, journals, magazines, newspapers
- internet sites of professional interest
- technical manuals
- research papers
- CD-ROMs
- transcript of speeches/conference items, lecture/seminar notes
- reports/guidance notes issued by professional bodies/govt bodies
- CPD study packs

Personal activities outside the workplace (Maximum 10 hours over 3 years)

Skills acquired from personal activities outside the workplace are just as relevant to the development of personal competence.

- Voluntary (non-professional) work. Active involvement with voluntary/charitable organisations can be a rewarding experience. You may be learning about applications for grants and lottery funding or developing skills in organising/running meetings.
- School governor, JP, member of PTA. These activities can broaden knowledge and understanding of many issues and institutions which form part of the broad context of people management.
- Parish council/other local government work
- Youth groups
- Local business community boards eg Chamber of Commerce

Formal Study, training courses and conferences (A minimum of 20 hours over 3 years but no maximum limit.)

- Training courses and seminars - in-house or external - on any topic of relevance to your professional and personal development.
- Long-term qualifications and projects (6 months or more) eg full/part-time study, open distance learning, contributions to original research
- Such formal study, training courses and conferences would normally be closely related to the Benchmarks and Competences set out in the 'Applicant's Guide' but broader topics could be undertaken (see Section Five below.)

Section Five – What topics should be covered by CPD?

Building Certifiers should bear in mind the Benchmarks and Competences set out in the 'Applicant's Guide' – these are an important guide to areas of competence that must be maintained. However, RICS recognises that broader CPD topics in the property, planning, legal and construction industries may be very relevant to the competence of Building Certifiers. In the same way less technical areas such as business management, finance, marketing, IT, professional practice, leadership and other areas may be entirely relevant.

Section Six – Keeping a record and providing evidence of your CPD

Keeping records allows you to demonstrate that you have sought to maintain your competence in the event that a claim or allegation is made against you. It is also important in demonstrating that you have met the RICS Certificate of Accreditation CPD requirements.

Please use Template 5 of the 'Applicant's Guide' to record your CPD.

RICS expects that a range of evidence of completion of CPD should be submitted when applying or re-applying for a Certificate of Accreditation.

Evidence might include the following:

Work-based activities: A description of the activity undertaken and how it has helped your professional development.

Professional Body Working Groups or Assessment Panels, CPD Technical Discussion Groups: Minutes of meetings showing attendance, a letter from a professional organisation, other similar documentary evidence. For internal/ external technical discussion groups, minutes of the meeting are required showing the topics discussed and who was in attendance.

Presentations and Publications: A copy of the presentation, publication or event flyer.

Self-directed and informal learning: Details of the learning/reading undertaken. (Specific article, CD, web page etc)

Personal activities outside the workplace; A description of the activity and how it has helped your professional development in a building certifier context.

Formal Study, training courses and conferences; A course transcript, diploma or certificate of attendance. (RICS keeps records of attendance at our events so no evidence of these is required.)

This list is not exhaustive and other evidence will be considered.

Section Seven – RICS as a provider of CPD

RICS is a CPD provider and will aim to provide relevant CPD events and access to other learning material (research reports, journals, guidance notes, market analysis) that will help building certifiers achieve their minimum requirements.

However, RICS will not limit or favour any particular providers of CPD. In respect of formal courses and seminars, professional journals etc RICS will accept CPD provided by any other reputable providers.

