

The Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Policy

1. Introduction

This is a policy document for all ACP members. It aims to provide broad, facilitating guidelines to support and enable the continuing professional development of all qualified Child and Adolescent Psychotherapists (CAPTs). While the policy aims primarily to be of assistance to individual clinicians, it is also intended to be useful to decision-makers who contribute to developing appropriate CPD requirements of CAPTs e.g. managers, commissioners and assessors gauging the suitability of applicants for posts, senior posts, and associated pay scales. It is not intended to be tightly prescriptive since there are a range of ways of maintaining professional competence and achieving career development. The ACP CPD scheme needs to match the aspirations of individual CAPTs and to develop the service offered to service users. It also needs to be endorsed and supported by the employing organisation or Trust. These guidelines have been prepared by the ACP Professional Standards Committee after extensive consultation. They are regularly monitored and updated so that the policy reflects the ongoing requirements of the CAPT's clinical work, effectively reflecting clinical need and provision to meet it.

In addition to the ACP's own professional standards, the ACP is an approved member (since November 2014) of the Professional Standards Authority (PSA) for Health and Social Care. This is an independent statutory body accountable to Parliament which is responsible for the accreditation of voluntary professional registers. The primary aim of the PSA is the protection of the public. Members of the ACP continue to be registered and to work within the ACP Codes of Ethics and Conduct. The accreditation of the ACP by the PSA provides a further, overarching level of professional scrutiny which allows the public increased access to information about practitioners.

2. CPD returns and authorisation by an ACP approved supervisor

From 1st January 2015 and beyond, ACP registration (which includes fee payment and CPD returns) is processed through the website. CPD returns will be completed online, and supervisors will need to approve CPD returns by logging-in to the ACP website. **A supervisor must be a full ACP member and have been qualified for at least two years, or be registered as a Supervising Associate in order to supervise ACP child psychotherapists.** This is because, as a condition of our PSA accreditation, we need to be clear that all members are being supervised by approved supervisors. The full criteria for Supervising Associates and an application form can be requested from the office. A Supervisory Associate is expected to be a professional who is registered with an appropriate professional body, who has a psychoanalytic training (which would have included intensive cases in training) and substantial experience of supervising and clinical work with children and adolescents. The Supervising Associate will need to pay a small fee each year to register. In line with ACP members, Supervising Associates will be required to re-register each CPD year that they wish to remain in role. [You can read the full Supervision Policy here](#)

Completed CPD returns are sent to the member's supervisor for review. Supervisors will be asked to write a few words about the member's work and can add any comments they feel would be useful. The supervisor will also be asked to confirm that they have heard the member's work and confirm that they are satisfied that the member is working within the [ACP Competence Framework](#). Supervisors are asked to contact the ACP directly (in confidence) if they have any concerns regarding the member's CPD submission or conduct.

An authorised CPD return is essential for ongoing registration with the ACP for all members (other than those exempt from CPD requirements) and for validation to work with children and adolescents.

The ACP may undertake a review of all CPD returns and contact members who are not meeting requirements.

3. ACP Members required to submit an annual CPD return

CPD returns relating to the preceding academic year are required from all members who have worked as a child psychotherapist during the CPD period. CPD returns cover 1 September to 31 August each year. Once the CPD return has been submitted, the CPD returns are sent to the supervisor for authorisation. Failure to submit the CPD return means that members will not be able to re-register with the ACP for the following year.

- All ACP members are required to complete a CPD return if they have worked during a CPD period, unless exempt as laid out in section 4.
- If the member has been both a 'not working' and 'full' member within the same CPD period, please contact the office for advice as to whether a CPD return will be required.

4. ACP Members who are exempt from filing a CPD return:

- Trainees, throughout the training period.
- Overseas members who do not have a UK based practice in person or online (including supervision, consultation or teaching)
- ACP members who have been a registered as a 'not working' member during the CPD period. Members can register as 'not working' for the following reasons;
 - Members who have stopped all clinical work, supervision, clinical teaching, parent work and consultation under their 'Child Psychotherapist' title and ACP registration. This includes members who are fully retired and members who have not practiced in the year of the current CPD period for reasons of illness, parental leave, career break or any other circumstances which create a temporary break in professional practice. If planning to return to practice, members in this category should inform the ACP Registrar of their circumstances and how they plan to meet the requirements set out in the return to work Policy. You can read the [Return to Work Policy](#).
 - Members no longer, or not currently, working as CAPTs but who may be working in related professions such as adult psychotherapy (who will then comply with the registration and CPD requirements of that related profession).

5. ACP Required Standards for Continuing Professional Development and Information Required for CPD Returns

These standards apply to all registered members working either in the NHS, public sector, a charity/other organisation or those working in independent practice.

Members in Independent Practice

A member undertaking any form of private work must ensure that they fulfil the requirements under the ACP Independent Practice Policy. These are that members have appropriate public liability insurance for their work, are registered with the Information Commissioners Office (ICO), if applicable and that they have appointed two named Clinical Trustees. Details for both are required on the member's ACP Profile and must be kept up to date. [Read the Independent Practice Guidelines here](#)

DBS / PVG / Access NI

It is required that all ACP members have a current Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Certificate, Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme (PVG) or Access NI Certificate and you will be asked to provide the date of this being granted. You will also be asked to state if your DBS/PVG/Access NI shows any previous convictions and if so to give details. Members who work in the NHS and other organisations will have their DBS updated according to the organisation's policy; those members who work in independent practice must ensure that their enhanced DBS certification is updated every three years.

If you are working in Independent Practice and are uncertain about how to apply for an enhanced DBS, please contact the office.

Safeguarding

It is required that all members are up to date with Level 3 Safeguarding trainings. All members employed by the NHS are required to update their Level 3 Safeguarding training every three years and the ACP Board has decided that this standard should apply to all members. There is a question on the CPD return asking for the date of your latest Level 3 training. For CPD purposes members are expected to produce a Level 3 Safeguarding certificate if asked to take part in the annual CPD Audit. [View the full Safeguarding Policy here](#)

Assessment and Management of Risk

All ACP members are trained to assess and manage risk. However, developments in research, clinical guidance and clinical practice, mean that risk is an important area to think about for all members' ongoing professional development. The ACP recommends that members regularly undertake further learning in this area - this may be within peer supervision groups, clinical discussion groups, reading, seminars, external training or other appropriate method.

Recording CPD activities

All required CAPTs must submit an annual CPD return giving current information about their employment status and CPD activities undertaken for the designated CPD year, CAPTs must be able to demonstrate on the annual CPD return that their CPD activity in the previous year has met ACP standards. Data from the CPD returns allows the ACP to monitor ongoing CPD activity within the profession and to consider current and future CPD needs for the profession. The ACP strives to maintain a high standard of professional work in the services provided to children and their families by its members.

All CAPTs must maintain a continuous and up-to-date record of CPD activities. The records should include details of CPD activities undertaken with dates and accompanying evidence (such as CPD attendance certificates at conferences, seminars, and other training events. A note should be kept of other activities, for example, teaching, research, supervising, and involvement in activities supporting and promoting the profession so that these can, if necessary, be verified). Each year five percent (5%) of the membership (selected on a random basis) will be asked to supply more detailed information about the CPD activities noted on their return (read section 7. Annual Audit of CPD declarations, for more information).

Minimum Hours of Clinical Work

To maintain core skills, all CAPTs in either the public or private sector are required to undertake a minimum of **12 hours per month of psychotherapeutic contact with children, adolescents or parents and families. This can include clinical teaching, supervision, parent work and consultation.** It is recommended that this includes individual psychotherapy with three individual cases as well as a combination of other direct work. It is recognised that it may not be possible for all members to fulfil this requirement due to their own unique circumstances. If the member has not met the minimum clinical hours in the CPD year and are not able to apply to become a non-working member, they will need to contact the office. They may be eligible to apply to become a Full Member-Reduced Hours.

NB. The ACP also strongly recommends that at least every seven years all CAPTs undertake an intensive case 2/3 times a week for at least one year of treatment.

Minimum Hours of Clinical Supervision

Qualified Child and Adolescent Psychotherapists are professionally and legally accountable for their own work. Safe clinical practice and sound personal development depends essentially on ongoing clinical supervision.

Clinical supervision is integral to maintaining core clinical skills. Frequency will vary according to grade and experience, and it should be noted that the figures below outline a minimum number of hours. This applies whether a member is an employee or self-employed in independent practice.

- **Full Member-Newly Qualified CAPTs** should receive two hours per month of individual clinical supervision from a Consultant Child Psychotherapist or senior member of the profession for up to two years following qualification to help them to consolidate their training and professional development.
- **For more experienced (two years post qualification)** members the requirement is monthly supervision, for one hour per supervision, and at least ten supervisions in the year.
- Peer group supervision can replace individual supervision for members who have been **qualified for 5 years or more**. Peer group supervision should take place monthly and no less than 10 supervisions in the year.

In addition to individual clinical supervision, the ACP recommends that where possible all practitioners link together to form peer supervision groups. CAPTs are encouraged to make use of opportunities to join in multi-disciplinary clinical discussions. It is also recognised that specialist external supervision may be necessary at times for all grades of staff to develop specific clinical skills and this may be specified in the Personal Development Plan for those employed in the NHS.

A member's CPD return must be read and authorised by an ACP approved supervisor. The choice of supervisor to authorise your CPD return should be someone with whom you discuss your clinical work on a regular basis. For NHS members who have supervision on their NHS work, this should be your NHS clinical supervisor if the supervisor is an ACP Child Psychotherapist, or an ACP Supervising Associate, and not an external supervisor or member of a peer group. If your NHS clinical supervisor is not recognised by the ACP, and you cannot negotiate this to be the case, then you will need to name an ACP external supervisor or an ACP member of a peer group with whom you discuss your work regularly. However, this arrangement should be reviewed regularly. [The full Supervision Policy here](#)

The minimum hours for clinical and non-clinical learning

The minimum hours for Clinical & Work-Based Learning (Category A) and Non-Clinical Learning - Professional Activity & Continuing Education (Category B) is 15 hours each per annum.

Guidance and examples for each category are given below. These are informed by the needs of the children and families with whom ACP CAPTs work with and by the requirements of the Professional Standards Authority. They are also guided by the Competence Framework. There has been much discussion in the Professional Standards Committee about how having a minimum number of hours set for CPD activity might be helpful for members to both aim to achieve and to use to put their case to employers for time to be given for this essential professional activity.

- **Examples of Category A. Clinical & Work-Based Learning: (15 hours of activity per annum)**
 - Case presentations.
 - Reflective practice (evidenced in recording of work and in discussion/supervision of work).
 - Peer supervision and clinical discussion.
 - Learning from clinical and work-based experience (evidenced in recording of work and in discussion/supervision of work).
 - Involvement in organisational aspects of work-place (e.g. promoting understanding of CAPT role with individuals and within the multi-disciplinary professional context of the work).
 - Membership of work-based Journal club.

- Participation in/delivery of in-service training.
 - Supervision of trained and training multidisciplinary colleagues.
 - In the NHS, evidence of learning activities undertaken in progression within the Knowledge and Skills framework.
- **Examples of Category B. Non-Clinical Learning - Professional Activity & Continuing Education (15 hours of activity per annum)**
 - Involvement in your professional body, the ACP.
 - Membership of a specialist interest group.
 - Membership of other relevant professional bodies or groups in relation to child psychotherapy
 - Lecturing and teaching.
 - Organising tutor role for professional/academic courses relating to child psychotherapy.
 - Organising role in specialist professional groups, including journal clubs.
 - Presentations at academic or professional meetings and conferences.
 - Mentoring.
 - Supervision of professional research.
 - Acting as academic examiner.
 - Tutor role.
 - Attending branch meetings (ACP; Unite).
 - Acting as expert witness.
 - Further education and training - attendance at appropriate courses and additional professional training.
 - Clinical audit and research.
 - Conducting or participating in research and doctoral study.
 - Developing and running appropriate professional courses.
 - Reading professional books, journals, and articles.
 - Reviewing professional books, journals, articles.

The list is not an exhaustive list and the PSA's intention is that the registrant will make a professional judgement regarding which activity and what level of involvement will allow activities to be put forward for CPD purposes.

The ACP CPD scheme is based on a process of ongoing professional learning and development; it focuses on the individual's learning achievements and the ways in which these are reflected in clinical practice and service delivery which promotes and supports appropriate, effective, and accessible services at all levels, directly and indirectly. Our emphasis is on the evidence of CPD undertaken across all categories.

Full Members - Reduced Hours

Full Member-Reduced Hours are permitted to do less than 12 hours of clinical work per month. This includes clinical teaching, supervision, consultation as well as direct work with children and families. In order to join the Full Members- Reduced Hours category, members will need to have completed an application form, and this will need to be approved by the Registrar. If members in this category then exceed 12 hours of clinical work per month, they will need to contact the Registrar to discuss leaving the Reduced Hours category.

Full Member-Reduced Hours are expected to undertake 15 hours of Category A CPD (Clinical & Work-Based Learning) and 10 hours of Category B (Non-Clinical Learning - Professional Activity & Continuing Education) per annum. This is a slight reduction in CPD, compared with the ordinary Full member requirement.

Full Member-Reduced Hours must continue to be supervised on the same basis as Full members (monthly supervision). The only exception to this, is if teaching is the only clinical activity that the member is undertaking, Full member – Reduced hour members are permitted to have termly supervision by their course lead, as long as they are an ACP member.

Please note, Full Member-Newly Qualified members cannot apply to be Full Member-Reduced Hours until they have moved out of the Newly Qualified category, as it is unlikely that members will have had the opportunity to consolidate their practice as Full Members, if working less than 12 hours per month.

All other CPD requirements remain the same, including DBS and safeguarding requirements.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

The ACP is committed to help members reflect on equality, diversity and inclusion and difference in all aspects of their work. Members will be asked to comment briefly on how thinking about difference and other aspects of diversity has featured in their work that year.

It is recommended that members update their learning and CPD on EDI regularly. There is no prescribed amount of hours in this category currently but members are encouraged to engage with learning in this area. There are many ways to do this, which may include for example: reading, case discussion, training, seminars, peer group supervision etc.

6. The Timeframe

CPD returns are required annually. The period of each CPD return is from 1 September through to 31 August the following year (e.g. 1 September 2021 – 31 August 2022). Following the CPD period, the ACP will request members to complete their CPD return in the September (e.g., September 2022). A completed and authorised CPD return will be required by all members unless exempt under section 4 of this policy (ACP Members who are exempt from filing a CPD return).

Members are required to submit their CPD return within the specified time (the deadline will be confirmed closer to the date). It is the responsibility of each member to ensure that their CPD return is submitted online within the specified timeline. Failure to do so will put their registered membership status at risk.

The ACP Registrar will inform a member who has not submitted their CPD return, of the breach of ACP Code of Rules and has the authority to de-register them according to the [**Rules of the Association**](#) (9 (vi) *members in breach of CPD requirements and who have not provided good reasons for the breach as laid out in the CPD Policy will be removed from the register after having been given 90 days written notice*).

7. Annual Audit of CPD declarations

Each year, in the Spring following the CPD period, 5% of members who completed a CPD return will be randomly selected to take part in the CPD audit. This is in accordance with the requirements of the PSA, of which we are an accredited register. The selected members are required to complete an audit form and provide evidence to support their CPD return. Evidence could include: CPD attendance certificates at conferences, seminars, and other training events, as well as email confirmation for other activities, for example, teaching, research, supervising, and involvement in activities supporting and promoting the profession so that these can, if necessary, be verified. This process will be overseen by the CPD lead and other auditors who are Full Members of the ACP.

Exemption from the audit will only be granted on grounds of ill health, bereavement or other significant extenuating circumstances and will need to be approved by the CPD lead. If you are exempted from that particular audit, you will automatically be audited the following year.

8. Special Circumstances

There are likely to be times when it is not possible for a member to fulfil her/his CPD requirements. Examples include parental leave, illness or changing work situations in a member's career. In such circumstances members should inform the CPD Lead and Registrar as soon as possible. It may be appropriate to apply to become a Full member - Reduced Hours member (see above for further details).

If the break from work and CPD activity is of sufficient duration (over 2 years) , the member should consult the [Return to Work Policy](#), which sets out the conditions that will need to be met for the member to return to practice. If the break is less than two years, there is no additional CPD to complete, but it would be helpful to consult the [Return to Work Policy](#) as this sets out the requirements for members to be Full Members.

If you have any concerns about your CPD return, please do not hesitate to contact the CPD lead and Registrar: registrar@childpsychotherapy.org.uk

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