



2011 - 2012

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

SCHEME RULES

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS &

NOTE OF ATTENDANCE

Revised June 2011

The Bar Council
cpd
Continuing Professional
Development

INTRODUCTION

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is the systematic maintenance, improvement and broadening of knowledge and skill and the development of personal qualities necessary for the performance of professional duties throughout the barrister's working life.

The Continuing Professional Development Programme was initiated as a means of ensuring the establishment and promotion of high standards of work within the profession and to enable barristers to develop their careers by acquiring new professional skills and areas of practice.

The scheme supports the objective of the Irish Bar to 'provide its clients with a high level of expertise in all areas of law combined with skilled advocacy'.

Details of the scheme are outlined below. Members will be responsible for their own planned development.

The rules of the CPD scheme may be subject to revision by the Bar Council periodically.

CPD SCHEME RULES

The Bar Council CPD scheme commenced on 1st October 2005 and it applies to all practising barristers. A CPD practice year is a period of 12 months ending on 30th September each year.

CPD Requirements – Ten points per year

Individual training needs vary and the CPD scheme has been designed to reflect this by offering flexibility in the training activities which qualify for CPD points. Barristers are required to attain ten points during each practice year.

Where a barrister undertakes CPD activities in the months of August or September of any year and thereby exceeds the total CPD points for that year, any excess points up to a maximum of five may be applied to the following years CPD activities.

To meet the points requirement barristers are free to choose activities relevant to their individual professional needs. Points are generally accrued on the basis of one point per hour of activity.

Every barrister shall endeavour to keep a record of the CPD undertaken and to comply with the scheme.

Criteria for CPD Activity

The activity must be:

- Of significant intellectual or practical content and must deal primarily with matters related to the practice of law;
- Conducted by persons or bodies that have suitable qualifications;
- Relevant to a practitioner's immediate or long term needs in relation to the practitioner's professional development.

CPD activities include but are not restricted to the following:

- Attendance at conferences, courses or seminars;
- Teaching;
- Training;
- Chairing;
- Research and writing.

Other examples include:

- Legal research and article writing for a publication;
- Post graduate legal studies;
- Active engagement in on-line legal programmes;
- Reviewing legal textbooks;
- Undergoing training in a one-to-one situation in online research, etc.; e.g. training in use of legal databases
- Preparing, editing, revising etc., papers, reading guides, materials, mock trials, mooted problems, model answers etc., for legal exams or CPD programme;
- Preparing curricula, reading guides, teaching materials etc., for CPD activities.

Course will be understood to mean an education programme, seminar, workshop, lecture, conference, in-house group discussion, distance learning, face-to-face training session held as part of a distance learning course, summer school, revision sessions, computer-based learning and course presented by means of videotape, audiotape, simultaneous broadcast or such other system or device.

Other activities may include law courses, preparation and presentation of approved training courses, teaching of approved courses, writing articles, books, private or group study and work as an external examiner of legal courses.

If a member has a query regarding the appropriateness of an activity they should contact the CPD Manager.

The number of points that may be attained through various activities is noted in the CPD points summary herein.

Programmes that can provide CPD points

CPD points may be accrued from seminars and programmes provided by, for example:

- The Council of the Bar of Ireland;
- The King's Inns;
- Groups of barristers organising their own events;
- Circuit barristers;
- Advocates organisations in other jurisdictions;
- Third level institutions;
- Other professional bodies (e.g. Institute of Taxation);
- State or semi state bodies (e.g. DPP / AG / CPS).

Accreditation

All appropriate CPD events conducted by or on behalf of the above organisations are automatically regarded by the Bar Council as relevant CPD activities.

Members may satisfy CPD requirements in a similar fashion with other organisations subject to ex ante or ex post individual approval by the CPD Manager / Internal Relations Committee.

Waivers

The Internal Relations Committee shall deal with any issues that arise surrounding compliance with the scheme by individual members.

HOW IS CPD ADMINISTERED & MONITORED

Members are required to maintain a record of their compliance with the scheme requirements. They will be required to certify their compliance on an annual basis.

The Bar Council shall monitor compliance with the obligatory CPD requirements and may audit the CPD records of any member of the Bar at any time. For external events in particular, members of the Bar have a duty to maintain copies of vouching CPD documentation such as certificate of attendance, invoice or a conference handout. The documentation should be retained for 1 year from the end of the 12 month period to which they relate. A member of the Bar may be asked to produce evidence that he or she has complied with the obligatory CPD requirements.

Self certification

Having attained 10 points members are required to certify that they have met the requirements. The relevant form on which to certify compliance will be distributed to members during the year and can be downloaded from the CPD section of www.lawlibrary.ie.

For Your Records

The next section is a 'Note of Attendance' on which you may wish to note details of activities undertaken this CPD year and for which you wish to claim CPD points. On the other side of the page you may note details of any reading, writing or personal study you undertook. This form should not be confused with the CPD Compliance Card.

If you require further information or advice please contact CPD Managers Inga Ryan or Marjorie Connolly at the Council of the Bar of Ireland, Distillery Building, 145/151 Church Street, Dublin 7. Tel 01 817 4614. Fax: 01 817 5677, E-mail: cpd@lawlibrary.ie.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do I register for Bar Council CPD events?

Mid week events do not require bookings. Members may register for certain events by contacting the CPD Unit in the Bar Council on e-mail: cpd@lawlibrary.ie

How many hours should I claim for events I attended?

This is a matter for each barrister. The CPD system is one of self-certification so a barrister is expected to record the number of hours attended, rather than those advertised.

Am I required to attend any compulsory courses?

You will only have to attend compulsory courses if you are in your first 12 months of practice. If this applies you will be required to attend sessions which have been devised especially for pupils.

Do I have to submit documentary evidence of courses attended when returning my completed CPD Compliance card?

No. However, members are required to retain evidence of having attended any seminar, course, conference or lecture attended for which CPD hours are to be claimed. You should ensure you sign the registration documents and that there is a record of your attendance.

How many points can I claim from writing an article or a paper?

One point per hour of preparation up to a maximum of 4 points may be claimed per article or paper published.

How many points can I gain from writing a textbook?

Up to 8 points may be claimed per textbook. Co-authorship will attract the same number of points.

Can I claim points for reading legal journals?

Yes. ½ a CPD point per article read may be claimed up to a maximum of 2 points per year.

Are points available for viewing recorded CPD DVDs or listening to MP3 downloads of CPD seminars?

This falls under the same heading as 'Reading legal journals' and points may be claimed for these on the same basis i.e. A maximum of 2 points may be claimed for **either** reading legal journals **or** viewing CPD DVDs **or** listening to MP3 files of recorded CPD seminars.

Are points allowable for participation on a committee?

Points are not allowable for participation on a committee.

Can I claim points for the same seminar if I present it more than once in the same year?

Points can only be claimed once in a given year for the presentation of a seminar.

I lecture in law on a regular basis. How many points can I claim from lecturing?

You may claim a maximum of 6 points for ongoing lecturing of law.

How many points may I claim for giving a talk or one off lecture?

Up to 4 points may be claimed for preparatory work for a seminar or conference (1 point per hour of preparation) and points may also be claimed for attendance at the event, again on a point per hour basis.

Does the Bar Council recommend seminars run by specific providers?

Each barrister should decide which seminars meet the criteria for CPD activities and which would be of most benefit to him/her.

The main consideration is that they are relevant to the practice needs of the profession.

Can I carry CPD points over from year to year?

Only in the case where a barrister undertakes CPD activities in the months of August or September thereby exceeding the total CPD points for that year, may excess points up to a maximum of five be applied to the following years CPD activities.

I do voluntary work for FLAC and other voluntary organisations. Can I claim points for this activity?

Points may be claimed for voluntary legal work (if approved by the Bar Council). These may be claimed on a point per hour basis, to a maximum of 6 points.

My particular circumstances do not appear to be covered by the regulations or have changed during the relevant practice year. What do I do?

Contact the CPD Unit in the Bar Council at the earliest opportunity to discuss the problem.

How will compliance be monitored?

You are required to certify compliance with the scheme annually. The CPD Compliance Card should be completed and returned to the Bar Council CPD Unit.

Who do I speak to in the Bar Council?

Queries regarding CPD should be directed to the CPD Manager at the Bar Council at tel. 01 817 4614 or email: cpd@lawlibrary.ie.

CPD points summary

Members are required to partake in at least two activities for CPD purposes. This means that participation in a conference over the course of two or more days will not suffice.

Attendance at courses - 1 point per hour up to a maximum of 9 points may be claimed for attendance at a course.

Teaching/Lecturing – 1 point per hour up to a maximum of 6 points may be claimed for the first year, 3 for subsequent years. This is the total for all subjects taught and all teaching activities.

Presenting a one off talk - Up to 4 points may be claimed for preparatory work for a seminar or conference (1 point per hour of preparation) and points may also be claimed for attendance at the event, again on a point per hour basis. The maximum number of points that may be claimed in this instance is 6.

Exam marking – 1 point per hour up to a maximum of 4 for the first year, 2 for subsequent years.

Voluntary and like work (if approved by the Bar Council) – 1 point per hour worked up to a maximum of 6 points.

Reading legal journals / Viewing CPD DVDs / Listening to MP3 file downloads of CPD seminars – ½ point per article read / DVD viewed / MP3 download listened to – up to a maximum of 2 points.

Published textbooks – Up to 8 points may be claimed per textbook published during the period. Co-authorship will attract the same number of points.

Judging moot trials – 1 point per hour worked up to a maximum of 2 points.

External Examiner – 1 point per hour worked up to a maximum of 2 points.

Relevant Private or Group Study – 1 point per hour to a maximum of 2 points.

Curriculum proposal or curriculum preparation – 1 point per hour of preparation up to a maximum of 2 points.

Chairing a conference or seminar - ½ point per hour and additional points may be claimed for attendance at the event.

