



Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

First edition

The Royal College of Radiologists

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1 Introduction

In 1994, the Royal College of Radiologists (RCR) was one of the first Colleges to establish a formal process of Continuing Medical Education (CME). The resulting RCR guidelines on CME proved to be the template for clinical radiology and radiotherapy throughout Europe. They focussed on attendance at lectures and seminars at national or international courses. Since that time there has been a recognition that CME has a much broader base involving other types of valuable educational and professional activities. The nature of a doctor's work has evolved and encompasses many tasks and skills that are not primarily medical but are still fundamental to the total delivery of patient care. The term that now covers the wider range of continuing medical and professional development is CPD (Continuing Professional Development). Integral to the idea of CPD is the concept that the process should reflect the individual needs. This document sets out the new RCR CPD policy for clinical radiology and clinical oncology. The effective date for the new policy is 1 January 2001. Since the new guidance is less restrictive there is no need for a transition period.

The Royal College of Radiologists' CPD scheme applies to all clinical oncologists and clinical radiologists, other than those who are in training posts, who are practicing in the UK.

It is recognised that these guidelines will need to be kept under review in the light of experience of CPD at national and European levels. Innovation in the provision of CPD opportunities is to be encouraged.

2 Definitions

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is concerned with the acquisition and maintenance of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values in order to ensure that doctors are able to maintain and improve their competence and performance in their specialist areas as well as in any areas of non-medical responsibility (eg education, management).

CPD is an ongoing process involving both individuals and teams, which enables the needs of patients to be met and the health outcomes and priorities of the Directorate/Trust/NHS to be delivered. The future requirement of annual assessment and five yearly revalidation will probably make CPD, in practice, a mandatory process.

Changes in career emphasis occur over time, including the development of lead roles in audit, risk management or clinical governance. Substantial management roles may be undertaken, including clinical director, medical director, clinical tutor, head of training scheme, regional advisor or postgraduate dean. These positions require appropriate training as part of planned personal career development. It is essential that such personal development should be mutually defined by the employer and the doctor and reviewed regularly. Equally important is for employers to identify the financial and other resources needed to support CPD by their employees. The audit process can inform CPD planning, as clinical audit can help to identify any weaknesses in the standards of service provided. All CPD planning should be flexible to ensure that it does not hinder appropriate unplanned learning opportunities.

Continuing Medical Education (CME) is a component of CPD comprising educational activities directly related to clinical practice designed to maintain competence, upgrade knowledge, improve performance, and to keep abreast of the newest techniques and skills. CME represents an ethical and moral obligation for each doctor who continues to practise clinically.

Personal Development Plans, including the medical education component, should be based on discussions at the annual individual review (appraisal) by the employing Trust. The following should be identified:

- Learning needs
- Learning opportunities in order to meet these needs
- Possible changes in practice
- Resources required

The importance of CPD is outlined in a number of NHS documents including *A First Class Service: Quality in the NHS, 1998*, *The Effectiveness of CPD, 1998 and 2000*, *Continuing Professional Development: Quality in the New NHS, 1999*.

3 Approved CPD Activities

The RCR has been examining appropriate methods for accrediting CPD, a process that is necessarily more complex than the previous method of awarding CME credits. In addition to attendance at formal lectures, seminars and workshops, radiologists and clinical oncologists may need time out of the workplace to undertake hands-on experience in new techniques with specialists in training departments. Specific management skills may be developed through courses, appropriate workshops, undertaking post-graduate diplomas or degrees in management and related subjects. Similarly, educational roles may be developed through corresponding education-based courses and qualifications.

3.1 Enrolment in the Scheme

Each doctor practising clinical radiology or clinical oncology in the UK should be enrolled in the RCR CPD scheme with effect from January of the year following completion of training so that there is continuity between Postgraduate Training and Continuing Professional Development. This will happen automatically for those awarded a CCST. Other doctors taking up a UK staff position, including those who trained or have been employed overseas, should contact the RCR to effect their enrolment.

3.2 Credit Targets

*The required number of credits over a five-year period is 250. Each credit is a unit of CPD and corresponds to one hour of educational activity. Credits are divided into Category I and Category II, which reflect different patterns of learning. The total 250 credits can be achieved solely as Category I credits or as a combination of the two categories. However, a maximum of 125 Category II credits will be accepted in a **five-year period. At least 50% of the Category I credits and 50% of the total credits should be from relevant clinical educational activity.***

Credits in excess of the required 250 **will not be carried forward** to the following five-year period.

The credit target of 250 credits will be required regardless of whether a specialist is working **part time** or **full time**. No yearly target has been set and this should enable those who have been sick, or absent from work for other reasons, to achieve their total target over the five year period.

3.3 Category I CPD credits

3.3.1 Meetings and courses

Category I CPD credits can be earned by **attendance at radiological/oncological or management courses with prior CPD approval** from the RCR, the RCP, or the European Union of Medical Specialties (UEMS), or in the case of overseas courses, from the national professional authority or its delegated radiological speciality body. Lectures given by visiting experts from outside institutions can earn CPD credits provided prior application to the RCR is made by the host institution. Courses organised by **other medical specialities and scientific societies** where the course content is relevant to radiological or oncological practice and where there is prior CPD approval by the **host speciality or society** will be accepted as Category I credits. Clinical radiology in particular deals with referrals from all other medical disciplines and this provision will, therefore, underscore the commitment of radiologists to keep up to date with all aspects of medicine.

An attendance certificate from the course organiser, giving the title, date and location of the course, the name of the participant and the number of CPD credits (including name of awarding body), must be retained.

- 3.3.2 **Organised training secondments** to another centre to work with recognised specialists or managers in order to learn new skills will be recognised for credits. A formal programme and timetable will be required that clearly outlines the educational goals and the methods of assessment of achievement by the specialist concerned. **4 credits a day can be awarded with a maximum of 16 credits per year.** These credits will be awarded as Category II if the training takes place in the clinical oncologist's or radiologist's own centre (see below). An attendance certificate from the supervisor, confirming the dates, times and content of the sessions, must be retained.
- 3.3.3 **Attending courses leading to a postgraduate Diploma, or for a Masters or Doctoral degree.** **50 Category I credits** may be awarded for attendance at a degree course and **30 Category I credits** may be awarded for attendance at a Diploma course. An attendance certificate from the organiser, giving the course title, dates and times of attendance and the participant's name, must be retained.
- 3.3.4 **The following activities can attract Category I credits with a maximum of 15 Category I credits** per year from all items combined. The credits will apply effective of the date of publication or presentation of the item in question. For lectures, seminars, posters and AV displays, credits are available only on the first occasion of presentation.
- (a) **Preparation and delivery of formal lecture or seminar at a national or international meeting.** **3 Category I credits.** A copy of the course programme, giving the date and title of the course, the lecture date and time, title and presenter's name, must be retained.
 - (b) **Presentation of a paper or a poster at a national or international meeting.** **3 Category I credits** for the first author and **1 Category I credit** for all other authors. A copy of the course programme, giving the date and title of the course, the title of the paper or poster and the presenter's name, must be retained.
 - (c) **Authorship of a full paper** in a recognised peer-reviewed medical or scientific journal or **book chapter.** **10 Category I credits** for the first author and the corresponding author and **3 Category I credits** for all other authors. A copy of the first page of the published paper must be retained. For a book chapter, a copy of the contents list, giving the date of publication, the title and author's name, must be retained.
 - (d) **Authorship or Editorship of a book.** **15 Category I credits** for each author or editor. A copy of the title page, giving the book's title, date of publication and the name of the author or editor, must be retained.
 - (e) **Authorship of a case report** in a recognised peer-reviewed medical or scientific journal. **3 Category I credits** for the first author only. A copy of the title page of the published report must be retained.
 - (f) **Audio-visual displays** at an accredited national or international meeting. **3 Category I credits** for the first author only. A copy of the course programme, giving the course title and date, the title of the display and the presenter's name, must be retained.
 - (g) **Editing or refereeing a paper or report** in a recognised peer-reviewed medical or scientific journal or **assessing a grant application.** **1 Category I credit** for

each paper or grant reviewed. Appropriate supporting documentation must be retained.

- (h) **A number of medical journals** have been approved for CPD. They produce a regular series of update articles covering a broad range of topics in a special CPD supplement of the journal. An MCQ test based on the update material completed by an individual clinical oncologist or radiologist and returned to the journal offices for validation can attract **2 Category I credits** per issue. Up to **6 Category I credits per year** may be earned in this way. The Internet may be used to facilitate this process.

Requests for CPD credits have to be sent with details of publication or internet package to the RCR Director of CPD for clinical radiology or clinical oncology for validation. A certificate from the journal, giving the doctor's name, the title, date and volume of the journal and the number of credits awarded, must be retained.

- (i) **National specialist examination setting meetings. 3 Category I credits per examination** up to a maximum of **6 Category I credits per year**. Confirmation from the meeting organiser, giving the examination title, date of the meeting and name of participant, must be retained.
- (j) **Examining for a national specialist examination. 3 Category I credits per examination sitting** up to a maximum of **6 Category I credits per year**. Appropriate supporting documentation must be retained.

3.4 Category II CPD credits

- 3.4.1 Category II credits can be claimed for **formal local hospital educational activities**, eg grand rounds, regular organised small group teaching activities, eg journal clubs, clinical audit meetings, etc. **1 Category II credit per hour can be awarded**. Such activities must be individually recorded in the RCR CPD diary.
- 3.4.2 **Organised training secondments** to learn new skills with specialists or managers in the clinical oncologist's or radiologist's own place of work are eligible for Category II credits. A formal programme and timetable will be required with prior clearly outlined educational goals and assessment of achievement by the specialist will be required. **4 Category II credits a day can be awarded with a maximum of 16 credits per year**. The activity must be recorded in the RCR CPD diary.
- 3.4.3 **Learning or updating computer skills**, particularly in order to improve educational skills and for departmental uses, including PACS, can attract Category II credits. A formal programme of training will be required with appropriate quality assurance. **An annual maximum of 10 Category II credits will be available for this type of activity with 1 credit for a half-day session**. The activity must be recorded in the RCR CPD diary.
- 3.4.4 **Self directed learning**. The RCR and the European Association of Radiology (EAR)/UEMS recognise the importance of self-directed learning by reading books, journals, etc and by using audio-visual and computer based programmes, both free-standing and linked through the Internet. **1 credit per hour can be awarded up to a maximum of 20 Category II credits per year**. (See also paragraph (h) of Category I credits above). Such activities must be recorded in the RCR CPD diary.

3.5 General Comments

Credits cannot be earned for service on committees or working parties whether local, national or international.

Educational meetings related to management issues and the delivery of a clinically effective and cost effective health service will be recognised for Category I and Category II CPD credits as appropriate.

Since the majority of clinical oncologists and radiologists who take on organisational or educational roles maintain their clinical commitments it is essential that medical education and training focussed on the clinical care of patients continues to form at least 50% of their Category I credits and at least 50% of their total CPD credits.

It is recognised that not all aspects of CPD can be covered by CPD credits; the credits quoted are, therefore, simply a required component, which in many instances will form just one part of a personal development plan that should be assessed by regular appraisal.

The RCR believes that entitlement to study leave and financial support for the purpose of participation in a recognised CPD scheme should be contractual and be sufficient to cover the necessary costs.

A summary of the activities approved for credits, the number of credits available and annual/five-yearly maximums is given in Appendix I.

4 Accreditation of CPD Activities

4.1 *Accrediting Bodies*

The RCR will continue to accredit clinical radiology and clinical oncology courses within the UK and award appropriate CPD Category I credits. These credits are accepted by many other countries for CPD. Meetings in other clinical disciplines will continue to be recognised for CPD credits where cross recognition between Colleges is agreed. Meetings outside the UK will be recognised through the European Accreditation Council for CME (EACCME), which has been set up to provide an umbrella organisation for awarding appropriate credits for European and international meetings. American Medical Association (AMA) CME points for North American meetings will also be recognised.

4.2 *Applications for Accreditation*

The organisers of UK courses are required to apply prospectively **at least two months in advance** to the **RCR Director of CPD for Clinical Radiology or Clinical Oncology** by submitting a copy of the course programme. This should set out the educational goals of the programme, course content, with exact times for all academic sessions, titles of lectures, names of lecturers and expected learning opportunities. It should also identify the group(s) likely to benefit from participation including those outside clinical oncology and radiology. Should a course be repeated, renewed approval will be required and organisers must submit a further application. This applies to all annual courses and meetings.

4.3 ***The RCR Director of CPD for clinical radiology or clinical oncology will:***

- (a) Consider the educational content of the course
- (b) Consider if the involved lecturers are of national or international standing
- (c) Award an appropriate number of Category I CPD credits based on the hours of educational activity.

Course organisers will be notified as to the number of Category I CPD credits awarded and will be asked to include this figure in their advertising. They will also be asked to provide attendance certificates confirming the CPD credits awarded to participants.

A rapid response mechanism will be available for consideration of those local courses for which the normal advance notice to attendees has not been possible. In such circumstances course organisers should fax details of the course or lecture to the RCR. The number of Category I credits awarded (if any) for attendance will be notified to the organisers as soon as possible. The same strict criteria required for prior approval will apply.

4.4 *Category II CPD Activities*

Individual educational and professional development activities will not be prospectively assessed and accredited by the RCR but they should be undertaken in a structured manner with clear objectives, a defined content and recorded in the CPD diary with a relevant record of achievement.

4.5 *Records of CPD Activity*

Each participant should log credits in a CPD diary, held either on paper or electronically. Large conferences such as the European Congress of Radiology (ECR), the Radiological Society of North America (RSNA) or the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) meetings may provide a detailed list of credits (or points) achieved at a particular course or

congress. Documents supporting attendance at courses and other CPD activities should be retained by each clinical oncologist and radiologist as evidence for CPD validation. These should not be submitted to the RCR unless specifically requested.

4.6 Monitoring Radiologists' CME/CPD Activities

The RCR has been responsible for monitoring individuals' CME credits. Individual clinical oncologists and radiologists have been responsible for collecting certificates from courses and clinical meetings attended and for maintaining a log-book of other CME activities. The RCR has audited 10% of participants each year and will continue to monitor at least 10%. The RCR will continue to provide this service for its members and Fellows as part of the documentation for GMC revalidation. The RCR will need to see evidence, which will include some or all of the following: attendance certificates for Category I meetings, the activity recorded in a diary (or equivalent), copies of first page of articles, programmes for lectures etc. Details of the required documentation for individual activities are given in Section 3 and Appendix I.

4.7 Quality Assurance on Continuing Professional Development

All course providers will be required to audit the effectiveness of the educational content and the quality of the lectures and workshops. The quality of the courses will be monitored by the body responsible for the accreditation. In order to be awarded Category I CPD credits, courses organisers should provide attendees with an evaluation form dealing with the quality of the lecture presentation, background and utility. Some reflection on learning points would seem appropriate.

Appendix I: A Summary of Approved CPD Activities

Activity (evidence required)	Category	Number of Credits	Limits	
Attending presentations at accredited meetings (attendance certificate)	I	1 per hour	No limit	
Learning new techniques under supervision at a specialist centre (attendance certificate)	I	4 per day	16 per year	
Setting national specialist examination questions/conducting national specialist examination (attendance confirmation)	I	3 per sitting (maximum: 6 per year)	15 per year	
Delivering formal lecture or seminar at an accredited meeting (course programme)	I	3 per first presentation		
Presentation of a paper or a poster at an accredited national or international meeting (course programme)	I	3 for first author 1 for other authors		
Publication of paper in peer reviewed journal (title page of paper)	I	10 for first and corresponding authors 3 for other authors		
Author or Editor of a book (title page of book)	I	15 per book		
Author of book chapter (contents list)	I	10 for first author 3 for other authors		
Publication of case report in a peer reviewed journal (first page of case report)	I	3 for first author 0 for other authors		
Display of an audio-visual presentation at an accredited national or international meeting (course programme)	I	3 for first author 0 for other authors		
Editing a paper for a peer-reviewed journal (appropriate documentation)	I	1 per paper		
Refereeing publications (appropriate documentation)	I	1 per paper		
Assessing grant applications (appropriate documentation)	I	1 per application		
MCO assessed reading of accredited journal/using accredited internet or computer based interactive CME package (certificate)	I	2 per journal/package (maximum: 6 per year)		
Attending a course leading to post-graduate qualification (evidence of attendance)	I	50 for degree course 30 for diploma course		
Attending local clinical review, audit or other multidisciplinary meeting, including clinico-radiological conferences and multidisciplinary team meetings (record in CPD diary)	II	1 per hour	-	125 per CPD period
Attending other hospital or regional post-graduate meeting (record in CPD diary)	II	1 per hour	-	
Local attachment for skill training to support service or academic work (record in CPD diary)	II	4 per day	16 per year	
Learning or updating computer skills (record in CPD diary)	II	1 per half-day	10 per year	
Reading books, journals etc for self-directed learning (record in CPD diary)	II	1 per hour	20 per year	

NB Medical Educational activity must contribute at least 50% of Category I credits and 50% of total credits

Appendix II: Questions and Answers

This document on CPD seems rather more complicated than previous ones relating to CME. Why?

The new guidance is more extensive and flexible than previously in order to allow credit for many new aspects of continuing professional development. The guidance now provides detailed answers to questions that have been posed by Members and Fellows and takes into account the recent guidelines of the European Association of Radiology and Union of European Medical Specialists.

What are CPD credits?

A credit is a unit of CME/CPD and represents one hour of approved educational activity. There are two types of CPD credit.

Category I credits, equivalent to what are also called **external credits**, are available for attendance at meetings approved for CPD by recognised educational bodies including medical Royal Colleges, specialist societies, general medical societies and associations.

Post-graduate centre lectures addressed by an individual from outside the centre are eligible for Category I credits. Management and audit activities relevant to clinical practice may also be approved. Satisfactory completion of CME journal-based multiple choice question tests can contribute up to 6 Category I credits each year. Question setting and examining for national specialist examination can contribute 3 Category I credits per sitting. Category I credits are also available for publications, postgraduate qualification courses and other activities as listed in the main document.

Category II credits, equivalent to what are also called **personal or internal credits**, are available for participation in local post-graduate education activities, attendance at grand rounds, interdisciplinary education meetings and clinico-radiological meetings/multi-disciplinary team meetings. Postgraduate centre lectures addressed by internal speakers fall into Category II.

Local attachments for skill training to support service or academic work will also attract Category II credits at a rate of 4 credits per day.

The type of credit attracted by a "local" lecture is determined by whether it is addressed by an external or an internal speaker. The former attracts Category I and the latter Category II.

What is my CPD credit target?

An individual's CPD target over a five year period is 250 credits. This equates to an average of 50 credits per year, but there is no formal annual credit requirement. Up to 125 credits in a five year period may be obtained from Category II activities.

50% of the total CPD credits, including at least 63 Category I credits, must be for clinical education. CPD credits cannot be transferred from one five year period to another. All CPD target periods run from

1 January to 31 December. An individual will be enrolled in the CPD scheme from the beginning of the year following that in which eligibility for Specialist Registration is achieved. Clinical oncologists or radiologists who take up staff positions in the UK without a CCST, including those who trained or have been employed overseas, should contact the RCR to effect their enrolment in the CPD scheme.

Those who achieved specialist status prior to the introduction of the CME scheme in 1994 were notified of their initial target date by letter in the autumn of 1993. Those achieving specialist status after the scheme began were informed of their CME target date when their certificate of accreditation or CCST application was approved. Initial CME target dates were staggered so that the administration of the scheme could be handled more effectively. This meant that most individuals who participated in

the scheme from its introduction had initial CME target periods that were shorter than five years. As the scheme has now been operational for over seven years all CME/CPD target periods are five years long.

A new CPD target period begins immediately upon conclusion of the previous one regardless of whether or not the target was achieved.

How does the College know how many credits I have?

For most of an individual's CPD period the College does not know how many credits have been achieved. Towards the end of an individual's five year CPD period, the College will send a form asking the individual to indicate how many CPD credits have been achieved in each category. In order to preserve the accountability of the CPD scheme, an audit of at least 10% of participants is conducted. These randomly selected individuals are asked to submit sufficient documentation in the form of attendance certificates, proof of publication and presentation etc and their CPD diary, to confirm the achievement of the CPD target. This audit may increase depending on the requirements for GMC revalidation. Once the College is satisfied that the target has been achieved, a certificate of satisfactory CPD participation will be issued.

What happens if I am not able to achieve my CPD target?

The Royal College of Radiologists' original CME scheme was voluntary. The College has strongly encouraged all of its specialist registered Members and Fellows to participate in the scheme to the fullest extent possible to benefit from further education. All those who are involved in the training and education of specialist registrars are required to be up-to-date with their CPD targets. The Training Accreditation Committee includes a requirement for this as part of its assessment of training schemes. Otherwise there are at present no measures that the Royal College of Radiologists or any other body may take against an individual who does not achieve their CPD target. Inclusion on the Specialist Register is not dependent, at present, upon satisfactory CPD participation.

Members and Fellows will be aware, however, that revalidation will be a requirement in future and an annual performance review will be required of all those working in the NHS. The form that revalidation will take is still under discussion, but it is likely that documentation of CPD will form part of these processes.

How many credits have been awarded to Meeting X?

This question is most appropriately addressed to the course organiser as the College's CPD Office can only advise if the RCR has made a credit award to the meeting. For a multidisciplinary meeting it is quite possible that another College or Faculty made a credit award. Additionally, if the organiser has not sought approval, by making this enquiry the potential participant can encourage this to be done.

I wasn't given an attendance certificate. What should I do?

Organisers of courses that are approved by the RCR are asked to issue attendance certificates. Participants should always ask for a certificate before leaving a meeting if one is not offered. If you are included in the CPD audit you will only be able to count Category I meeting attendance that is supported by attendance certificate.

I have got 248 credits, isn't that enough?

Unfortunately, the answer must be no. The target of 250 credits over five years was chosen as representing a level considered to be achievable. Even being a very small number of credits short of the target will mean that a certificate of satisfactory CPD participation cannot be issued.

I work part-time. How many credits do I need?

The target of 250 credits applies to all regardless of the number of sessions per week that are worked. Those working less than full time need to update their skills to be the same level as their full time colleagues.

How does an absence from work for maternity or sick leave affect my target?

It is hoped that the CPD target is achievable even if an absence from work has occurred. You should participate in CPD activities to the greatest extent possible. However, if, due to maternity or sick leave, you are not able to achieve your target, special consideration will be given at the end of your target period.

I have retired from all clinical practice. Do I still need to obtain CPD credits?

Once involvement in clinical practice has ceased, enrolment in the CPD scheme can be discontinued. Please write to the CPD Office so that the appropriate action can be taken. At the same time, arrangements can usually be made to continue membership of the RCR at a much reduced subscription rate.

I have retired from my permanent NHS post but am still undertaking some private work and/or locums. What is my CPD requirement?

All those who are practicing in the UK, however infrequently or few sessions, should participate in the CPD scheme.

Citation details:

The Royal College of Radiologists (2001). *Continuing Professional Development*. The Royal College of Radiologists, London.

ISBN 1 872599 74 5

RCR Ref No RCR(01)2

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