Continuing Professional Development

Principles, Requirements & Guidelines
for UKCP Member Organisations

Introduction

The UKCP Registration Board (RB), UKCP Standards Board (SB) and UKCP Education and Training Committee (ETC) agreed that it was time to update the Core UKCP CPD Principles, Requirements and Guidelines. This was partly in response to requests for further information and guidance from individual registrants and trainees; member organisations at quinquennial reviews and else wise; and in light of the attention being paid to CPD generally - within the psychological professions, and more widely in all professions. This initiative was led initially by the RB because of the specific question of a need for requirements and guidelines on Return to Practice for Registrants.

To this end draft versions on CPD Policies, Requirements and Guidelines have been sent out widely to UKCP Sections UKCP MOs and UKCP Institutional Members for consultation. It is hoped that in the near future, through the work of the Service Development Committee and the increased involvement of the individual Registrant in the work of the UKCP, that mechanisms will exist to enable individual registrants to have an opportunity to input to such documentation more fully.

The spirit of the following holds that CPD approaches are developed as an extension of reflective and reflexive practice in a manner consistent with the practice of the modality. The CPD requirements and guidelines herein are envisioned as being fulfilled by a creative mix of actions and reflections that will be defined in more detail at UKCP Institutional Member, UKCP Section and UKCP MO levels.

Where reference is made to UKCP Member Organisations and UKCP Sections this should be read throughout to include all the Sections, Colleges, Member Organisations and Institutional Members of UKCP.

The document refers to work based, self-directed studies and community-based activities as examples of the different ways in which the CPD requirements and guidelines might be achieved. It is recognised that the terms such as skills, knowledge, experience, reflective and reflexive practice can be understood in a variety of ways within the professions of psychotherapy and psychotherapeutic counselling. They can be apprehended differently in the context of any one specific modality or by a specific MO within a modality. The following should be read with an understanding of the need for modality compatibility to be borne in mind in relation to the principles, requirements and guidelines therein.

The requirement of minimum hours was introduced in part to be closer to the current best practice in Europe as represented by the European Association for Psychotherapy (of which the UKCP is a founder member) guidelines and requirements on CPD. It was recognised that minimum generic requirements are one of the most frequent requests regarding CPD from registrants to the centre.
Section 1

1. Background

1.1. It is now widely accepted in the majority of professions that there is a need for Continuing Professional Development (CPD). Thus practitioners in medicine, the law and accountancy, as well as dentists, nurses, librarians, and others, have some form of requirement for keeping abreast of developments in their respective fields.

1.2. One of the central aims of UKCP is to ensure the protection of the public. One of the ways of achieving this is by the continuing maintenance and improvement of standards of practice. The purpose of this document is to set out within a broad framework the necessary elements to be included within a Continuing Professional Development policy to be devised by Member Organisations for their registered psychotherapists / psychotherapeutic counsellors in a manner consistent with the practice of the modality.

1.3. Item 3.3 of the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the UKCP states that one of the objects of the Charity is: “to promote (Or assist in the promotion, preservation and protection of public health by encouraging) high standards of training and practice in psychotherapy and the wider provision of psychotherapy for the public.” Similarly the UKCP Document entitled Ethical Guidelines states in section 2.8 that: “Psychotherapists are required to maintain their ability to perform competently and to take the necessary steps to do so.”

1.4. It is through the implementation of a Continuing Professional Development policy that this requirement becomes formalised, and, by taking up the issue of Continuing Professional Development, UKCP is aligning itself with other organisations and professions that place strong emphasis upon verifiable CPD.

2. CPD for Psychotherapy and Psychotherapeutic Counselling

The task of developing CPD models that are credible, specific and appropriate for the practice of psychotherapy and psychotherapeutic counselling is a complex one, and models of CPD that could suit other professions might be unsuitable for psychotherapy and psychotherapeutic counselling. Also psychotherapists and psychotherapeutic counsellors already carry out many of the elements that other professions are building into their CPD. For instance reflective practice is the basis of our work, and psychotherapists’ and psychotherapeutic counsellors’ use of supervision and consultation is similar to the process of mentoring found in other professions. The psychotherapeutic endeavour is enabled not only by the therapist’s professional development but also by his or her personal development.

3. Principles of CPD

3.1. Whilst CPD has the potential to be a creative tool in the enhancement of professional practice, it also has the potential to be a bureaucratic nightmare of form filling and hours of accounting. In order to militate against this, a number of principles are important:

   a) The overarching purpose of CPD activity is the protection of the public interest by ensuring the maintenance and improvement of standards of practice.

   b) Registered psychotherapists and psychotherapeutic counsellors need to be able to take full responsibility for the aliveness and development of their own practice. The CPD policies developed by member organisations, therefore, are likely to be varied, reflecting the diversity of practice modalities within the Council.
Within the profession of psychotherapy and psychotherapeutic counselling, we already have a model of reflection on practice and CPD policies should seek to build on this. CPD activity must be focused on finding ways of maintaining and improving the quality of the work being undertaken.

Professional Development is more than simply sitting in our consulting room clocking up hours of experience. Development involves the active reflection on experience in a way that allows for the individual to specify what has been learned or reconfirmed. Thus CPD is about moving from passive experience to active attempts to learn from that experience.

Professional Development is therefore something that is capable of being accounted for and in some way verified. In order to demonstrate that it has taken place, an individual needs to be able to describe what happened and specify at least some of what has been learned in a way that another informed individual can understand. In this sense, CPD seeks to build on the current model of reflective practice which is, for example, facilitated by professional consultation/supervision.

In order to allow for the maintenance of quality, and the vastly differing needs of psychotherapists and psychotherapeutic counsellors, any system must have sufficient flexibility to allow for individuals to develop in ways that are meaningful to them. In order to achieve a desired level of flexibility, it is crucial that CPD be broadly defined. Thus for example, the development of skills in clinical supervision, teaching, research and management all need to be seen as valid professional development and be accounted for by organisational policies.

Clearly a workable system must be reasonably achievable both in financial, emotional and time terms for individuals engaged in day to day practice.

In order to allow for flexibility, CPD policies need to allow for the possibility of individuals developing through work undertaken outside of their registering member organisations. Policies and practice should allow for the individual to develop in a variety of ways, and shall not be applied in ways that restrict this.

In order to be both bounded and flexible, CPD policies shall work with a 5-year cycle.

### 4. Definition of CPD

1. We have taken CPD as being the systematic maintenance, improvement and broadening of knowledge, awareness, skills, abilities and the development of personal and professional qualities necessary for effective practice throughout the practitioner's working life. It will, in the main, be in a manner consistent with the practice of the modality. It must not be confined to modality or MO only development or activity.

2. Gaining a professional qualification is not the final aim but rather just one stage in the process of lifelong learning. Psychotherapists and Psychotherapeutic Counsellors need to consider the need to consolidate, change and develop in order to remain competent to practice in an evolving profession.

3. There is a duty for all members to update and broaden their professional knowledge and skills on a continuing basis. This becomes particularly important when the psychotherapist / counsellor is returning from a period of absence from practice. The intention is to ensure that members remain at the forefront in maintaining and developing their professional competence for their own benefit, for the profession and for that of society.

4. Initial Professional Development (IPD) is seen as bridging the gap between the starting point of a trainee and attaining the professional registration (UKCP Accreditation).
4.5. Continuing Professional Development (CPD), as a post professional qualification, is the maintenance and development of that qualification as demonstrated by a commitment to ongoing professional development. For CPD to be effective a balance of work based, self directed study and community activities could be encouraged.

5. Requirements of UKCP Member Organisations and UKCP Institutional Member Organisations

5.1. Each member organisation will develop a CPD policy that is appropriate for its registrants and in a form that is consistent with the practice and ethical codes of the Organisation and UKCP.

5.2. Such policies will be in line with the principles outlined above.

5.3. Policies will include a statement as to how the balance of clinical CPD (via supervision, training etc.) and wider professional development (via committee activity etc.) is to be managed.

5.4. CPD policies need to make clear the relationship between CPD and re-registration and re-accreditation processes. The Registration Board would expect all policies to meet or exceed the following requirements for CPD activities:

a) **At least 250 hours of CPD activity in any five year period.**

b) **A minimum of 20 hours during any year within that five year period.**

c) **Assessment of CPD:** Policies should also include clear information about when and how CPD will be assessed and how the assessment of CPD relates to re-registration. Procedures for addressing appeals relating to assessments of CPD should be provided.

d) **CPD and Re-Accreditation:** At present within the UKCP system CPD is assessed annually at re-registration but may also be further assessed in greater detail through more formal re-accreditation procedures, which may occur annually of every 5 years.

e) When specifying the formal review / assessment points within a policy the maximum period between formal reviews of a practitioner’s CPD must be five years.

f) **Sabbaticals:** Clear rules for the use of sabbaticals should be included. The Registration Board considers any period during which a practitioner remains registered but does not see any clients to be a sabbatical. Normally the Registration Board would expect practitioners intending discontinuance of client work for a period of more than 3 months to inform their MO.

g) Policies additionally should make clear what the CPD requirements are for periods in which no client work is undertaken, of greater than 6 months, and which occur between re-accreditation assessments (these must be consistent with the Registration Board’s criteria for returns to registration). Guidance on this are dealt with further in **Section 2** of this document.

h) **Minimum Practice as an element of CPD:** the Registration Board considers the UKCP National Register of Psychotherapists and the UKCP National Register of Psychotherapeutic Counsellors to be professional registers of individuals who are currently fit to practice. Consequently the Registration Board considers it reasonable that CPD requirements define a minimum level of client work as a core element.
i) Each UKCP modality Section / College and Institutional Member is responsible for setting the minimum level of practice for practitioners in that modality or institution – these must be adopted by MOs and individuals in that modality or institution and clearly covered in the CPD requirements.

5.5. The devised policy should be flexible, and therefore not hinder any registrants who might seek to diversify their practice to include models that lie outside of their original training or the ethos of their member organisation.

5.6. The policy will be made available to registrants and, via the UKCP Sections, Colleges and Institutional Members to the UKCP Standards Board which has oversight of generic CPD policy development and implementation. The Registration Board has oversight of CPD monitoring.
Section 2

Procedures, Rules and CPD Requirements for Re-Registration following periods out of Registration

1. Introduction

1.1. This document provides details of the UKCP Registration Board’s minimum criteria and requirements governing the return to registration following any period during which an individual’s registration was no longer ‘current’ or ‘live’.

1.2. Voluntary periods out of registration are defined as any period during which registration was discontinued or allowed to lapse at the discretion of the registrant concerned.

1.3. Enforced periods out of registration are defined as any period out of registration resulting from suspension or removal of registration following Registration Board, Central Complaints Process (CCP) or other disciplinary process.

2. Return To Practice (RTP) Categories

2.1. There are two primary categories of RTP. The CPD requirements for each category are similar but the emphasis may be different – variations to the CPD requirements are addressed in Section 4. Different Return to Registration categories require different routes of re-entry – procedures for re-entry are dealt with in Section 3.

2.1.1. Category A – Elective Lapse of Registration: a registrant who has chosen to take a break from practice;

2.1.2. Category B – Enforced Suspension or Removal: a registrant who has been required by one or more of their professional bodies to take a break from practice; that is, has been suspended or removed from the register;

2.2. Category A

2.2.1. For Elective Lapses of Registration (ELR) the following exceptions to additional (i.e. beyond those ordinarily required for renewal or re-accreditation of registration) CPD requirements may be granted by the Registration Board (or RB approved organisation) as follows:

2.2.1.1. An exemption (12 months) for parents after adoption, birth or long-term fostering of a child

2.2.1.2. An exemption (6 months) for bereavement of a partner, child or other family member living in the household

2.2.1.3. An exemption for a temporary situation (of up to 12 months) for being a full time carer of a partner, child or other family member due to illness or injury

2.2.1.4. An exemption for a temporary situation (of up to 12 months) for the practitioner needing to take time off due to illness or injury

2.2.2. Where any of the situations described in 2.2.1 above arises immediately or soon after initial (first) registration then the RB shall be guided by an appropriate sliding scale. The level of actual post qualification experience will be taken into account in this consideration.

2.2.3. The scale will specify the amount of structured / verifiable CPD or alternative / equivalent Re-Training that the person is expected to have completed before RTP.
2.2.4. Where a practitioner has chosen to take a break from practice for reasons other than those listed in A. above, specific agreed requirements shall be enacted in accordance with Section 3 of this document.

2.3. **Category B**

2.3.1. We recognise that it is inevitable in therapeutic work that sometimes real or imagined transgressions will occur. It is recognised that what is considered appropriate or inappropriate action within the therapeutic context is a matter of sophisticated judgement involving attention to the dynamics of the client, the therapist, and their relationship. The Registration Board’s role is not to adjudicate on such matters, but to ensure that any requirements, conditions of practice or findings directing suspension or removal from registration are appropriately actioned and followed up.

2.3.2. **Suspension**: Where a Fitness to Practice Panel has directed that a registrant be suspended for a given period from registration it is within the panel’s remit to specify remedial action (such as additional supervision, training or personal work for example) and / or other conditions that must be met prior to return to registration.

2.3.3. While the registration board does not set these conditions it has the responsibility for ensuring that they have been met and also for ensuring that any other CPD requirements that are relevant to the practitioner can also be satisfactorily demonstrated.

2.3.4. **Removal**: where a panel returns a decision directing that a practitioner be removed from registration the panel will provide clarification of the minimum period prior to which an application for return to registration will not be accepted. The minimum period is 5 years.

2.3.5. As for Suspension it lies within the remit of the panel to stipulate specific conditions to be met prior to any application for a return to registration. The Registration Board must also be satisfied that the practitioner has maintained relevant levels of CPD during the period in which they were removed from registration.

2.3.6. For either Suspension or removal the Registration Board is empowered to return individual cases to the CCP in the event that that the requirements of their decision have not be met – it is in the power of the CCP to extend periods or suspension or removal in such cases.

2.3.7. Where requirements specific to the CCP processes have been satisfied, but the general requirements of the Registration Board have not been met, it shall be at the Boards discretion to set conditions and timeframes for reapplication.

3. **Procedures**

3.1. **Elective (Category A)**: Any individual seeking to return to the register following any period of absence shall be subject to the requirements and procedures specified by both the UKCP Registration Board and the Member Organisation through which they are seeking to renew the validation of their registration. They may also be required to provide evidence in relation to UKCP College or Modality Section requirements or CCP Decisions and Sanctions.

3.2. Where return to the register is sought through the Member Organisation (MO) through which the registrant was most recently registered, the process shall be as follows:

3.3. Submission of Return to Registration form to MO by former registrant
3.4. MO scrutinises Return to Registration submission against MO, College / Modality Section / Registration Board requirements for CPD etc. This should include appropriate measures to ensure that the individual has not been registered through another MO during the period of absence and that there are no outstanding disciplinary matters with the CCP or any other Professional body.

3.5. MO provides a Return to Registration validation to support submission and forwards both to the UKCP Registration Officer.

3.6. UKCP Registration officer scrutinises Return to Registration submission and MO statement in relation to appropriate requirements and standards.

3.7. If these are met registration is renewed. If they are not met a request for further details may be issued or the matter referred to the UKCP Registration Board or the designated officer for this area.

3.8. Where applications are declined clear reasons for the decision will be given. Registrants may appeal to the Chair of the Registration Board.

3.9. Any conditions associated to the return and the period during which these shall apply, whether set by the MO, RB or CCP shall be recorded in the UKCP registration database as appropriate.

3.10. Where return is sought through a new MO or and MO through which the former registrant was previously registered, but which was not the most recent registering MO prior to the period out of registration the process shall be the same as in 2.2 but with the following additional requirements:

3.11. Declarations from each MO through which the former registrant has been UKCP registered in the past must be provided to support the application.

3.12. The applicant must provide written agreement to additional investigation being undertaken by the UKCP RB in relation to their registration through, membership of, or affiliation with, other professional bodies

3.13. **Enforced (Category B):** for individuals seeking to return to registration following a period of suspension or removal from the register arising from any disciplinary procedure, the following process shall apply:

3.14. The former registrant must inform the Clerk to the Registration Board of their intention to submit a Return to Registration application in writing. This must include details of the date and nature of the decision that resulted in suspension or removal; full disclosure of all requirements relating to future return to the register as detailed in the decision; confirmation of the member organisation (MO) through which return to registration is to be sought.

3.15. The Clerk to the Registration Board will notify the Chair of the registration board and seek confirmation from the relevant MO that they are aware of the intention to apply. The MO will be asked to confirm whether they support the application.

3.16. Where the MO concerned is prepared to support the application the former registrant shall follow the procedure under 2.2 or 2.3. If following the process under 2.3 the agreement of the MO through which the former registrant was last registered must be gained along with that of the proposed re-registering MO and the RB Chair.
3.17. In following the procedures under 2.2 or 2.3 of this document for returns following enforced de-registration additional attention must be paid to establishing that all requirements and conditions stipulated in the decision that defined the period of suspension or removal have been met / satisfied.

3.18. The RB or the re-registering MO shall be entitled to undertake such additional investigations or enquiries as required to establish that all relevant requirements have been met and that the applicant is fit to practice.

4. Current Best Practice on CPD for Returners

4.1. Current best practice across sectors suggests that it will be necessary to undertake CPD in order for practitioners to maintain fitness to practice (and thus entitlement to registration) but also personal marketability (employed and self-employed alike) and to keep up-to-date with changes in the professional field whilst on any type of career break.

4.2. Where a break from registration extends for a period of up to 18 months then in order to be re-registered you would normally be required to show evidence of a programme of structured / verifiable CPD or alternative / equivalent Re-Training undertaken over a period of six months to one year; where the break period is no more than 12 months, the six month requirement would normally apply. The Member Organisation would be expected to set out in writing their reasons for any exception to normal requirements.

4.3. Should membership of UKCP lapse for a period of more than 18 months then in order to be re-registered you would normally be required to show evidence of a programme of structured/ verifiable CPD or alternative / equivalent Re-Training undertaken over a period of twelve to eighteen months. The Member Organisation would be expected to set out in writing their reasons for any exception to normal requirements.

The RB expect the amounts of CPD that are required following a period out of registration to take account of both the duration of the period and the experience of the practitioner prior to the break from registration.

4.4. Stages of Practitioner Experience:

4.4.1. Stage A. Practitioner between initial accreditation and first re-accreditation (i.e. < 5 years post qualification experience)

4.4.2. Stage B. Practitioner between first re-accreditation and second re-accreditation (i.e. > 5 years but < 10 years post qualification experience)

4.4.3. Stage C. Practitioner completed at least two re-accreditations (i.e. > 10 years post qualification experience).

4.5. The Registration Board does not seek to specify minimum levels of practice or to thereby distinguish between full time and part time practice in determining CPD requirements for return to practice. However, consideration will be given to any such requirements established by the Modality or UKCP College through which the practitioner is seeking return to the register. In all such matters the RB will attend to the UKCP Standards Boards current guidance and requirements. It shall be at the discretion of the Board to determine the weight given to evidence of experience and over all duration of the post initial registration / qualification period.

5. Suggested Sources of CPD whilst on a Career Break

On a career break, without the support and opportunities for CPD provided by an employer / workplace or being in regular touch with other professionals, some of the opportunities available to practitioners are:
5.1. **Structured reading** - Researching particular themes or topics of interest to the practitioner, possibly by reading past relevant articles in professional journals or reading relevant books. (A log of reading could be kept by practitioners and submitted with any application for re-accreditation.)

5.2. **The Internet** - Consider the wealth of information available on the Internet: this can be an invaluable source of CPD. (A log of reading / research on the net could be kept by practitioners and submitted with any application for re-accreditation.)

5.3. **Attendance at short courses at a College or University** - These could be modules of a course relevant to psychotherapy or psychotherapeutic counselling, or they could be of a more generic nature such as IT, presentation skills or management for practitioners with other professional / managerial responsibilities. Many colleges are happy to welcome participants onto either individual modules or full courses. (Certificates of attendance could be provided by practitioners and submitted with any application for re-accreditation.)

5.4. **Distance or Open Learning** - In today's environment this is a very popular form of learning. A wide range of subjects is available. Practitioners could contact / explore colleges, institutes or universities via the internet.

5.5. **Learn Direct** - The Government's Lifelong Learning initiative provides wide-ranging learning material in local areas, and also learning centres and access to computers.

5.6. **Television / Film / Documentaries / Theatre** - There are an increasing number of television, film, documentaries and theatre programmes focusing on relevant themes. (A descriptive log of this could be kept by practitioners and submitted with any application for re-accreditation.)

5.7. **Travel** - You may be taking a career break to undertake international travel. If this is the case consider the learning experience you could gain through travel and the comparative study you could make of other countries’ approaches to our work. (Practitioners could use some of their time away to research and write / publish about work being done in other countries. Copies to be submitted with application for re-accreditation)

5.8. **Supervision** - Reflective Practice Case Study Supervision could be undertaken as a part preparation for return after a period of more than 12 months / dependant on reason for break / amount of post qualification practitioner experience.

5.8.1. That is, the practitioner could prepare one or two short case studies from work immediately preceding the break to take to formal supervision for a specified minimum number of supervisions before recommencement of practice. This would provide support to the returner and allow the supervisor to help them gauge whether they have adequately prepared for the return.

5.8.2. Where supervision has been stipulated by a hearing panel to address certain concerns or to evidence certain developments / area of work this provision could be adapted by said panel at the discretion of the panel Chair.

5.8.3. A form / area on a form to be co-signed by supervisor and supervisee confirming attendance at such sessions and could form part of any re-accreditation application process.

5.8.4. **Therapy** - On-going personal individual / group therapy could be part of any CPD portfolio during a break. (A personal experience log or papers that present reflective thought / review in relation to events, periods of time or experiences could be kept by practitioners and submitted with any application for re-accreditation.)

We suggest this might be a relevant and creative addition to the professions CPD portfolio of options.
6. Other Areas for Consideration

6.1. UKCP Considers the use of peer review and / or practice reflection groups to be an appropriate option for Modality Sections / Colleges to consider as part of their requirements for CPD.

6.2. Along with 6.1 the Registration Board reserves the right to employ vivas, panel reviews or interviews (or to require that another appointed body employ these means of assessment on behalf of the Registration Board) in pursuit of effective assessment of an individuals CPD portfolio or as part of an integrated assessment of their fitness to return to registration after a period of being de-registered (for any reason).

6.3. Criteria for Return to Registration following suspension are set by the CCP. The Registration Board is responsible for ensuring that in assessing applications to return to registration any requirements specified in tribunal Decisions have been met. In the event that assessment suggests or confirms that such requirements have not been met the Registration Board will refer the matter back to the CCP.
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