CPD Guidance

Introduction

Professionals accept responsibility for the maintenance and enhancement of their levels of knowledge, skills and professional competence. The BSSS CPD Programme gives members the opportunity to demonstrate their commitment to the continuing development of their overall professional competence and to maximise their ability to contribute to society, through application of the skills acquired throughout their professional life.

As a Full or Fellow member of the British Society of Soil Science, you are required to undertake and record Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activities on an annual basis, as detailed in the Society's Code of Conduct. In order to retain the *M.I. Soil Sci* or *F.I. Soil Sci* designation, all Full or Fellow members must comply with the Society's CPD standard.

Please note that if you are also a Chartered Scientist (CSci), you will only be required to complete one form for your CPD submission, which will be used for both your BSSS membership and CSci registration.

The objectives of the BSSS CPD scheme are:
- to articulate the value of and need for CPD to members of the profession and to their employers;
- to provide advice and guidance to members of the profession in identifying their educational needs, to strengthen their performance and further their careers;
- to enable individual members to identify the activities that will satisfy their learning needs;
- to establish a credible mechanism by which members receive formal recognition for their CPD activities and thereby demonstrate their commitment to the profession and to their employers;
- to promote the highest professional standards of its members;
- to enhance the status of soil scientists.

The BSSS CPD scheme is aligned with the four Science Council Standards for CPD renewal:
1. Maintain a continuous, up-to-date, accurate and reflective record of CPD activities and be able to provide supporting evidence if requested
2. Demonstrate that CPD activities are a mixture of learning activities relevant to current or future practice
3. Seek to ensure that CPD has benefited the quality of practice and reflect upon this
4. Seek to ensure that CPD has benefited the users of a member's work (employee, customer, student etc) and reflect upon this.

The most important aspect of CPD is the outcome of CPD activity for the individual rather than the length of time engaged in it. Learning outcomes and, where relevant, their application to practice should be recorded for each piece of CPD undertaken. BSSS members are employed in a very wide range of occupations and at differing levels of responsibility. Their continuing learning needs will be equally varied, and a range of subjects and experience can, therefore, count as CPD.

Some of the **main** aims of CPD are:
- maintaining scientific and technical knowledge,
- developing scientific and technical knowledge,
- broadening scientific and technical knowledge beyond one's speciality,
- acquiring professional life skills and knowledge, e.g. management techniques, interpersonal skills, finance, languages.

Almost all activities may include an element of CPD. It is for individual registrants to recognise and record learning outcomes. It is important that CPD is across a range of activities:
- Work-based learning
- Professional activities
- Formal/educational
- Self-directed learning
- Other

Worked based learning

Work based learning is professional development that takes place by fulfilling the current job role. Such development naturally takes place as experience is gained in the role, greater independence and responsibility is given, and the complexity and scope of work undertaken increases.

Work based learning also includes in-house learning activities and development opportunities that are provided by the employer as part of staff orientation and development in support of organisational performance and objectives.

Worked based learning – Examples

- Experiential learning: Learning by doing the job – gaining, and learning from, experience – expanding role
- In-service training – includes orientation programmes, standard operating procedures and employee development
- Receiving coaching from others
- Work shadowing
- Peer review of own work, including presentations to colleagues
- Review of case studies & literature

- Discussions with colleagues – idea generation, problem solving, etc.
- Presentations to external clients, regulators, policy makers
- Supervising colleagues or students
- Job rotation, secondments, and sabbaticals
- Involvement in the wider work of employer – beyond scope of role
- Post-mortem & lessons learnt activities following significant projects, events
- Requesting and analysing feedback on performance from colleagues, clients
- Participating in the employer's performance appraisal and goal setting process.

Professional activity

Professional activities that support professional development include participating in the management and organisation of a professional body; and also participating in activities that develop the professional skills and knowledge of other professionals, and participating in activities that apply statistical expertise in the wider community.

Professional activity – Examples

- Involvement in the management of a professional body – officer, organiser, committee member, working group member
- Organiser of a conference, scientific meeting or course
- Being an examiner
- Being a referee for a journal
- Supervisor of research
- Membership of a technical expert group – e.g. special interest group, section or study group
- Being an expert witness
- Lecturing or teaching (new material)
- Giving presentations or being a discussant at conferences or scientific meetings
- Networking with professionals in other organisations
- Coaching or mentoring.

Formal/educational

Formal/educational professional development includes participation in activities that lead to gaining academic/professional qualifications and the attendance at structured learning activities organised by professional bodies, learned societies or training providers; and also the preparation of papers, articles or presentations for a professional audience.

<u>Formal/educational – Examples</u>

- Undertaking a programme of learning or research for an academic qualification
- Attending training courses, conferences or scientific meetings
- Undertaking distance learning or e-learning activities
- Reading to understand the legal, regulatory framework for professional work
- Maintaining or developing specialist skills
- Writing articles or papers
- Preparing presentations for conferences or scientific meetings
- Preparing material for training courses.

Self-directed learning

Self-directed learning takes place when the individual takes the initiative in diagnosing learning needs, formulating learning goals, designing learning experiences, identifying and using human and material resources and evaluating learning outcomes.

<u>Self-directed learning – Examples</u>

- Reading books, journals and articles
- Reviewing and summarising books and articles
- Upgrading knowledge through internet searches and the use of electronic information sources
- Reflective practice – assessing benefit of CPD activities to self, client or employer – identifying next steps.

Other

Activities which do not require soil science expertise, but which help develop transferable skills and gain experiences that are valuable in the current professional role or in future career directions. These would include involvement in strategic activities for the employer; and activities carried out outside of professional life.

<u>Other – Examples</u>

- Strategic projects for employer (e.g. organisational restructuring, strategic planning & resourcing, external/community relations, facility development)
- Public service (e.g. school governor, church parish councillor)
- Voluntary work (e.g. leader of scouting activity, telephone advice for Samaritans)
- Charitable work (e.g. trustee of charity, organiser of fundraising event).

Evidence

Evidence of participation should be maintained alongside a formal record. This may include things such as certificates of attendance or achievement, examples of work such as reports or papers. **The Society does not expect members to submit all their evidence** but members should be maintaining these records themselves.

Members are advised to develop a cross referencing system between the formal record of CPD activity and individual items of evidence. The quality rather than the quantity of CPD is important. However registrants may wish to record the amount of 'quality' time whilst engaged in the CPD activity. For example, the number of hours spent on a training course might all be considered valuable whereas some of the time spent at a conference may not be relevant for the member's development.