

Why CPD?

Continuing professional development is the hallmark of the professional. And professional bodies give the public and the sector confidence that individual teachers, trainers, tutors and assessors are striving to continuously improve their skills, knowledge and expertise.

As the professional body across the full breadth of further education, including adult and work-based learning, the Institute for Learning asks each member to commit to improving their expertise both in teaching and in their vocational or subject area.

This means that any activities that are undertaken for the purposes of keeping up to date with the latest developments in a subject area and keeping abreast of developments in teaching approaches will count as meaningful CPD as long as these questions can be answered:

Has there been reflection on the learning gained from a professional development activity?

Has the activity and the reflection made a difference to practice?

Can an impact on learners or colleagues be evidenced?

The activities can range from the formal such as workshops, conferences, courses or programmes to the informal, self-directed kind such as reading journal articles or reviewing websites. The key thing to remember is that this is not just about completing a list of activities undertaken during the year that add up to 6 or 12 or 30 hours.

The time spent will be meaningless unless it makes a difference. So for example, attendance at a half day conference or workshop which gives updates on planned curriculum changes to a subject area may well involve 4 hours or more listening, note-taking and discussion that might result in nothing new back at the workplace.

If on return, that conference participant, full of ideas for changing how they will deliver a new curriculum, puts the discussion and notes into practice and then measures the 'so what' factor by analysing what has been changed, what feedback there was and what difference it has made to teaching or training – this could result in many more than 4 hours. The time spent before and after the activity is vital for professional development to make an impact.

It is the quality of the thought that goes into CPD activities that is crucially important to the notion of professional development. As a teacher or trainer who is committed to your own professionalism you will want to be at the leading edge of practice.

More information CPD is available in the [CPD guidelines](#)

Why REfLECT?

Reflect is an online space offered as a benefit to all IfL members. It is a personal space which can be use for storing files, collaborating with peers, creating action plans amongst many other facilities.

Using REfLECT will support you to continually develop your expertise both as an individual and within a community of practice.

Completing 30 hours of CPD (if you are a full-time teacher or trainer) may seem onerous but if you keep track of all of your activities, thoughts and evidence of impact throughout the year in REfLECT, nothing is lost and when the time is right you can select the most significant activities for the submission of your CPD record.

REfLECT is available from any computer with internet access and Abode Flash version 7 installed on it. This ensures that your work is instantly accessible and portable across institutions.