

Evaluating impact

Research findings from surveys conducted by IfL identify that practitioners would welcome guidance on effective systems for evaluating the impact of continuing professional development.

Evaluating the impact of CPD on practice enables individuals and organisations to improve outcomes in teaching, training and learning.

“Through continuing professional development we are not only investing in our staff but also in the learning environment, ensuring that both students and employers benefit from a wide range of high quality services.”

City of Wolverhampton Principal, Ian Millard

A key aspect of effective impact evaluation is establishing clear, simple objectives and outcomes at the initial planning stage.

“Good evaluation does not need to be complex; what is necessary is good planning and paying attention to evaluation at the outset of the professional development programme, not at the end “

Guskey, 2002

Impact evaluation

Effective planning at the outset will assist in establishing;

- What changes you want to achieve
- Who are the participants?
- Dates for completion
- Focus on practitioner benefits
- Variety of evidence e.g. video, audio, online questionnaires, skills analysis, observation and formal impact evaluation
- Baseline statement including data analysis and evidence of current practice
- What you need to achieve
- Evaluation methods you will use to reflect on and capture the evidence of impact

Key questions for evaluating the impact of CPD could include the following examples:

- 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?
- What will the evidence be and how will it be presented?
- How will the evaluation contribute to staff development strategies
- What lessons can be learned

What counts as CPD?

Examples include:

- Reading relevant journal articles or reviewing books
- Training courses or formal study
- Peer review, observation and shadowing
- Online e-learning including online discussion forums and blogs
- Viewing and reviewing television programmes, documentaries and the Internet

Impact Evaluation Model

IfI are providing a simple model that can be used by practitioners to evaluate the impact of CPD in their organisation.

By providing this model, we aim to help improve the national evidence base and demonstrate the impact of CPD on professional practice at local and regional levels.

Connections can use the model to evaluate the impact of their role on individual and organisational CPD outcomes,

Examples of evidence will inform the development of case studies, support materials and resources.

CPD IMPACT EVALUATION MODEL

REFLECTIVE CYCLE

1 + 2
Needs & Goals

What changes would you like to make to your practice?
How will you know when these changes have made a difference?

3 + 4
Plan & Do

What has gone to plan and what hasn't?
Any surprises, setbacks and / or challenges?

5
Review & Analyse

What worked / didn't work?
What would you have done differently, if you were going to do this again?
Is it too late to change anything?

6
So what?

What's changed?
What difference/s have you made?
Have you asked the right questions?
Where to now?

EVIDENCE NEEDED

Initial benchmarking
Who's involved?
Expected completion date?
What changes do you want to see? Who will be affected by these changes, e.g. you, colleagues, learners?

Professional Development Plan
Reflections on the planned CPD activities.
Evidence gathered as you went along?

Peer discussions?
Revised plan?
Next steps?

Evidence of changes, e.g. Feedback from learners and colleagues, data, documentation?
What have you learnt or gained from using this evaluation model?

