Main points for Registrants to note for future audits

In preparing a CPD plan, communication professionals should first identify development needs, then devise a development plan to meet those needs. Some CPD may still be undertaken that is not on the plan if an additional development opportunity during the year of the plan.

Unstructured CPD

i. Overall there is a significant issue with reflective notes being too general and not specific enough, e.g. "We discussed strategies to ensure the client was comfortable." The notes need to detail what strategies the communication professional will consider using and perhaps even the success or otherwise of strategies when used. How will the elements from the discussion be applied to their practice?

ii. Delivering teaching or training to other communication professionals can only be included as CPD if it is the FIRST time that the course / subject is prepared for and taught. Preparing for and delivering teaching / training always counts as Unstructured hours.

iii. Attending / observing classes to gain knowledge for future interpreting assignments – e.g. ante-natal classes. While this can be counted as CPD, the communication professional needs to provide notes and/or a reflective log of what knowledge was gained and how it will be applied.

iv. NUBSLI, ASLI, VLP, local interpreters network meetings are all Unstructured unless specific activities with definite learning outcomes have been arranged (e.g. scheduled topics on the agenda, a speaker on a specific subject).

v. Any unstructured activity should be accompanied by evidence of when and where it took place or, at the very least, an explanation of what was involved, what the candidate learned from it, and how they will use that learning in their professional practice. It is not enough simply to say what happened, and why. This can take the form of a reflective log or journal.

vi. Working in a paid or voluntary capacity per se is not CPD, although time spent writing up an adequate explanation of what a registrant has learned from undertaking such activity could count as unstructured CPD.

vii. Routine preparation for assignments per se does not constitute CPD, although follow-up research and development work post-assignment could count as unstructured CPD if accompanied by an explanation of what a candidate has learned from that, how it has developed their skills, and how they will use that in their practice going forward.

viii. Registrants who are registered in multiple registration categories should have a balance of CPD activities to reflect their multiple development needs.

ix.   Where a registrant has spent a lot of time reading books or journals and researching relevant topics as part of their unstructured CPD, they must produce notes which reflect the amount of time spent on that activity. For example, it is not sufficient to write a note consisting of one paragraph if a registrant is claiming 10 hours of unstructured CPD. They must produce more detailed notes in order to justify their claim.

Structured CPD

i.   PowerPoint slides, agendas and timetable do not constitute evidence of actually attending a meeting – either minutes with the communication professional's name in the attendees, personal notes, or an email confirming attendance are acceptable evidence.

ii.   A receipt / invoice or booking form for a course or webinar does not constitute evidence of actually attending the course – personal notes from the course, a certificate of attendance with date, or an email confirming attendance are acceptable evidence.

iii.   The auditors do not need copies of PowerPoint slides or course handouts unless the communication professional has made notes on them and therefore these evidence attendance.

iv.   If a certificate of attendance does not give the number of hours attended, further evidence such as a programme or agenda will be sought to confirm the times claimed. For future audits, it would be helpful if certificates issued by training providers and professional bodies could include the number of CPD hours attained and the date, including year.