



National Standards and Accreditation of Career Practitioners Project

Briefing Paper 5: Continuing Professional Development

This paper has been written as part of the National Standards and Accreditation of Career Practitioners project commissioned through the Career Industry Council of Australia by the Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training. The views expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Education, Science and Training.

This paper is the fifth in a series of briefing papers that will be distributed by CICA to all career practitioners who belong to the member associations of CICA. The purpose of these papers is to assist career practitioners to be well informed and updated on the project. All papers produced in the project maybe downloaded from the CICA website: www.cica.org.au

What is continuing professional development?

Continuing professional development refers to

The ongoing maintenance and growth of professional excellence through participation in learning activities which are planned and implemented to achieve excellence for the benefits of participants, clients and the community (AASW, 2002)

Why do we need continuing professional development?

While entry level skills and qualifications are important, it is also important that practitioners continue to update their knowledge and skills in order that they provide the best service that they can to clients.

Information gathered in Stages 1 and 2 of the project

Most participants at the Forum and in the consultation indicated that continuing professional development should be included in the standards. The process of recording the professional development of practitioners was thought to be largely the domain of the accrediting body or the career practitioner associations. A point system of recording continuing professional development was favoured by respondents to the consultation.

How has it been implemented elsewhere?

Appendix 1 illustrates how continuing professional development has been implemented in other practitioner associations.

The Task Ahead

CICA will develop a set of guidelines on continuing professional development. Member associations of CICA will develop their own models of continuing professional development that will accord with the guidelines agreed to by the member associations of CICA.

Reference

Australian Association of Social Workers. (2002). Continuing professional education policy planner logbook, 14. Retrieved July 21, 2004, from http://www.aasw.asn.au/adobe/about/CPE_logbook2002_04.pdf

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Appendix 1: Comparison of models of continuing professional development

The table below illustrates key features of the continuing professional development programs of three organisations. There is considerable agreement in how these programs are administered.

Professional Association	Brief outline of professional development program
Australian Psychological Society (APS, 2004)	<p>The APS Professional Development (PD) program operates on a two-year cycle</p> <p>Members are required to complete a PD log sheet</p> <p>Members are required to accumulate 60 points over a two year period</p> <p>A table indicating a selection of PD activities and their point allocation is provided on the APS website</p> <p>Members are required to submit a signed copy of the PD log sheet indicating the number of points accrued over this two year cycle</p> <p>The total number of points is recorded on the Member's PD record and a PD Certificate is issued to member</p> <p>Members may be randomly selected for an audit, members are required to submit all supporting documentation to the activities being claimed.</p>
Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW, 2004)	<p>Continuing Professional Education (CPE) operates on a two-year cycle</p> <p>CPE is part of the association's self-regulation strategy</p> <p>Members are required to accumulate 150 points or more by engaging in recognised CPE activities</p> <p>Members are supplied with a logbook to record their CPE activities</p> <p>When renewing their membership, members sign a declaration confirming that they have complied with the CPE requirements for the previous cycle</p> <p>Members who complete the requirements regarding CPE are eligible to be recognised as accredited social workers</p> <p>AASW is also implementing a process of "Appellation" whereby CPE programs may be approved on the basis of their relevance to effective social work practice. CPE activities that receive appellation will receive double points for member participants.</p>
Career Practitioners Association of New Zealand (CPANZ, 2000)	<p>Professional Development requirements operate according to subscription years</p> <p>A minimum of 50 hours of professional development per subscription year is required of members applying for or renewing membership</p> <p>PD must cover a range of activities relevant to the career industry</p> <p>Members are advised to keep a PD journal with information on the date, activity, provider, outline of the content and the time spent on the activity</p> <p>PD activities must be completed outside normal work requirements.</p>