

CPD
Continuing Professional Development
Guidance Booklet
November 2009

INDEX

INDEX.....	2
INTRODUCTION	3
The CPD Scheme	4
The Code of Standards – Competence and Training.....	4
REGULATIONS.....	5
Who has to comply with the scheme?	5
Who does not have to comply with the scheme?	5
Non-compliance with the scheme	5
CPD Year	5
CPD Hours per Year	5
When does an adviser enter the CPD scheme?	5
Maternity Leave / Long-Term Illness / Sabbatical.....	6
Maternity Leave	6
Sabbatical	6
Long-Term Illness	7
ACCEPTED ACTIVITIES.....	8
What activity can be accepted as CPD?	8
What activity is not accepted as CPD?.....	8
DEFINITIONS.....	9
ON-LINE E-LEARNING PLATFORM	11
OISC Website.....	11
Adviser Portfolio	11
Adviser Log In Details	11
Computer Requirements / Specifications	12
OISC E-Learning Courses.....	12
Open University Personal Development and Management Courses	12
Input of CPD Activities (other than OISC or OU courses).....	13
Viewing CPD Records	13

INTRODUCTION

The CPD scheme has been introduced to encourage and assist advisers to remain skilled and competent. The OISC will offer support and encouragement where it can, for example, by offering its training courses free-of-charge to all advisers through e-learning.

OISC-regulated advisers, like other professionals, need to continue learning as they must remain aware of developments, keep up-to-date with best practice and alert to ways in which they can improve the service they provide to their clients and to run their businesses more effectively. The CPD scheme has been formulated to focus on ensuring that those advisers who the OISC has assessed as being competent remain so in a sector where rules and legislation frequently change.

The CPD scheme is associated with the Code of Standard's on-going requirement for organisations to have training plans and will operate together with the OISC's Competence Assessment programme to encourage advisers to retain and/or expand their skills and knowledge. However, an adviser will only be able to change their level of competence or widen their categories of service if judged competent to do so by the OISC and not through the CPD scheme.

We would expect advisers at the beginning of each year to review their skills and knowledge with regards to their work and business plans. They should then produce a Training and Development Plan for their CPD focusing on what they need to learn and how they might do this, for example, by attending classroom training courses, e-learning courses or even attending a conference. A Training and Development Plan form is available to download from the OISC website.

We do not expect advisers to stick to this plan rigidly as long as they complete the requisite hours of CPD and courses undertaken are relevant to their business. Although advisers can choose how they undertake their CPD, the OISC may recommend specific areas they feel should be improved upon, for example, areas identified through competence assessment or a complaint investigation.

Compliance with the scheme will be monitored by the adviser's caseworker.

To assist advisers with their CPD the OISC has joined together with The Open University (OU) to offer OISC training courses on-line via the OISC website. The courses will be free-of-charge and available to those advisers who are required to comply with the scheme. We are also able to offer various OU management and personal development courses on-line, free-of-charge. These courses are not compulsory and are provided for advisers to take if they choose to.

The OU has developed an on-line learning platform to provide advisers with their own personal CPD portfolio. This portfolio will not only record all CPD activity, but will also give access to the e-learning courses.

All advisers are required to use their portfolio to record their CPD activity; therefore access to a computer and to the Internet is required. An individual personal email address is required for access and privacy reasons.

The CPD Scheme

- Advisers are to take responsibility for ensuring that they remain competent. Advisers who are judged to be incompetent will not be authorised.
- It is the statutory duty of the OISC to ensure that advisers are competent and CPD is a tool to assist in that judgement.
- Advisers will be responsible for their own training with support provided by their organisation according to the Codes and Rules.
- CPD will benefit both the adviser and the client by increasing the adviser's knowledge, skills and capability.
- Advisers will continue to be judged against the OISC's competence requirements for each level and category they apply to be regulated at.
- No matter what CPD an adviser has undertaken, they will only be able to change their level of competence or widen their categories of service if they are judged competent to do so by the OISC.

The Code of Standards – Competence and Training

- Code 17: An adviser operating at any given level of activity and category must have the relevant knowledge, competencies, resources and information sources as set out in the most recently published version of the Commissioner's Guidance on Competence.
- Code 18: An adviser must have and continue to have the necessary skills, knowledge and competencies to meet their client's needs and must satisfy the Commissioner of this via the processes and systems approved by the Commissioner for this purpose.
- Code 19: An adviser must be able to show that they have acquired the relevant knowledge, competencies and resources, and that these are kept under review in order to ensure that they are up to date. Advisers are required to review their performance regularly.
- Code 21: An adviser must have ready access to up to date information on immigration law and practice, and a written procedure as to how they will keep themselves up to date.
- Code 22: Advisers must have a training plan, which must be documented and regularly reviewed.
- Code 23: An adviser must be able to demonstrate to the Commissioner that their knowledge has been kept up to date by the production of a training log or similar appropriate document and must ensure their continuous professional development in accordance with any scheme as may be prescribed by the Commissioner from time to time.

REGULATIONS

Who has to comply with the scheme?

All advisers that the OISC regulates inc:

- ILEX members
- LSC accredited advisers
- Advisers providing basic immigration work
- Advisers on maternity leave, long-term illness or sabbatical (see below)

Who does not have to comply with the scheme?

- Members of a designated professional body with a current practice certificate
- Education and health sector bodies who are exempt by Ministerial Order
- Government ministers and staff
- CAB Level 1 advisers

Non-compliance with the scheme

Non-compliance is a breach of Code 23 of the Commissioner's Code of Standards and will affect your continued regulation with the Commissioner

CPD Year

1 April – 31 March

CPD Hours per Year

Level 1	8 Hours	6 core knowledge	2 non-core knowledge
Level 2	12 Hours	9 core knowledge	3 non-core knowledge
Level 3	16 Hours	12 core knowledge	4 non-core knowledge

- Core knowledge refers to knowledge specifically related to UK and EEA immigration and asylum law
- Non-core knowledge refers to professional development, management skills and personal skills (such as computer skills, administration, communication). Also immigration and asylum law of other nations and other speciality knowledge required by your organisation (such as welfare benefits)
- It is necessary to complete the required number of core and non-core hours
- CPD hours cannot be carried over from one year to another

When does an adviser enter the CPD scheme?

- All advisers who are authorised by the OISC at the start of the new CPD year (1 April) must commence CPD from that date and each year following
- Newly regulated advisers commence on 1 April following authorisation
- Those advisers who move up a level should complete the CPD for their current level and then work to the higher level in the subsequent year
- Those advisers who move down a level may work to the lower requirements

Maternity Leave / Long-Term Illness / Sabbatical

Code 5 of The Code of Standards states:

‘All advisers and/or those in actual control of a regulated advice organisation must notify the Commissioner of any significant changes in their personal or business circumstances within ten working days of those changes occurring.’

Maternity Leave

- An ‘Application for Waiver of CPD due to Maternity Leave’ must be completed and sent to the CPD Coordinator before commencement of maternity leave
 - The application form can be found in the CPD section of the OISC website
- Upon authorisation, CPD requirement will be waived for the CPD year the adviser commences maternity leave and for the CPD year the adviser returns from maternity leave (if different)
 - The OISC does, however, encourage advisers to undergo some CPD before maternity leave commences
- An adviser who requests a waiver of CPD must not provide immigration advice or services during their maternity leave
- If an adviser continues to work during maternity leave they must comply fully with the CPD requirements
- It is the employer’s responsibility to ensure:
 - The adviser undergoes refresher training on return to work and before advising clients
 - Refresher training must be agreed in advance with the OISC caseworker and be appropriate
 - The adviser must have access to the updates and training provided to other advisers in the organisation during their maternity leave
 - The adviser should be invited, where practicable, to attend training provided to other advisers in the organisation or should be provided with the same training on their return to work
 - Any training undertaken must be logged in their on-line CPD portfolio

Sabbatical

- An ‘Application for Waiver of CPD due to Sabbatical’ must be completed and sent to the CPD Coordinator before commencement of the sabbatical
 - The application form can be found in the CPD section of the OISC website
- Authorisation for a waiver of CPD for those on sabbatical will be dealt with on an individual basis by the caseworker
- An adviser who requests a waiver of CPD must not provide immigration advice or services during their sabbatical leave
- If an adviser undertakes work during their sabbatical they must comply fully with the CPD requirements
- It is the employer’s responsibility to ensure:
 - The adviser undergoes refresher training on return to work and before advising clients
 - Refresher training must be agreed in advance with the OISC caseworker and be appropriate

- The adviser must have access to the updates and training provided to other advisers in the organisation during their sabbatical
- Any training undertaken must be logged in their on-line CPD portfolio

Long-Term Illness

- It is the employer's responsibility to inform the OISC of any long-term illness when it becomes known
- If an adviser requires a reduction or waiver in their CPD requirement due to ill health they must complete an 'Application for Reduction / Waiver of CPD due to long-term illness' and return it to the CPD Coordinator upon return to work
 - The application form can be found in the CPD section of the OISC website
- Applications will be dealt with on an individual basis
- Supporting documentation must be provided in the form of a medical certificate from the GP or hospital, or a doctor's letter
- It is the employer's responsibility to ensure:
 - The adviser undergoes refresher training on return to work and before advising clients
 - Refresher training must be agreed in advance with the OISC caseworker and be appropriate
 - The adviser must have access to the updates and training provided to other advisers in the organisation during their absence
 - Any training undertaken must be logged in their on-line CPD portfolio

ACCEPTED ACTIVITIES

What activity can be accepted as CPD?

Activity	CPD to be claimed	Evidence Required
OISC e-learning course	CPD hours automatically allocated depending on course taken	Information stored automatically in CPD portfolio
Open University e-learning personal development and management course	30 minutes of CPD per course	Information stored automatically in CPD portfolio
Core knowledge course or event provided by a professional training organisation and accredited by a Designated Professional Body	CPD hours awarded by DPB accepted on a 1:1 basis	Entry of details into CPD portfolio Proof of attendance
Non-core knowledge course provided by a professional training organisation	1 hour of CPD for each hour of learning (excluding breaks)	Entry of details into CPD portfolio Proof of attendance
Conference by UKBA and OISC or a representative body for immigration advisers	3 hours of core CPD for full day 1½ hours of core CPD for ½ day	Entry of details into CPD portfolio Proof of attendance
Meeting organised by a representative body for immigration advisers or a regional forum	2 hours of core CPD for full day 1 hour of core CPD for ½ day	Entry of details into CPD portfolio Proof of attendance
In-house training course provided by a qualified trainer in that subject or by a professional training organisation	1 hour of CPD for each hour of learning (excluding breaks)	Entry of details into CPD portfolio Proof of attendance
University qualification		Contact CPD Coordinator
Preparation of training material for a course, lecture or seminar accredited by a DPB	Actual time of delivery of the course, lecture or seminar can be claimed	Entry of details into CPD Portfolio Proof of preparation
Delivery of a course, lecture or seminar accredited by a DPB	Actual time of delivery can be claimed Repeat delivery in the same CPD year will not count	Entry of details into CPD Portfolio Proof of delivery

What activity is not accepted as CPD?

- Preparing and presenting of lectures or teaching if event not accredited by a DPB
- Mentoring and coaching
- Writing of papers for publication
- In-house meetings
- Study leave

DEFINITIONS

Designated Professional Body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Law Society of England and Wales • The Law Society of Scotland • The Law Society of Northern Ireland • The Institute of Legal executives (ILEX) • The General Council of the Bar of England and Wales • The Faculty of Advocates • The General Council of the Bar of Northern Ireland
Professional training organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An organisation that produces and delivers training to outside organisations and individuals • Employs qualified trainers
Qualified trainer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Someone who has a UK recognised qualification in training e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIPD Certificate in Training • NVQ Level 3 & 4 • City & Guilds Level 3 & 4 • For an adviser with a number of years experience in teaching / lecturing we can accept a Training the Trainers course together with a brief relevant history
A representative body for immigration advisers	<p>An organisation that represents the business interests and welfare of immigration advisers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ARIA • ILPA
A regional forum	<p>A meeting amongst immigration advisers from different organisations to discuss relevant issues in immigration and asylum law</p>
Core knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UK and EU Immigration and asylum law • Human rights • Welfare for asylum applicants (relevant for Level 1, Category 1 advisers only)
Non-core knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional development and business related knowledge such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accounting • Computer • Management • Administration • Personal development skills such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication • Presentation skills • Client Care • Ethics • Immigration and asylum law of other nations • Other knowledge required such as welfare and housing benefits

Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planned in advance for a specific time and date • Held in a room used solely for the meeting • Agenda supplied • Record of attendance kept • Subject of meeting to be relevant to adviser's work in immigration and asylum law
University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A recognised body as defined in the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 • Approved on an individual basis • If approved, CPD hours accepted on a 1:1 basis (up to the total CPD hours required that year)
Evidence Required / Proof of attendance	<p>To include at least one of the following:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Booking confirmation • Programme • Meeting agenda • Participant list • Certificate of attendance • Register signed by participants and kept by event organiser

ON-LINE E-LEARNING PLATFORM

The OISC CPD scheme operates using an on-line e-learning platform that provides each adviser with his or her own personal CPD portfolio. It is a requirement that details of all CPD activity are entered into this portfolio.

The portfolio not only records CPD activity by the adviser but also gives access to the OISC and Open University e-learning courses.

Please be aware that the OISC will have access to each CPD portfolio for monitoring purposes. No other person or organisation will have access.

OISC Website

The CPD section on the website includes the following: -

- Link to adviser CPD portfolio
- Information on the CPD scheme
- Training providers of courses in core knowledge
- Link to OISC CPD Coordinator regarding CPD queries
- CPD Training and Development Plan
- CPD Record Sheet
- Frequently Asked Questions

Adviser Portfolio

This provides the following: -

- Record of and statistics of all CPD activity undertaken
- Access to the OISC e-learning courses
- Access to the Open University e-learning personal development and management courses
- Facility to manually enter details of other CPD activity undertaken
- Calendar showing dates relevant to CPD
- News update from the OISC on relevant CPD matters, including changes in the law

Adviser Log In Details

- Log in - the link will be via the OISC website in the CPD section
- User Name - adviser number given during registration with the OISC consisting of 6 numbers
- Password - organisation number to be used for the initial login and a prompt will be given to change it for security purposes

Computer Requirements / Specifications

- Pentium 200MHz processor
- 64MB RAM
- Graphics resolution of 800 x 600, in 16 bit colour
- Sound card
- Broadband recommended
- 56k modem
- Microsoft Windows 2000 Professional
- Microsoft Windows XP (Home or Professional)
- Mac OS 10
- Flashplayer version 8 or above

OISC E-Learning Courses

- Courses are provided free of charge
- Courses are not compulsory and are provided for advisers to take if they choose to
- An adviser can take any course regardless of the category or level of the course as long as it is relevant to their work
- Courses are divided into 3 areas: basic, intermediate and advanced
- Access is through the adviser portfolio
- The number of hours allocated varies depending upon the length of each course
- A score of 70% and above on the course quiz will have to be achieved before CPD hours are allocated
 - 3 attempts at the quiz will be allowed in order to gain a score of 70%
 - Answers and feedback will be given on completion of a quiz
- Each course can only be taken once in a 12 month period
- Details of the course taken and the hours allocated upon passing the quiz are automatically recorded in the adviser's portfolio and can be seen in the 'statistics' section found on the main page

Open University Personal Development and Management Courses

- Courses are provided free of charge
- Courses are not compulsory and are provided for advisers to take if they choose to
- All courses are estimated to take 30 minutes
 - This is an estimated time and there will be no cut-off after 30 minutes
- A score of 70% or above on the quiz will have to be achieved before CPD time is allocated
 - 3 attempts at the quiz will be allowed in order to gain a score of 70%
 - After 3 attempts, the quiz will be blocked for 30 days
- If a course is taken more than once in a CPD year, credits will be allocated only once
- Details of the course taken and the time allocated upon passing the quiz are automatically recorded in the adviser's portfolio and can be seen in the 'statistics' section found on the main page

Input of CPD Activities (other than OISC or OU courses)

- Details of CPD activities undertaken should be entered into the 'other CPD activities' section of the 'OISC extras' box found on the front page
- Information required
 - Title of activity
 - Provider
 - Basic description of activity
 - Date and time of activity
 - CPD hours awarded
 - Either 'core' or 'non-core' but not both
 - A zero should be entered in the other box
- It is not necessary to include an attachment
- Ensure that you 'Save Changes' to complete the entry
- Errors cannot be changed once the activity has been saved
 - Contact CPD Co-ordinator if an error has been made

Viewing CPD Records

- CPD records can be accessed by using the functions in the 'OISC extras' box found on the front page
- 'Other CPD activities' show activities entered manually
- 'Statistics' show
 - Details of the on-line courses taken
 - CPD hours obtained
 - CPD hours still outstanding
- It is recommended that a copy of the statistics is made when CPD has been completed for the year