

FPA CPD Diary guidance for members

Introduction

Continuing professional development (CPD) is the educative means of updating, developing and enhancing the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to work safely and effectively as a Physician Associate (PA). All PAs are currently required to fulfil CPD requirements to remain on the Physician Associate Managed Voluntary Register (PAMVR). Following the removal of the PA recertification exam in March 2023 the way PAs are required to evidence their learning and maintenance of skills has changed.

The FPA ePortfolio was developed because it was a tool that members had requested in their feedback. It is a bespoke ePortfolio that has been designed by PAs, for PAs. **PAs are recommended to log their CPD through the FPA ePortfolio from the start of the CPD year – 1 April 2024.**

Whilst we understand that there are other available systems that PAs can use to record their CPD, the FPA strongly encourages PAs who are members to record CPD on the FPA ePortfolio and are able to evidence meeting the requirements of their CPD as part of the audit process. Any previous CPD you have logged using alternative systems can still be used towards your 5 year CPD cycle.

If you have previously used the RCP CPD Diary, you are no longer be able to log any further CPD in your account. You can still access your CPD account however this will be read-only access. You can download all your previous entries in PDF. Anyone registered on the RCP CPD Diary are to transfer from this system to the new FPA ePortfolio.

All qualified PAs who are registered on the PAMVR are required to achieve **50 hours of CPD every year.**

Following regulation with the General Medical Council (GMC), all regulated PAs will be expected to adhere to their revalidation model:

- Every five years PAs will be required to provide evidence of annual appraisals.
- Their employer must confirm they are fit to practice.
- They must demonstrate they are working within their locally agreed framework of clinical governance.
- They must submit reflections on, and evidence of, the following:
 - CPD
 - Complaints and compliments
 - Feedback from colleagues and patients
 - Quality improvement projects
 - Significant events

The GMC will not provide guidance to how much CPD you will need to complete or which systems to use; this will be guided by your professional body.

CPD diary year

The CPD year runs from 1 April – 31 March.

Employment programme / post date

Whilst the CPD year runs from 1 April – 31 March, your ePortfolio access runs on your membership year (1 November – 31 October). All posts must fall within this date range as it's a record of your employment during the membership year as opposed to your actual contract with your employer.

Historic posts before 1 Nov 2023 cannot be added.

CPD hours

CPD hours refer to the total duration of the CPD event/session that you have attended whether that is in-person or online. This does not automatically mean that you can claim the total hours as CPD credit. **CPD hours are not the same as CPD credits.**

CPD credits

CPD credits are the total approved CPD that has been accredited as part of the total programme/session or event by the FPA, RCP or any other accrediting body. This is not the same as CPD hours. When logging this you must ensure accurate CPD credits are recorded.

Where you have recorded a reflection on unverifiable CPD, you must record an accurate number of CPD hours and credits that you have spent learning. This does not include breaks, symposiums, preparations etc.

Total CPD credit requirements

You are expected to complete **250 hours of educational learning every five years** with 125 hours of this time spent divided across the 18 areas in the CCPC.

This table displays the CPD breakdown of requirement for annual and 5-year cycle.

	Annual CPD requirement	5-year CPD cycle requirement
Core CPD – CCPC Category A represents the 18 different areas of the CCPC	25 hours	125 hours
Additional/Supplementary/My speciality CPD Category B is for you to evidence your learning in your area of practice	25 hours	125 hours
<i>*Verifiable</i> <i>Out of the total hours achieved in category A and B you are required to evidence 20% of the hours as verifiable CPD. This means that the learning has been awarded formal certification from a body such as the RCP, FPA or other.</i>	<i>10 hours</i> <i>Within every annual cycle, 10 hours of your CPD will need to be verifiable. You can record more if you wish to.</i>	<i>50 hours</i> <i>Within every five-year cycle, 50 hours of your CPD will need to be verifiable. You can record more if you wish to.</i>
<i>*Non-verifiable</i> <i>Out of the total number of CPD achieved in category A and B you can have 80% of the hours marked as unverifiable. This includes</i>	<i>40 hours</i> <i>Within every annual cycle, it is expected that up to 40 hours</i>	<i>200 hours</i> <i>Within every five-year cycle, up to 200 hours of your CPD will be expected to be non-verifiable.</i>

<i>the self-directed learning you have done without a formal course or approval of the content. The expectation is that you will reflect on your learning using evidence-based resources in your ePortfolio.</i>	<i>or more of your CPD will be non-verifiable.</i>	
Total CPD to achieve	50 hours	250 hours

*The total CPD includes how many verifiable and non-verifiable CPD hours are required to be achieved within the annual and 5 year CPD requirements.

18 specialty areas – CCPC

PAs are generalists and the FPA require all PAs to keep up to date in all 18 areas of the Core Clinical Practice Curriculum (CCPC) which was launched in September 2023. Each of these 18 areas has specific topics within them and the detail on this can be found within the PA content map document.

1	Acute and emergency (inc. toxicology)
2	Cardiovascular
3	Child and adolescent health
4	Clinical haematology
5	Dermatology
6	Ear, nose and throat (ENT)
7	Ophthalmology
8	Obstetrics and gynaecology
9	Endocrine and metabolic
10	Gastrointestinal
11	Infection (inc. sexually transmitted infections)
12	Mental Health
13	Musculoskeletal
14	Neurosciences
15	Renal and urology
16	Respiratory
17	Surgery
18	Palliative and end of life care

Each PA is responsible for their own learning and development. You are required to complete and evidence CPD in all 18 clinical areas annually and clearly assign the relevant evidence of meeting this in the CPD diary. If you have a specific specialty area that you are working in, you should therefore record more towards your main specialty area but also ensure you are also aiming to cover the other 18 speciality areas.

Some CPD events/session may cover specialties that overlap. **You must choose one area/specialty only** when logging your CPD.

Non-clinical and clinical

You may not be working clinically but you will need to evidence your 25 hours of clinical CPD annually to maintain the CPD requirements. You can then spend the remaining 25 hours on research or academia depending on your area of work.

Verifiable and non-verifiable CPD

Verifiable CPD means that the learning event has been formally accredited by an accrediting organisation such as the FPA, RCP or other accredited body. You must be able to provide evidence that the event has been accredited.

Unverifiable CPD means that the learning event has not been formally accredited by the FPA, RCP or any other accredited body.

	Annual minimum requirement
Verifiable	10 hours
Non-verifiable	40 hours

Examples:

1. Attending an FPA accredited one-hour lecture on ECG interpretation can be entered as a 'Reflection on learning' on the ePortfolio. You will need to record this as a '**Clinical CPD**' type and select either Acute and emergency or cardiovascular specialty. You will need to reflect on your learning and review which of the GMC's good medical practice domains it fits with depending on the reflection you have taken from the event. You will need to select '**Verifiable CPD**' and then link the evidence to this form once saved that it has been accredited e.g. a certificate confirming CPD credit.

2. Attending a leadership course can be entered as a 'Reflection on learning' on the ePortfolio. You will need to record this as a '**Non-clinical**' CPD type, reflect on your learning, and review which of the GMC's good medical practice domains it fits with depending on the reflection you have taken from the event. You will need to select '**Non-verifiable**' CPD.

Evidencing CPD

For all verifiable CPD you must provide evidence that this has been accredited by FPA, RCP or any other external accrediting body such as a certificate of accreditation and attendance. This needs to be linked to your reflection form on the ePortfolio.

Even if you attend events/session that have not been accredited for CPD (unverifiable CPD), the FPA would still expect you upload a certificate of attendance or confirmation of this to validate your attendance and self-learning where possible.

GMC Good Medical Practice (GMP) Domains

For each event/activity that is attended and reflected on for CPD credit, you must select the appropriate GMP domain it meets. There are four domains (you can select one or multiple as applies):

- Knowledge, skills and development
- Patients, Partnership and communication
- Colleagues, culture and safety
- Trust and professionalism

Exemptions

Exemptions are mitigating reasons on why the minimum required CPD for the year could not be achieved. Exemption CPD can only be claimed in exceptional circumstances such as long-term illness or absence such as parental leave or career break. **Exemptions do not count towards your overall CPD credit for the year**, and these will need to be achieved during your 5-year CPD cycle if there are any shortfalls. Whilst these can be claimed, they effectively work as a placeholder and do not count towards your overall CPD.

FPA CPD audit

The FPA will carry out an annual audit on 20% of randomly selected PA's ePortfolios. They will review the CPD that has been recorded and whether the individual had maintained a true record of their activities. PAs recording CPD on alternative systems must ensure they that they upload their CPD evidence in the personal library section of the ePortfolio as this will be requested during the audit process.

CPD credit allocation: half points

Learning sessions/events that are 30 minutes or less but more than or equal to 20 minutes in duration can be awarded 0.5 CPD credits. If the events are 60 minutes or less but more than or equal to 31 minutes in duration it can be awarded 1 CPD credit.

Not meeting the annual minimum CPD requirement

If you have not met the minimum annual 50 CPD hour requirement, you will need to make up any shortfall within the 5-year CPD cycle. There is some flexibility to allow you to catch up on any gaps over the 5 year period. You will be required to meet the 250 CPD hours when you complete your 5 year CPD cycle.

Unemployed – do I still need to record CPD?

The answer is yes. Once you are qualified as a PA, you are required to start recording your CPD. If you are unemployed, you can still attend events (verifiable or non-verifiable) and continue your learning and development as the GMC would still require you to demonstrate your commitment to keeping up to date.

Employed, but not as a physician associate

You can still access the FPA ePortfolio and record your learning, CPD and development even if you are not working as a PA. You will need to record your employment post as 'Employed - Clinical (not as a PA)'.

Moving to a new specialty

The GMC are clear that each PA must take responsibility for their own CPD. If a PA moves to a new specialty, then they must be actively obtaining education within that specialty to evidence that they are developing their learning to support their transition to a new specialty.

Academic PAs – not working clinically

PAs who do not work clinically will still be regulated by the GMC, and you must still meet the criteria outlined by the GMC in order to revalidate. The GMC will provide clarification regarding their stance on the revalidation model for PAs working in academic settings at a later time.

Accredited Pg certificate / Diploma / MSc courses

You can claim a maximum of **12 CPD hours** for an accredited course for the duration of the course/study and it can only be claimed in one CPD year.

PA National Exam examiner

As numbers of graduating PAs increase there is a need to maintain high numbers of examiners at the PA national exam. There will be CPD hours awarded to encourage PAs to support the exam. **A maximum of 12 hours for PA examining activities in a one-year cycle can be claimed.** This will need to be recorded as a non-clinical activity and you must reflect on the experience and learning as an examiner in your FPA ePortfolio.

Audit of my CPD Diary

CPD activities and credits will be reviewed as part of your annual appraisal with your supervisor. This will then be reviewed by the responsible officer at revalidation every 5 years as part of the GMC requirement. The FPA will also undertake an annual audit of 20% of PAs CPD diaries.

RCP CPD Diary – after 31 March 2024 this will no longer be in use

If you have previously logged your CPD activities using the RCP CPD Diary, you will not be able to continue to record your CPD on that platform from 1 April 2024. You are mandated to start logging all CPD activities using the FPA ePortfolio. However, you will still have read-only access and can download all your CPD into PDF and import this in your FPA ePortfolio account and save it in your personal library.

CPD summary

All CPD entries that have been logged on the FPA ePortfolio for both clinical and non-clinical activities will be displayed on the CPD summary page. This will show a breakdown of what you have achieved within the annual CPD year and accumulatively leading up to your 5-year CPD cycle. It will give you a better understanding of the specialty areas you have covered and any gaps in your CPD that you need make up (if there are any shortfalls).

FPA CPD Diary

From the **1 April 2024** all PAs who are a member of the FPA will be recommended to start recording their CPD using the FPA ePortfolio.

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For more information contact FPACPDqueries@rcp.ac.uk