

Identifying your CPD learning goals

From 1 December 2020

1. Why should I identify my CPD learning goals?

The Continuing professional development (CPD) registration standard requires you to maintain a portfolio that documents your learning goals, your planned CPD activities and your reflections on what you have learned.

Identifying your learning goals means that you are able to plan your CPD activities so that they focus on your individual needs based on your practice setting, professional interests and patient needs. By planning your CPD activities so that they are relevant to your practice they are more likely to keep you up to date and improve your patient outcomes.

2. When should I identify my CPD learning goals?

You should identify your learning goals early in each registration year after you have renewed your registration. You should identify and record your goals before you start to plan your CPD activities for the coming registration year.

Although you should identify your learning goals in advance, you can update your learning goals at any time during the year. Your learning goals may change in response to factors within your individual professional practice or to peer review. e.g. when a patient presents with a condition that you are unfamiliar with or you need to learn or refresh an approach to your work.

Learning goals may also change in response to factors outside of your professional practice such as areas identified by your Board, professional association or employer e.g. cultural safety.

3. How should I identify my CPD learning goals?

When identifying your CPD goals it can be helpful to think about your strengths and areas for improvement. Ideally your learning plan will balance building on your strengths and addressing any weaknesses relevant to your area of practice. This will help you to plan CPD activities that improve your skills and knowledge, develop your abilities and link your learning to your professional practice.

The following questions and suggestions may help you to identify your learning goals and possible CPD activities:

1. Think about the activities that you do in your work. How can your CPD help? (your scope of work might be set by your employer and your CPD should relate to it)
2. Think about your strengths. Are there any gaps or areas for improvement?
3. Are there competencies in the profession's competency standards¹ that you should work on?
4. What are your professional interests?
5. Where do you want to be professionally in five years?
6. Do your patients' needs suggest an area you should learn more about?
7. Could you ask for feedback from your peers and colleagues?
8. Could you undertake a practice audit or peer review?
9. What learning goals has your employer/manager set? (Do these meet the requirements of the CPD registration standard, or do you need to set additional learning goals?)

It may be helpful to use a SWOT analysis to help identify your learning goals. A SWOT analysis is a structured way of considering the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of an issue. It can be an effective tool to help you identify your learning goals based on your individual practice and

¹ Optometry Australia entry-level competency standards for optometry

issues that arise in your professional environment. Some questions to consider in a SWOT analysis are included in the following example.

4. Example SWOT analysis

You may find it useful to review your profession's competency standards or capabilities for practice when thinking about your strengths and weaknesses.

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What CPD topics have I completed over the past few years? • What aspects of my practice am I most knowledgeable/skilled in? • What areas of practice do I spend more time on? • What areas am I most competent in? 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there any areas of my practice where I haven't updated my knowledge and skills in recent years? • What aspects of my practice am I least knowledgeable/skilled in? • Are there particular conditions/patients attending my practice that I am less familiar with?
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there any new or developing evidence-based clinical techniques/ management approaches that could benefit my patients? (all CPD including on clinical techniques must be evidence-based and meet the requirements of the CPD registration standard) • Are there any CPD activities available that are particularly relevant to my practice? 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have any risk areas been identified in my profession by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The National Board ○ Professional association ○ My professional indemnity insurance provider?

5. How should I record my CPD learning goals?

You must record your learning goals in your CPD portfolio. The Board has developed a template CPD portfolio that you may choose to use to record your learning goals, CPD activities and reflections. The template portfolio is an example only and you may choose to use an alternative. You can alter the template or use an alternative format.

6. How long should I keep a record of my CPD learning goals for?

You must keep a record of your learning goals, CPD plan, CPD reflections and evidence of the CPD activities that you have completed for five years after the end of the registration period.