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Australian Pharmacy Council Ltd

# **Accreditation Standards for Continuing Professional Development Activities**

EFFECTIVE FROM 1 JULY 2013

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EFFECTIVE FROM 1 JULY 2013

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# **Accreditation Standards for Continuing Professional Development Activities**

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# Introduction

## Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Under the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2009*, which governs the operations of the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) and the National Boards for the registrable health professions, all registered practising health practitioners must undertake Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

CPD helps health professionals to maintain and improve their knowledge, skills and competence. The professional competencies for pharmacists are set out in the *National Competency Standards Framework for Pharmacists in Australia 2010* (the Competency Standards). The Competency Standards identify and describe the domains of professional responsibility for pharmacists.

CPD activities must assist pharmacists to maintain competency in the relevant domains of professional responsibility as set out in the current version of the Competency Standards. The particular competencies required by any pharmacist will depend on their scope of practice – that is the professional roles they perform or services they provide. Scope of practice, and performance level are the dimensions that describe a pharmacist's professional practice profile<sup>1</sup>.

One of the defining principles that underpins CPD is that of lifelong learning. Pharmacists demonstrate their commitment to this principle by undertaking activities that assist them to maintain competency and meet their self-assessed learning needs in their area of practice. CPD activities broaden and enhance the knowledge and skills that a pharmacist applies in their practice environment. It remains the decision of each individual pharmacist to choose suitable CPD activities, whether accredited or non-accredited, as being relevant to any identified learning needs and scope of practice.

Pharmacists should develop a learning plan to document their proposed self-directed learning and regularly review it during the CPD period to ensure that their needs are being met and to incorporate additional needs which evolve.

The Pharmacy Board of Australia's (PBA) *CPD Registration Standard on Continuing Professional Development* describe the specific requirements that must be met by pharmacists when undertaking CPD for the purpose of meeting the PBA's annual registration requirements.

The PBA has identified three categories or groups that describe CPD activities. Group 1 activities are broadly defined as 'information accessed without assessment'. Group 2 activities require a demonstration of knowledge or skills improvement through assessment. To be classified as Group 3, an activity must facilitate demonstrable quality or practice improvement. The PBA's definitions of Group 1, Group 2 and Group 3 are at Appendix A.

Activities are allocated one credit per hour, multiplied by the number associated with the relevant Group. Credits are calculated by multiplying the time limit undertaken by the PBA Group Category e.g. 1 hour x Group 2 activity = 2 CPD credits.

## CPD Accreditation

CPD can be either accredited or non-accredited. The accreditation of CPD activities provides an assurance to pharmacists that an activity has been reviewed for its educational quality and for its relevance to a pharmacist's practice.

The PBA does not require that CPD is accredited, or that any portion of the CPD activities undertaken by pharmacists must be accredited at this time. The PBA acknowledges that pharmacists may not have access to accredited CPD activities across the various activity groups or that cover the entire scope of the practice of pharmacy as defined in the PBA's CPD Standard. However, where non-accredited activities are undertaken, it is the responsibility of the pharmacist to assess potential activities for suitability and relevance and to determine whether individual learning needs will be addressed by undertaking these activities.

The PBA has authorised the Australian Pharmacy Council (APC) to accredit organisations to accredit CPD activities for pharmacists. Organisations must meet strict criteria to accredit. These will be provided as part of the application process.

CPD accrediting organisations assess CPD activities against the Standards set out in this document. The Standards define measurable attributes that CPD activities must demonstrate to become accredited. The Standards allow CPD accrediting organisations to objectively assess an activity to determine the number and type of CPD credits that can be allocated to the activity.

In the case of all CPD undertaken, maintenance of detailed and verifiable records is the responsibility of the pharmacist.

<sup>1</sup> For more information on scope of practice, and performance level, and the professional practice profile please see the *National Competency Standards Framework for Pharmacists in Australia 2010*

# The CPD Accreditation Standards

The CPD Accreditation Standards are those standards against which CPD accrediting organisations are required to assess a CPD activity and determine the activity's classification according to the PBA's CPD Standards and Guidelines and the corresponding number of CPD credits that can be claimed.

To be accredited, a CPD activity must demonstrate that it satisfies all of the Accreditation Standards. The application and supporting evidence must demonstrate how the activity meets each of these Standards.

# Standard 1: Learning Objectives

This Standard ensures that information provided to pharmacists about the activity includes the intended outcome objectives presented in such a way as to support pharmacists to choose suitable activities in accordance with their scope of practice and learning plan/needs

Element	Performance Criteria	Evidence examples
1.1 The activity must have a statement of specific learning objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Objectives must be linked to the Competency Standards</li><li>Objectives must be actionable statements</li><li>Objectives must be specific and measurable wherever possible</li><li>A statement containing the learning objectives must be accessible to pharmacists to allow them to choose appropriate activities</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>promotional materials</li><li>presentation materials</li><li>content of online and journal based activities</li><li>mapping of the objectives to the Competency Standards</li></ul>

Actionable statements are statements that define what a pharmacist should know, or be able to do, at the completion of the activity.

Selected examples of how learning outcome objectives should be expressed so that they are specific, measurable and actionable:

On completion of this activity you will be able to:

- Describe the three main causes of UTIs
- Explain the treatment options available
- Discuss the efficacy of naturopathic remedies with patients
- Discuss preventive measures with patients
- Demonstrate ability to take an accurate medication history in a patient with a UTI.

# Standard 2: Development

This Standard ensures that an activity is relevant to pharmacy practice

Element	Performance Criteria	Evidence examples
2.1 An appropriate development process must underpin the activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A justification for conducting the educational activity must be stated</li> <li>There must be significant pharmacist and/or another subject matter expert (SME) involvement in the development of the activity</li> <li>Pharmacists and SMEs involved in activity development must be able to demonstrate they are suitably qualified and/or experienced</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>list of authors/content developers</li> <li>key relevant experience including academic qualifications, credentials and relevant substantive employment or appointment details, as indicators of expertise relevant to the content for the pharmacists and SMEs involved in development</li> <li>description of roles/responsibilities of pharmacists and SMEs involved</li> <li>needs analysis documentation e.g. collated feedback, survey data, proposals</li> </ul>
2.2 The Competency Standards must be appropriately considered in the development of content and materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Competencies must be mapped to at least the Standard level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>documentation mapping content to the Competency Standards</li> </ul>
2.3 The proposed content of the activity must be based on critical evaluation of relevant literature and/or practice-based professional evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limitations on information must be disclosed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>course content</li> </ul>
2.4 Conflicts of interest must be disclosed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All parties involved in development, including expert reviewers, must disclose conflicts of interest whether actual or perceived</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>declarations of conflict of interest from developers and expert reviewers</li> </ul>
2.5 The activity must be developed free of commercial bias	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Involvement of an entity with a commercial interest related to the subject area must be disclosed and the entity must not unduly influence the content of the activity</li> <li>Active ingredient and brand names must be used to achieve a balanced presentation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>course content</li> <li>supplementary and/or assessment materials</li> <li>presenter's brief</li> </ul>



# Standard 3: Presentation

This Standard ensures that activities are objectively presented

Element		Performance Criteria	Evidence examples
3.1	The learning outcome objectives must be displayed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Learning outcome objectives must be displayed on presentational and instructional and/or assessment materials</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• course content</li><li>• instructional material</li><li>• journal article proofs</li></ul>
3.2	Conflicts of interest must be disclosed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Full disclosure of conflicts of interest must be made available to participants</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• declarations of interests from presenters</li><li>• journal article proofs</li><li>• electronic presentation/e-learning materials</li></ul>
3.3	The activity must be presented free of commercial bias	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Active ingredient and brand names must be used to achieve a balanced presentation</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• course content</li><li>• instructional and/or assessment materials</li><li>• presenter's brief</li></ul>
3.4	The activity must be delivered in accordance with the application as approved		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• course content</li><li>• instructional and/or assessment materials</li><li>• presenter's brief</li></ul>

# Standard 4: Educational Methods

This Standard ensures that teaching and assessment methods facilitate the integration of new knowledge and skills into a pharmacist's practice

Element		Performance Criteria	Evidence examples
4.1	Methods of delivery must promote effective adult learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Activities delivered face to face must allow time for interaction and questions or otherwise allow active involvement of participants and the opportunity to address problems relevant to practice</li> <li>Activities that are not conducted face to face (e.g. journal articles, online modules) must be designed using the principles of adult learning<sup>2</sup> and include active learning components in order to gain accreditation as a Group 2 activity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>details of learning activities/assessments used</li> <li>presenter's brief defining the role of the facilitator in monitoring discussions</li> </ul>
4.2	If instructional materials are used they must enhance participants' understanding of the content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appropriate instructional materials which are of satisfactory technical quality and current in content must be prepared for the activity</li> <li>Instructional materials must include references and be dated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>details of learning activities/assessments used</li> </ul>
4.3	Group 2 activities must include a learning assessment mechanism capable of demonstrating the improvement in knowledge and/or skills of the participants resulting from the activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The assessment mechanism must be designed to evaluate a participant's achievement of all of the learning outcome objectives</li> <li>The assessment must be constructed (e.g. in terms of number of questions, style of questions, number of distractors where multiple choice questions are used, level of difficulty and pass mark) to adequately assess the learning outcomes and be appropriate for the mode of delivery<sup>3</sup></li> <li>Should the assessment involve multiple choice questions, it must comprise of at least 5 questions per hour of activity that adequately assess the learning outcomes</li> <li>Interactive activities must be structured and facilitated in such a way as to allow each participant the ability to demonstrate the acquisition of the learning objectives</li> <li>Where supplementary assessment is allowed for a participant to demonstrate improvement in knowledge and/or skills, the content of subsequent assessments must be distinct from previous attempts. There must be a method of reporting back successful completion of the activity to each participant</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>activity running sheets/ timetables</li> <li>details of learning activities/assessments used</li> <li>outline of criteria for determining improvement of knowledge and/or skills</li> <li>presenter's brief defining the role of the facilitator in monitoring discussions</li> </ul>

2 The six principles of adult learning have been identified as: adults are internally motivated and self-directed; adults bring life experiences and knowledge to learning experiences; adults are goal oriented; adults are relevancy oriented; adults are practical; and adult learners like to be respected.

3 CPD providers are referred to the following reference for guidance on the expectations of appropriate written assessments: Constructing written test questions for the basic and clinical sciences, 3rd edition (revised). Philadelphia: National Board of Medical Examiners, 2002. Available at [www.nbme.org/publications/item-writing-manual-download.html](http://www.nbme.org/publications/item-writing-manual-download.html)

Element		Performance Criteria	Evidence examples
4.4	Group 3 activities must include a suitable period of reflection before and after the activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group 3 activities must be preceded by a documented structured reflection on practice and then followed by a post-activity to evaluate practice change or outcomes resulting from the activity. Such an activity may extend over a number of weeks or months and may include peer review <sup>4</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>details of learning activities/assessments used</li> <li>outline of criteria for determining improvement of knowledge and/or skills</li> <li>outline of criteria for determining the outcomes of the activity</li> </ul>

### Examples of active learning components for Group 2 activities are:

- post- and/or pre-testing (e.g. MCQs, short answer questions)
- problem solving scenarios/case studies
- question and answer sessions
- moderated discussion
- self-assessment activities
- data manipulation exercises

<sup>4</sup> An exemplar describing a Group 3 activity is available in the CPD Accreditation Guidelines.

# Standard 5: Promotion

This Standard ensures clear communication of activity accreditation and credit value

Element	Performance Criteria	Evidence examples
5.1 Promotion must comply with the APC CPD logo policy regarding promotion of accredited CPD activities and the accrediting organisation's conflict of interest policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Approved wording must be used to communicate the number of CPD credits</li><li>• The promoters of CPD activities must not advertise or give the impression that the activity is accredited until the activity has been granted accreditation by a CPD accrediting organisation</li><li>• Sponsors of an activity and/or hospitality associated with an activity may only be acknowledged during the activity in such a way as to make it clear that the educational content is independent</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• proposed promotional material</li><li>• activity provider's promotion policy</li></ul>

# Standard 6: Evaluation

This Standard ensures the delivery and outcome of CPD activities are assessed for quality and compliance with the CPD Accreditation Standards

Element	Performance Criteria	Evidence examples
6.1	Participants must be given the opportunity to evaluate the quality of the activity (or group of activities)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• participant surveys</li> </ul>
6.2	Providers must comply with Principle 2 of the National Privacy Principles as defined under the Privacy Act 1988	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• privacy statements</li> </ul>
6.3	Activities designed for repeated delivery must be subject to periodic review by the developer/provider and incorporate relevant feedback from previous evaluations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The evaluation must assess:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• achievement of learning outcome objectives</li> <li>• relevance of activity and content to practice</li> <li>• overall satisfaction</li> <li>• suitability of delivery</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The content of activities must be benchmarked against current practice</li> <li>• It is expected that all activities will be reviewed and that the review cycle will be sensitive to the rate of change in the area covered by the content</li> <li>• The provider must notify the accreditor of any changes resulting from a review</li> </ul>

# References

**Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2009**

<http://www.ahpra.gov.au/Legislation-and-Publications/Legislation.aspx>

**National Competency Standards for Pharmacists in Australia 2010**

<http://www.psa.org.au/supporting-practice/national-competency-standards>

**National Privacy Principles**

<http://www.privacy.gov.au/materials/types/infosheets/view/6583>

**Pharmacy Board of Australia Guidelines on Continuing Professional Development**

<http://www.pharmacyboard.gov.au/Codes-Guidelines.aspx>

**Pharmacy Board of Australia Registration Standards**

<http://www.pharmacyboard.gov.au/Registration-Standards.aspx>

