

The logo for the Statistical Society of Australia features the text "Statistical Society of Australia" in a dark blue, sans-serif font. The text is arranged in three lines: "Statistical" on the top line, "Society of" on the middle line, and "Australia" on the bottom line. To the left of the text is a blue L-shaped graphic element consisting of a vertical line on the left and a horizontal line at the bottom, meeting at a right angle.

Statistical Society of Australia

Continuing Professional Development Policy

Introduction

Continuing Professional Development (CPD): CPD is a process by which people maintain their knowledge and skill related to their professional career. CPD learning can involve structured, unstructured or informal and self-directed learning. A CPD working committee was set up after seeking an online interest from all the members of Statistical Society of Australia Inc (SSA).

The newly formed committee for CPD identified the need for a purpose, or policy, statement to fill a key strategic gap in the societies approach to continuing professional development. Previous attempts by the society (2000: Nick Fisher CPD Linked to Accreditation; 2002: Working Group on CPD conducted a survey of possible workshops; 2009: William Dunsmuir re-ignites the idea of CPD leading to Paul Sutcliffe's involvement in running CPD) were more focused on getting a CPD program up and running rather than developing a policy for the societies approach to CPD.

Rather than re-inventing the wheel this policy is modelled on the CPD Policy of the Royal Statistical Society (RSS) and policies of other Australian associations. The RSS policy is well developed and is linked to accreditation of members. Rather than develop a policy formally linked to accreditation this policy will developed in two stages. The first stage is to develop and promote a CPD policy which encourages members to engage in the process of CPD. This would be beneficial for young statisticians who are early in their career. The Accreditation Committee is expected to review the links to accreditation and decide whether to extend/promote the policy to formal level for re-accreditation purposes. The policy would then be updated to include the links to renewal of membership to the society and the accreditation.

The current CPD policy was initially drafted by the CPD committee on 31 July 2013 and submitted to the SSA Executive and Central Council for endorsement.

CPD Committee (on 31 July 2013)

Paul Sutcliffe (Chair)
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CPD POLICY

The SSA encourages its members, to follow a process of continuous professional review through CPD. The society provides guidelines on minimum targets at which to aim. All practising statisticians should view CPD as a vital part of their individual review process.

The SSA defines CPD as follows

CPD is an ongoing and continuous process through which an individual maintains and extends their knowledge and the development of individual qualities necessary for the execution of professional and technical duties throughout the practitioner's working life.

The society believes that:

1. CPD is a key part of professional recognition in the field of Statistics.
2. CPD must not be looked upon just as a medium of statistical technical development but as a whole person development, which includes non-statistical development aspects.
3. CPD evaluation is essentially an individual assessment process.

CPD involves

- work based learning,
- professional activities,
- formal/education,
- self-directed learning, and
- others.

Definitions and illustrations of these categories are given in Appendix 1.

Who does the CPD policy apply to?

For the purposes of Continued Professional Development, SSA members are broken up into the following broad categories A-D;

- A. Academics who specialise in the discipline of statistics or a discipline closely related.
- B. Those who are employed predominantly to practice statistical methods in either the private or public sector. Such individuals are often given titles such as:
 - i. Statisticians
 - ii. Data analysts

iii. Research officers

C. Those who are employed with some need to practice statistical methods in either the private or public sector. Such individuals can be addressed by a large spectrum of professional titles. This includes people who manage statistical units and also people such as senior general managers who have previously been active professional statisticians.

D. Individuals not falling into any of the above categories whom are merely seeking to keep abreast of developments in statistics and its practice.

Members in the first two categories (A and B) are encouraged to engage actively in the SSA CPD Policy described within this policy document as a way of planning and managing their professional development. Members in the other categories (C and D) should self-determine the level of professional development appropriate to their circumstance based on the guidelines mentioned in the CPD Guiding Principles below.

CPD Guiding Principles

SSA members can range from those beginning their career straight out of University to very experienced and senior practitioners and high level academics. As careers develop the CPD requirements will change and be approached in different ways. This policy is designed to assist those early in their careers, but also be applicable to all members.

To guide the individual through establishing their overall need for CPD consideration should be given to the following;

1. Relative importance of additional statistical knowledge in the furthering of one's professional career.
2. Relative importance of additional statistical knowledge in the furthering of one's academic endeavours (mainly aimed at students).
3. General level of interest in statistical knowledge for reasons not related to employment or academic development.

For example, consider a case where an SSA member works as an epidemiologist in an academic institute. Statistics and subject matter knowledge are considered to be roughly equally split in terms of prioritized skill sets within the profession. This individual may therefore use the first guiding principle to establish that they will only adhere to half of the recommended level of CPD detailed below.

The Society's Policy encourages an annual CPD profile of at least 50 "*Learning hours*" of CPD covering any combination of the above three activities. Learning hours is defined as

$$\text{Learning hours} = \text{Actual hours} \times \text{perceived CPD benefit (0-1 scale)}$$

The perceived CPD benefit is a personal assessment of the benefit to the individual of each CPD activity. In many cases the value will be one (1), but there may be times when the activity has components that may not provide benefit and therefore a value of less than one can be used.

The Society expects that most practising statisticians in categories A and B will *readily* find that their CPD activities comfortably exceed the minimum requirements. It is however accepted that there may be particular years where attainment of the minima is, for various good reasons not achievable (e.g. due to career breaks).

Recording CPD

The Society recommends maintenance of CPD records as an important feature of the CPD Policy. The Society expects that its members not to view this as a bureaucratic requirement but consider it as a normal part of good practice in professional life. Many Societies and employers already expect this, often as part of annual review and goal setting processes. As a good professional and personal trait, the Society believes that, it is useful to maintain a "CPD diary" to keep track of the CPD activities undertaken in a year. To simplify the process and give members an easy way to follow their level of CPD progress, the SSA has devised two tables (Appendix 2).

These tables are provided to serve as guidelines but by no means an exhaustive method of recording the CPD activities. For those who already maintaining records elsewhere, perhaps on a system provided by the employer, they may continue to do so-It is not the intention of the Society to ask for unnecessary duplication effort.

For those who prefer a slight summary method of recording their CPD activities, the short table (Table-1) might be considered useful. Please see Appendix-2 Table-1. If this option is preferred other supporting material would be held separately.

Appendix-1

Definitions of the CPD Activities [Adapted from the Royal Statistical Society, UK, CPD Policy]

CPD activities are allocated to one of the following five categories, with a requirement to undertake activities in at least three categories (exceptionally two categories) during each 12-month period.

1. Work based learning
2. Professional activity
3. Formal / educational
4. Self-directed learning
5. Other

Detailed elaboration of how these categories are defined is provided below:

Work based learning

Work based learning is professional development that takes place by fulfilling the current job role. Such development naturally takes place as experience is gained in the role, greater independence and responsibility is given, and the complexity and scope of work undertaken increases.

Work based learning also includes in-house learning activities and development opportunities that are provided by the employer as part of staff orientation and development in support of organisational performance and objectives.

Worked based learning – examples:

- Experiential learning: learning by doing the job – gaining, and learning from, experience – expanding role
- In-service training – includes orientation programs, standard operating procedures and employee development
- Receiving coaching from others
- Work shadowing
- Peer review of own work, including presentations to colleagues
- Review of case studies and literature
- Participating in journal club
- Discussions with colleagues – idea generation, problem solving, etc
- Presentations to external clients, regulators, policy makers
- Supervising colleagues or students
- Job rotation, secondments, sabbaticals
- Involvement in the wider work of employer – beyond scope of role
- Post-mortem and lessons-learnt activities following significant projects, events
- Requesting and analysing feedback on performance from colleagues, clients
- Participating in the employer's performance appraisal and goal setting process

Professional activity

Professional activities that support professional development include participating in the management and organisation of a professional body; and also participating in activities that develop the professional skills and knowledge of other professionals, and participating in activities that apply statistical expertise in the wider community.

Professional activity – examples:

- Involvement in the management of a professional body – officer, organiser, committee member, working group member
- Organiser of a conference, scientific meeting or course
- Being an examiner
- Being a referee for a journal
- Supervisor of research
- Membership of a technical expert group – e.g. special interest group, section or study group
- Being an expert witness
- Lecturing or teaching (new material)
- Giving presentations or being a discussant at conferences or scientific meetings
- Networking with professionals in other organisations
- Coaching or mentoring

Formal / educational

Formal/educational professional development includes the participation in activities that lead to gaining academic/professional qualifications and the attendance at structured learning activities organised by professional bodies, learned societies or training providers; and also the preparation of papers, articles or presentations for a professional audience.

Formal / educational – examples:

- Undertaking a programme of learning or research for an academic qualification
- Attending training courses
- Attending conferences or scientific meetings
- Undertaking distance learning or e-learning activities
- Reading to understand the legal and/or regulatory framework for professional work
- Maintaining or developing specialist skills
- Writing articles or papers
- Preparing presentations for conferences or scientific meetings
- Preparing material for training courses

Self-directed learning

Self-directed learning takes place when the individual takes the initiative in diagnosing learning needs, formulating learning goals, designing learning experiences, identifying and using human and material resources and evaluating learning outcomes.

Self-directed learning – examples:

- Reading books, journals and articles
- Reviewing and summarising books and articles
- Upgrading knowledge through internet searches and the use of electronic information sources
- Reflective practice – assessing benefit of CPD activities to self, client or employer – identifying next steps

Other

Activities which do not require statistical expertise, but which help develop transferable skills and gain experiences that are valuable in the current professional role or in future career directions. These would include involvement in strategic activities for the employer; and activities carried on outside of professional life.

Other – examples:

- Strategic thinking (e.g. projects for employers such as organisational restructuring, strategic planning and resourcing, external/community relations, facility development)
- Leadership skills (e.g. managing a children's sports team, leader of a scouting/guides activity, Chair-person for a club or society)
- Organisation and planning skills (secretary for a club or society, school governor, Parent Teacher Association organiser, church parish councillor)
- Finance skills (e.g. treasurer for a club or society)
- Coaching and counselling skills (e.g. sports coach, Samaritans volunteer, mentoring, tutoring)

Appendix -2

Table-1 Summary of CPD activities

Name:	Date:	Membership Status:
CPD Activity	Number of Learning Hours	
Work-Based Learning		
Professional activity		
Formal/Educational		
Self-directed learning		
Other		
Total		

Table-2 CPD Annual Summary

Name:

Job title:

Description of duties:

Progress review:

Activities	Description of Activity	Venue and facilitator	Start Date	Actual Hours	Perceived CPD benefit	Learning Hours
Work based learning						
Professional						
Formal/Educational						
Self-directed learning						
Other						
Total						