

FAQ on Revisions to CPD Scheme to account for Impact of Pandemic¹

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused the Society to cancel or postpone many of its events. It has also imposed extra work and caused personal disruption to a large number of our members. Therefore, on 9th April 2020, the Society announced that it was adapting its CPD Scheme for the current and next CPD years. A link to the full details can be found below but in essence they amount to the CPD scheme “year” becoming a two-year period with the requirement for the two-year period being one and a half times that of a single year. This document has been produced as a response to some of the questions that we have received, since the announcement, as additional guidance to members.

It should be noted that there is already a guide for members which pre-dates the recent changes but otherwise is informative.

Useful Links

[SAI response to COVID-19 situation](#)

[ASP PA - 1 Continuing Professional Development](#)

[Existing CPD Guide](#)

Q: Does the ASP PA-1 still apply?

A: Yes. Except where the details have been explicitly modified by the temporary changes, the ASP still applies. It will apply in full from 1st July 2021 once more, though we may modify it, as we have done in the past, to take account of changing circumstances and through the usual consultation and approval process.

Q: Do the changes affect who has to do CPD and record it?

A: No. As before all Fellow and Associate members must comply. As before members working outside Ireland who are complying with a scheme recognised by the Society may treat compliance with that scheme as equivalent. Please see below for more details on how compliance with the IFoA requirements is recognised following the introduction of the new IFoA scheme.

Q: What happens for members taking maternity leave or other forms of extended absence from work?

A: The same rules apply as at present. If you are away from work on extended absence, then you are allowed a reduction in the required amount of CPD, provided the period of absence exceeds 3 months. Note that does not include being unemployed and seeking work. The reduction is linear but

¹ This version produced August 2020 has been updated to account for the IFoA new CPD scheme applying from 1st September 2020.

with a minimum requirement of 5 hours and no reduction to the professionalism training requirement.

For example, if you are in member category 2B and were on leave from 1st February 2020 to 30th November 2020, your required CPD would be (14/24) of the 30 hours. The other requirements would be reduced similarly but the professionalism training requirement remains 2 hours.

Q: Are all the requirements of the 2-year period equal to 1.5 times the previous single year requirement?

A: Not quite;

- you must complete 2 (rather than 3) hours of verifiable professionalism training in total over the two years, and
- the minimum amount for completion by a member who has been on extended leave for a large part of the period (but not the full 2 years) is 5 hours, just as it is at the present

Q: Does that mean that a member who did their 2 hours professionalism training before the shutdown is good until 30th June 2021?

A: That's right, but note that if they are also IFoA members, they also have to comply with the IFoA's scheme which requires professionalism CPD in its scheme year running from 1st September 2020 to 31st August 2021.

Q: What will happen for those members who need practising certificates?

A: Members who require a new or renewed practising certificate will be required to submit details of CPD completed from 1st July 2019 to the date of application, so that the Practising Certificate Committee can see how much they have done, the aim being to demonstrate that compliance with the two-year requirement is likely. Applicants will also be asked to undertake to meet the revised CPD requirements by 30th June 2021.

Q: Does the new arrangement mean that I need not record any CPD until 30 June 2021?

A: Well, you don't have to, but that's probably a bad idea. By June 2021, some of your CPD may have taken place two years ago and your recollections may be sketchy. We strongly recommend that you record your CPD as you go along. It also helps you keep in mind where you are on meeting your requirements. In addition, as mentioned above, any members needing practising certificates will be expected to show that they are keeping up to date (see above).

Q: What happens to those who become Fellows (or Associates) during the two-year period?

A: A pro-rata rule applies here. For example, if you become a Fellow on 1st May 2020, then you would have 14 months as a Fellow out of 24 possible. Therefore, the requirements are 14/24^{ths} of the normal requirement for the CPD category you belong to. Note that the minimum of 2 hours professionalism training applies. Most members in this position will be attending the Graduation Programme which will supply CPD including professionalism CPD. The CPD Guide amplifies on the requirements for Associates in its FAQ section (question 6).

Q: I am a student member but carrying out a role that would mean that I would be CPD category 2A or 1 if I were a Fellow. Does the CPD scheme apply to me?

A: Technically, no, the CPD scheme does not apply to Students. However, there are requirements under the Code of Professional Conduct. One of these is that you have appropriate levels of knowledge and skill. We expect members in this position to undertake sufficient CPD to meet this requirement and to maintain records so that they can demonstrate this.

Q: What is happening about the Graduation Programmes?

A: The Society is now running two courses of the Graduate Programme converted into an online format in the Autumn. These will be a series of shorter sessions over a number of days. Full details can be obtained from the Society. Places are limited, so if you need to do this, please register as soon as possible.

Q: Has the IFoA confirmed they are comfortable with these changes for those Society members who are also members of the IFoA?

A: Yes. The IFoA has now confirmed that it will continue to recognise our CPD Scheme (including the revisions we announced on 9th April 2020).

Attendance at our Graduation Programme was already deemed as being equivalent to Stage 2 of the IFoA Professional Skills Training for freshly qualified actuaries. They have confirmed that if a member who was booked onto our April course is late in completing their IFoA requirements (i.e. not within a year of becoming a Fellow), then attendance at one of the Autumn 2020 courses would be acceptable.

Q: What is happening with IFoA CPD Requirements for 2019/20?

A: The IFoA's CPD Scheme "year" is 14 months for 2019/20 and ends on 31st August 2020. Society members seeking to rely on their compliance with the Society's scheme and not submit details into the IFoA must make an application to that effect. Please see the section on "Further Matters for IFoA members" in [SAI response to COVID-19 situation](#). Please note that the deadline for this was 31st July 2020. If you have not made the application, it may still be possible to do so but there may be a charge by the IFoA.

Q: What is happening with IFoA CPD Requirements for 2020/21?

A: The IFoA's new CPD Scheme will run from 1st September 2020 to 31st August 2021. The implications of this were detailed in an email to Members on the 7th August 2020, which is reproduced at the end of this document.

Q: Will the SAI 2020 Annual Convention still be taking place?

A: Yes, it will be in an online format, probably in December. No decision has yet been taken as to whether there will be another Convention before 30th June 2021, so it would be unwise to rely on this to meet your CPD requirements for the two-year period.

Q: Will there be more changes?

No more changes are planned for the period to 30th June 2021. We consider that there are enough chances to meet CPD requirements remotely that members should be able to comply even if Covid-19 restrictions are extended much longer than currently expected. If this does happen and individual members are facing difficulties, they should contact us at CPD@actuaries.ie.

Q: Where can I get online CPD that is verifiable?

A: If you register for and join a live SAI webinar, you are considered to have 'signed in' to the event. The SAI will keep a record of your attendance at the webinar and you may submit this event as verifiable CPD.

If you join a live Society webinar by conference call, then we will have records also. However, they will not identify you by name, but only the phone number. Therefore, when recording your entry for attendance you should note the telephone number that you used so that a later match-up can be made if you are audited.

[Actuview](#) is a useful utility and we plan to load more Irish content onto it. We are holding webinars, as are many other organisations. We expect that this will be a permanent feature even when the pandemic recedes. Indeed, we had begun moving in that direction before the crisis.

Q: I used to get together with a group from work and listen to Podcasts, can this still work?

A: Yes. Some form of electronic roll-call will be acceptable as verification. We recommend arranging to listen together then using one of the many web tools for meeting (e.g. Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Skype), then using screenshots of participants or email roll-calls or some other form of evidencing.

Q: Actuview did not record my CPD, what should I do?

A: We have been told that the bugs that appeared early on have now been fixed. If you have problems, please let us know as soon as possible. We do recommend checking each time you view just to be safe. Remember, you must view at least 90% of the video for it to count.

Q: I volunteer for the Society on a Committee, but there are no longer sign-in sheets, does this mean that the CPD is no longer verifiable?

A: No, not at all. If the meeting has a Society host, they will record attendance and this record will be retained by the Society; if there is no Society host, the Chair needs to do this. In addition, the minutes should record those present and should be placed in the relevant forum on our website.

Q: Will you be creating online Professionalism CPD material?

A: We will be considering how to deliver Professionalism CPD in the future. If it becomes possible, we will be delivering at least some of our Professionalism content face to face. Equally, we were planning to create online Professionalism CPD before the pandemic, so that is now very likely. However, as IFoA members who have to complete 2 hours by 31st August 2020 have access to IFoA online resources, we do not consider that it is essential to deliver Society professionalism training before that date.

Q: Do I need to make a compliance declaration in respect of 2019/20?

A: You should not make a compliance declaration in respect of the year to 30th June 2020. The system has been modified to cover the two-year period to 30th June 2021.

Announcement made to members (on 7th August) concerning the impact of the IFoA new CPD Scheme

Dear Member,

Members of the Society may be aware that following a review process and consultation with its members, the IFoA has introduced a new CPD scheme. This will apply from 1st September and can be found [here](#).

Following discussions between the Society and the IFoA, we can explain what will apply to those of our members who are also members of the IFoA (referred to as “Dual Members” below).

For many years there have been arrangements in place for Society CPD Category 2B/IFoA Category 2 Dual Members to use compliance with one scheme to give compliance with the other. This was done on the basis of where the member worked. So, if you worked wholly or mainly in the UK, the Society would accept compliance with the IFoA Scheme as giving compliance with the Society’s. Likewise, if you worked wholly or mainly in Ireland, the IFoA would accept compliance with the Society’s Scheme as giving compliance with the IFoA’s.

The situation that will apply for the next year (only) is given below. It is likely that different arrangements will apply from next year. In this context, we will be engaging in a review of our CPD Scheme with the intention that a new scheme will apply from 1st July 2021.

Dual Members Working in the UK

For Dual Members working in the UK, compliance with the IFoA Scheme will in general be treated as compliance with the Society Scheme. However, please note the following: -

- The two-year period of the Society’s scheme is covered by the 14 months of the IFoA 2019/’20 scheme plus 10 months (out of 12) of the 2020/’21 scheme. To be deemed compliant with the Society’s scheme for the full period, you must be compliant with the 2019/’20 UK Scheme and must have the firm intention at 30 June 2021 that you will be compliant with the 2020/’21 scheme. If, despite that intention, you do not comply with the IFoA scheme for 2020/’21, we require that you inform us of this and give due reason.
- You should comply with either the Society’s scheme or the IFoA’s for the whole of the two-year period. That said, for members who change country where they work during this period, we are prepared to show flexibility and if this applies to you, please contact us at CPD@actuaries.ie
- The IFoA scheme does not apply to Members working in organisations that adopt the QAS CPD Scheme. The Society will accept compliance with the QAS CPD Scheme as being equivalent to complying with the Society scheme.
- The IFoA scheme does not apply to “Non-Practising Members” (as defined in the scheme). The Society will not automatically accept classification by the IFoA as a “Non-Practising Member” as grounds for exemption from the requirements of the Society’s scheme. We do not expect there will be many (if any) Members falling into this category. If you believe this will apply to you, please contact the Society at CPD@actuaries.ie as soon as possible.
- The new IFoA scheme requires that you keep records of CPD activities but you do not have to do this on the IFoA’s CPD recording system. We will not require that you keep records on our system either. However, if you are randomly picked for audit, you will be asked to evidence compliance with the UK schemes by showing us your records and (for the 2019/’20 scheme only) providing verification.

Dual Members Working in Ireland

If you are a Dual Member who works wholly or mainly in Ireland and the IFoA has accepted an application from you for recognition of your compliance with the Society’s CPD Scheme for the CPD year 2019/’20:

- The IFoA will continue to recognise the hours-based requirement of the Society's Scheme, as adapted for the Covid-19 situation, into 2020/'21.
- You will be expected to comply with all other requirements under the new IFoA Scheme from 1st September 2020. Therefore:
 - You will be required to keep records of your CPD activities. We require that this is done on our CPD reporting system anyway.
 - You will need to engage in a Reflective Practice Discussion with an Appropriate Person (someone who understands the nature of your work, development and learning outcomes).
 - You may also be required to engage in a Reflective Practice Discussion with a member of the IFoA team. This will be happening on a sample basis from September 2021 onwards.

Questions

If you have any questions about the Society's CPD requirements, please email cpd@actuaries.ie.

If you have any questions about the IFoA's CPD requirements, please email cpd_feedback@actuaries.org.uk