# CPD Learning Categories

Your CPD record is unique to you and should reflect your speciality, role, current position within your organisation, and future career aspirations. As such, these guidelines will give you an idea of appropriate activities for your CPD, without detailing specific and expected activities that qualify.

**CPD learning activities**

The CPD activities you undertake will depend on your priorities and the opportunities available to you, your personal learning styles, any learning required for current or future roles, and particular areas of interest for you. Your chosen activities may therefore be entirely related to environmental or scientific matters, or could also explore a variety of skills relating to professional practice, such as developing IT skills, learning a new language, or undertaking management training.

There should be a good balance of activities within your record to demonstrate the breadth of your professional development. The CPD activities recorded for the IES come under one of five learning categories, and to achieve a good balance you should include activities across **at least 3** of the learning categories.

**CPD Learning Categories**

**1. Formal Learning**

Activities under this category often lead to gaining academic/professional qualifications, such as your Chartership or a part-time Masters' degree, or are learning opportunities organised by professional bodies, learned societies, or training providers that you either attend or facilitate.

Formal learning activities may include:
- Undertaking a programme of learning or research for an academic qualification
- Attending training courses, conferences or scientific meetings
- Undertaking distance learning, webinars or e-learning activities
- Maintaining or developing specialist skills
- Writing articles or papers for publication/circulation outside your normal work
- Preparing presentations for conferences or scientific meetings
- Preparing (new) material for training courses

**2. Work based learning**

These activities help develop transferable skills and experiences which may be valuable in your current professional role or in future career directions. CPD activities in this category also include any specific learning undertaken for your role, such as in-house training for a specific technical skill or expanding knowledge in a particular area required for your role.

Work based activities may include:
- Strategic thinking (e.g. projects for employers such as organisational restructuring, strategic planning and resourcing, external/community relations, facility development)
- Leadership skills
- IT and technology skills
- Organisation and planning skills
- Finance skills
- Coaching and counselling skills

**3. Professional activity**

Professional activities involve the wider community of environmental scientists. Professional activities that support professional development include participating in the activities of a

professional body, learned society or trade association, participating in activities that develop the professional skills and knowledge of other professionals, and participating in activities that apply scientific expertise for the benefit of the wider community.

Professional activities may include:
- Involvement in helping organise activities for the IES or other scientific or trade associations
- Organiser of a conference, scientific meeting or technical visit, outside your day job
- Being a referee for a journal
- Act as an examiner or supervisor of research (on a voluntary basis)
- Participation in a special interest group, panel or study group
- Taking part in workshops, focus groups and technical visits with other professionals
- Preparation of new materials for teaching others
- Preparation for giving presentations or taking part in a debate at conferences or scientific meetings
- Networking with professionals in other organisations
- Coaching or mentoring (voluntary)
- Taking part in online discussions on matters of major scientific or technical interest
- Assessing Chartership or other Registration candidates
- Auditing CPD records

### 4. 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 may include:
- Structured reading of books, journals and articles to upgrade knowledge
- 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

### 5. Other
This section is for voluntary work, public service and CPD that doesn't fit into the above categories. Activities here may include coaching sports teams, acting as a STEM ambassador, supporting local community groups or donating your time to causes that you care about. As these activities tend to fall outside of typical professional work, when including these activities it is crucial to reflect on what you have gained from that activity and how it has helped you develop as a professional.