

Accreditation and continuing professional development (CPD)

CPD accreditation

Application guide

V4.4

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Introduction

Continuing professional development (CPD) is the ‘responsibility of individual pharmacists for systematic maintenance, development and broadening of knowledge, skills and attitudes, to ensure continued competence as professionals, throughout their careers.’¹

CPD is an ongoing, cyclical process of continuous quality improvement. Individuals actively manage the process of conducting a self-appraisal, developing a personalised learning plan, participating in relevant educational activities, implementing new knowledge/skills in practice and evaluating the outcome.²

The professional competencies for pharmacists are set out in the *National Competency Standards Framework for Pharmacists in Australia 2016* (the 2016 Competency Standards). The Competency Standards identify and describe the domains of professional responsibility for pharmacists. The 2010 Competency Standards will remain available for a transition period, recognising that this framework is currently embedded across many facets of the profession.

CPD must assist pharmacists to maintain competency in the relevant domains of professional responsibility as set out in the 2016 Competency Standards and/or 2010 Competency Standards). The particular competencies required by any pharmacist will depend on their scope of practice – that is professional roles they perform or services they provide.

The Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA), as the peak professional body for pharmacists working in all sectors, is continually strengthening the opportunities for pharmacists to maintain and extend their professional capability through CPD and practice improvement.

Under the auspices of the Australian Pharmacy Council (APC) the PSA may accredit CPD for pharmacists that is eligible to be used as supporting evidence of continuing competence. 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. It assists pharmacists to identify opportunities that best address their own professional competence and the quality of the systems in which they work.

¹ ibid

² ibid

Principles underpinning accreditation

The following principles underpin the accreditation process.

Transparency	The criteria for achieving accreditation are documented and published. They are equally applicable to all CPD providers.
Confidentiality	All information supplied to PSA by providers of CPD activities as part of an application for accreditation will remain confidential. Details relating to applications will only be discussed with and disclosed to those people involved in the assessment of applications; associated agencies (e.g. APC) on a 'need to know' basis, or where authorised in writing by the provider.
Integrity	The PSA is the peak professional body for pharmacists. Like the profession they represent, PSA will act in the best interest of its members and will not act to promote its own self-interest when accrediting CPD activities.
Consistency	Internal reviews for quality assurance will facilitate consistent interpretation and implementation of the APC <i>Accreditation Standards for Continuing Professional Development Activities</i> (1 July 2013) and <i>Guidelines 2015</i> (April 2016).
Accountability	An appeals process is in place to allow providers of CPD activities to challenge accreditation decisions.

Accreditation of CPD activities

The planning and delivery of quality CPD activities is a complex process, which draws upon expertise from the fields of adult education as well as the discipline of pharmacy. Providers must be capable of incorporating principles of adult learning in order to meet the learning needs of pharmacists and enhance learning outcomes.

The APC *Accreditation Standards for Continuing Professional Development Activities* (1 July 2013) are the Accreditation Standards against which PSA is required to assess a CPD activity and determine the activity's classification and 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 process and forms have been designed and structured in a way that providers will be able to respond to questions and provide evidence that will enable sound review and assessment of each activity.

Providers are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the Accreditation Standards to ensure they meet the requirements for accreditation and retain evidence on file.

An electronic copy of the APC *Accreditation Standards for Continuing Professional Development Activities* (1 July 2013) can be found at: <https://www.pharmacycouncil.org.au/library/standards/>

Applying for accreditation

All forms are available from the PSA website: www.psa.org.au/accreditation

The accreditation application can take up to **20 business days to process** (or 10 business days to process with fast track for an additional fee). This is provided that all correct and complete documentation is submitted to PSA at the time of application and the application meets the APC Accreditation Standards.

The CPD provider must notify PSA a minimum of **10 business days prior to submission** to confirm availability of the fast-track service as availability of this service is not guaranteed.

The following documents must be submitted with your application:

1. Completed *CPD accreditation application form*
2. Copies of ALL presenter/author briefs (signed by presenter/author)
3. Copies of ALL biographies/CVs of presenter/author
4. Copies of ALL FINAL proposed content (e.g. presentations/articles) complete with learning objectives and 2016 Competency Standards (and/or 2010 Competency Standards) addressed
5. Copies of ALL assessment mechanisms (e.g. multiple choice questions)
6. Copy of evaluation form
7. Any promotional material if available.

Additional materials required for 2 or 3 day activities (e.g. conferences):

1. Completed *Conference accreditation form*
2. Copy of final program.

Please note that PSA cannot guarantee the timely outcome of an accreditation application if applications are lodged with missing documents.

If the application is assessed as not yet meeting the APC Accreditation Standards, the CPD provider will be requested to address these issues and resubmit or provide further support documentation.

The accreditation process must be finalised and an *Accreditation notification letter* received from PSA before the CPD activity can be advertised as accredited, delivered, published or distributed. Applications submitted for accreditation of activities after delivery, publication or distribution will not be accepted for review.

The PSA can provide assistance (on request) for an additional fee to give suggestions to assist a successful accreditation outcome. This may be in the form of phone support or email.

All accreditation applications and queries should be sent to [**accreditation@psa.org.au**](mailto:accreditation@psa.org.au)

Accreditation of conferences/symposiums

Assessment of content in conferences/symposiums requires more time due to the large number of presentations. If the application is missing correct documentation, it can further delay assessment.

It is the provider's responsibility to submit applications in sufficient time to allow for any revisions or rewrites required prior to final approval. The PSA is not responsible for missed deadlines or lack of accreditation due to late submission of an application or any delays caused by revisions or further information required from the provider.

Please consider the timeframe for this process when submitting applications and allow sufficient time between assessment of your activity and date of actual activity.

Providers are to note that case-study or workshop sessions in conferences can only be accredited as Group 2 activities if each CPD activity has a 1:20 facilitator to participant ratio AND they are two-thirds interactive.

The APC stipulates:

- Face-to-face interactive activities must be structured and facilitated in such a way to allow each participant to demonstrate the acquisition of the learning objectives.
- For an interactive CPD activity to be granted Group 2 accreditation, the interactive component of the activity **must** form two thirds of the time allocated for the CPD activity. For example, if it is a 30 minutes CPD activity, the interactive component of the activity must be for at least 20 minutes.
- For an interactive activity to be granted Group 2 accreditation, the ratio of facilitator to participants should be **no more than 1:20**.
- Individual participants must contribute individually and/or be actively involved in a group activity to be eligible for Group 2 CPD credits.

Application process

This checklist outlines the process for applying for CPD accreditation.

Step	Description	Completed
1	Read the details within this CPD accreditation application guide and other related documents to ensure the activity is appropriate to apply for CPD accreditation.	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Complete <i>CPD accreditation application form</i> .	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Send <i>Presenter/author brief</i> to all authors/presenters for completion (e.g. signed by presenter/author).	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Forward signed <i>CPD accreditation application form</i> and <i>Presenter/author brief</i> to PSA with supporting information such as FINAL proposed content (e.g. <i>PowerPoint</i> presentation/article), promotional material (e.g. flyer), copy of evaluation form and other relevant information to accreditation@psa.org.au	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	PSA will notify applicant of estimated costs and timeframe for accreditation. Applicant will need to accept the costs and approve the assessment process to continue.	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	PSA will provide feedback on any areas of the application that do not meet the APC <i>Accreditation Standards for Continuing Professional Development Activities</i> (1 July 2013). Applicant will need to make any requested changes to the activity as recommended by PSA.	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	PSA will send an <i>Accreditation notification letter</i> outlining the accreditation decision as approved, and details of the accreditation including use of APC CPD logo, accreditation number, accompanying statement, CPD activity group, PBA CPD credits and accreditation expiry date.	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Applicant must deliver the activity in accordance with the application as approved or send a completed <i>Deviation from accreditation form</i> to accreditation@psa.org.au	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Applicant must send a summary of the participant evaluations to accreditation@psa.org.au within 1 month of completion of the activity or on a 6-monthly basis for ongoing activities. Note: Applicant may not be eligible to apply for future accreditation or re-accreditation if an evaluation summary is overdue.	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Applicant must participate in, and respond to, the audit process as requested by PSA.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Accreditation fees

PSA will notify applicant of estimated costs and timeframe for accreditation. Applicant will need to accept the costs and approve the assessment process to continue. The application fee covers review of the program material and is due upon notification of the final fee. Accreditation of CPD activities is subject to fees being paid. If fees are not paid in a timely fashion, PSA reserves the right to revoke the accreditation outcome.

Fee structure is based on the length and amount of material that needs to be reviewed. The fee is non-refundable after the application has been reviewed regardless of whether the material meets the APC Accreditation Standards.

Fee schedule

Activity	Fee (ex GST)	Fee (inc GST)
≤1-hour activity	\$489	\$537.90
1–2-hour activity	\$613	\$674.30
2–4-hour (half-day) activity	\$1,185	\$1,303.50
4–6-hour (full-day) activity	\$1,725	\$1,897.50
More than full-day activity	POA	POA
Fast-track fee	\$258	\$283.80
Application assistance (on request)	\$129/hour	\$141.90/hour
Appeals fee	\$258	\$283.80

Current as at 1 July 2018.

Accreditation appeals and grievance process

Overview

PSA is committed to providing an effective, efficient, timely, fair and confidential grievance handling process for all CPD accreditation applications.

Opportunities to amend content or other resources by the CPD provider are offered as part of the accreditation review process. A PSA Accreditation Assessor may make recommendations for changes to assist with meeting the Accreditation Standards when assessing the application. In the event that any of the Accreditation Standards are still not met, accreditation will not be granted.

PSA will treat all complaints and appeals in confidence, involving only those who need to know.

At all stages of the process, discussions relating to complaints, grievances and appeals are recorded in writing and stored for a period of 7 years. A full written explanation of decisions and actions taken as part of this procedure are provided to the CPD provider on request.

An appeal may be based on an error in the:

- assessment against the Accreditation Standards
- CPD credits and/or CPD activity type
- outcome of the application.

Responsibility

The Resource Development Manager is responsible for managing grievances and appeals and ensuring that all Accreditation Assessors are competent accreditation decision-makers and that CPD providers are made aware of the process for appeals.

Formal grievance and appeals process

Stage one

A CPD provider who is not satisfied with the accreditation decision can submit a formal appeal to the Resource Development Manager in writing at accreditation@psa.org.au

The appropriate fee must accompany the appeal, and will be refunded if a decision is made in favour of the CPD provider.

The responsible officer is the Resource Development Manager within PSA who assesses the grievance and arranges an accreditation assessment by a suitably qualified/experienced Accreditation Assessor that was not involved in the initial assessment.

The Accreditation Assessor will be blinded to the result of the prior accreditation assessment and outcome.

The Resource Development Manager will consider the outcome of this accreditation assessment and notify the CPD provider in writing within 10 business days the outcome of their appeal, including the reasons for the decision.

The complainant is advised of their right to access stage two of this procedure if they are not satisfied with the outcome of stage one.

Stage two

If the CPD provider is not satisfied with the outcome of stage one, they may lodge an appeal in writing to the Executive Director, Practice Support & Education and request referral of the matter to an independent external Accreditation Assessor appointed for this purpose by PSA.

The independent external Accreditation Assessor will be blinded to the result of the prior accreditation assessments and outcomes.

PSA will give due consideration to any recommendations arising from the external review within 10 business days and notify the CPD provider the outcome of their appeal, including the reasons for the decision.

Promotion and delivery

Once an activity has been accredited, PSA grants the provider the rights to use the APC CPD logo on promotional material associated with the accredited activity. The logo must comply with the APC *Accreditation Marketing Policy* and be accompanied by an accreditation number and accompanying statement. The logo, accreditation number, and accompanying statement will be given to the provider when they are notified in writing of the accreditation outcome.

A statement containing the learning objectives must be accessible to pharmacists to allow them to choose appropriate activities.

Participants need to be provided with the following information to allow them to meet PBA requirements for recording CPD:

- Relevant 2016 Competency Standards (and/or 2010 Competency Standards) for a pharmacist's CPD plan (these could be included on the participation certificate)
- Start and finish date of activity
- Source or provider details
- Type of activity (e.g. journal article, seminar, lecture, workshop)
- Topics covered during activity (specify all topics covered)
- Accreditation status (accredited or non-accredited)
- CPD activity group (Group 1, 2 or 3)
- Pharmacy Board of Australia CPD credits.

CPD providers will supply the PSA with a copy of promotional materials used, including a screen drop of any online promotion within 1 month of completion of the activity.

Marketing or advertising your CPD activity

CPD providers cannot advertise their activity as accredited unless they have received their *Accreditation notification letter* from PSA.

Usage of APC logos

The information in this section is an excerpt from the APC *Accreditation Marketing Policy*. The full document is available at: <https://www.pharmacycouncil.org.au/education-providers/resources/>

“APC CPD logo is a nationally consistent and distinguishable mark to be displayed on accredited CPD activities to demonstrate an activity has been allocated CPD credits and meets the requirements for accredited CPD.

This APC CPD logo must be displayed in a way that clearly identifies both the activity’s status and the unique identifier adjacent to the logo. It should be displayed in a manner that clearly states the credits allocated and status of the accredited activity.

One of the following statements must accompany the APC CPD logo and accreditation number:

- This activity has been accredited for X hours of Group X CPD (or X CPD credits) suitable for inclusion in an individual pharmacist’s CPD plan. OR
- This activity has been accredited for X hours of Group X CPD and X hours of Group X CPD (for the interactive workshop component). This comprises a total of X CPD credits suitable for inclusion in an individual pharmacist’s CPD plan. OR
- This activity has been accredited for X hours of Group X CPD (or X CPD credits) suitable for inclusion in an individual pharmacist’s CPD plan which can be converted to X hours of Group X CPD (or X CPD credits) upon successful completion of relevant assessment activities.

CPD activity providers **must not** identify the organisation that has accredited the activity in promotional material except by the use of the unique identifier supplied by the accrediting organisation when the activity is accredited.

The APC stipulate: “CPD activity providers may choose to include in their promotional materials that the provider has applied for accreditation. Therefore, they may use a statement such as ‘**currently applying for accreditation**’ or ‘**seeking accreditation**’ in their promotional materials. However, CPD activity providers must not give an indication of a likely outcome of the accreditation while advertising. For example, the amount of credits awarded should not be advertised until accreditation is granted.”

CPD activity providers and CPD accrediting organisations must ensure that advertising comprises no more than 20% of total space allocated in and around the printed content of any material relating to the activity (e.g. *PowerPoint* slides).”

Sponsor acknowledgement and commercial bias

This relates to Accreditation Standards 2.4, 2.5, 3.2, 3.3.

Sponsor acknowledgment must be clear, concise and transparent. PSA suggests the following as a guide for acknowledging different types of sponsorship:

- This article was independently commissioned and reviewed by XXX at the request of and/or with support from company xxx.
- This activity has been funded/supported by xxx.
- The educational material has been commissioned and supported by XXX, and independently reviewed by XXX.

Activities must be developed and presented free of commercial bias:

- 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.
- Active ingredient and brand names must be used to achieve a balanced presentation.

Deviation from accreditation

It is the provider's responsibility to ensure the activity is delivered according to the application as approved. Changes to an activity that is accredited may require a review of activity material. Review following minor changes (e.g. name or date change of activity) will be undertaken at no additional cost to the provider. Reviews following major changes (e.g. content change, delivery format change) may require submission of a completely new application, which will attract the applicable fee.

If the activity delivered differs from what was originally accredited and promoted (e.g. a lecturer completes the program in less time than was originally accredited), a *Deviation from accreditation* form must be submitted within 48 hours. Accreditation may be adjusted accordingly.

A *Deviation from accreditation* form can be downloaded from www.psa.org.au/accreditation

Maintaining accreditation

Upon accreditation being granted, the provider will be sent an *Accreditation notification letter* detailing the use of APC CPD logo, accreditation number, accompanying statement, CPD activity group, PBA CPD credits, and accreditation expiry date.

CPD activities are accredited for a maximum of 2 years.

An expiry date is allocated by PSA. Accreditation may be granted for 12 months if it is likely that research and development in the topic area will require content to be reviewed and updated during the accreditation period. Allocation of a 12- or 24-month accreditation period is at the discretion of PSA. For all activities, the provider must maintain records of participation and have the capacity to issue individual documentation of successful completion to each participant if requested. Participants may request such documentation for retaining their personal learning portfolio or submitting to a registering or accrediting body.

The provider (not PSA) is required to have procedures in place for maintaining records of participation in an activity and responding to such requests by participants.

The provider must comply with the Australian Privacy Principles as defined under the Privacy Act 1988.

Providers may apply for re-accreditation if the activity is to remain accredited after the accreditation expiry date. Content must be reviewed and revised within the provider's review cycle and incorporate new and relevant researched information and relevant feedback from previous evaluations. A new application or *Re-accreditation checklist and declaration* may be requested for the re-accreditation of an activity and will be at the discretion of PSA.

Re-accreditation by PSA can only be applied for if an activity has been previously accredited by PSA and not another CPD accrediting organisation.

A *Re-accreditation checklist and declaration* form can be downloaded from www.psa.org.au/accreditation

Evaluation summary

Participants must be given the opportunity to evaluate the quality of the activity (or group of activities). The evaluation must assess:

- achievement of learning outcome objectives
- relevance of activity and content to practice
- overall satisfaction
- suitability of delivery.

Each question should be rated on a 3-point scale of not met, partially met or entirely met.

A template *Evaluation form* and *Summary of evaluations form* can be downloaded from www.psa.org.au/accreditation

Audits

Audits are a planned, systematic and documented process used to assess a provider's compliance with the Accreditation Standards for accredited CPD activities. Audits also give feedback to providers on the quality of their activity to support the continuous improvement of their activity development and delivery. The audit will assist and enhance the overall validity and reliability of the application process.

Over the course of a year, PSA will conduct an audit of a selection of accredited activities. The aim is for at least 5% of all accredited activities to be randomly selected for audit each year. In addition to this, the audit process may be initiated (but is not limited to) when:

- a complaint is received about an activity
- activity content does not appear to be evidence-based or is still emerging or evolving in some way (e.g. due to new evidence).

The audit process will assess the provider's compliance with the Accreditation Standards, and may involve:

- participation of a PSA representative in the activity
- discussion with activity participants to solicit their opinions against the standards
- request for the provider to submit activity documentation which could include assessment and/or evaluation forms.

If the activity fails to conform to the *CPD accreditation application form* as approved (or the *Deviation from accreditation form*), the provider will be notified and may be given the opportunity to remedy any breaches of the Accreditation Standards.

If appropriate remedies are unable to be made, or the provider fails to participate in the audit process, accreditation may be revoked. The provider will be responsible for notifying all future participants that accreditation has been revoked. The PSA may also refuse to accredit future submissions from the offending provider or sponsor, either for a specified period of time or indefinitely.

CPD providers are reminded that if CPD activities are not delivered in accordance with the application as approved, it is considered a breach of APC Accreditation Standards. By signing the *CPD accreditation application form*, CPD providers agree to these terms.

Further resources

PSA documents

- *National Competency Standards Framework for Pharmacists in Australia 2016*. At: www.psa.org.au/practice-support-and-tools/psa-information-framework#national-competency-standards-framework
- *National Competency Standards Framework for Pharmacists in Australia 2010*. At: www.psa.org.au/practice-support-and-tools/psa-information-framework#national-competency-standards-framework
- PSA reference material: Learning objectives and professional competencies for continuing professional development and practice improvement activities. At: www.psa.org.au/accreditation
- PSA reference material: Multiple choice questions to assess continuing professional development and practice improvement. At: www.psa.org.au/accreditation
- PSA Guide to documenting Group 3 CPD credits. At: www.psa.org.au/accreditation

APC and PBA documents

- *APC Accreditation Standards for Continuing Professional Development Activities* (1 July 2013). <https://www.pharmacycouncil.org.au/policies-procedures/standards/>
- *APC Accreditation Standards for Continuing Professional Development Activities – Guidelines 2015* (April 2016). At: <https://www.psa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/APC-CPD-Accreditation-Standards-Guidelines-2015.pdf>
- *APC Accreditation Marketing Policy* (May 2015). At: <https://www.pharmacycouncil.org.au/policies-procedures/policies/>
- Pharmacy Board of Australia Guidelines on continuing professional development (effective 1 December 2015). At: www.pharmacyboard.gov.au/documents/default.aspx?record=WD15%2f18499&dbid=AP&chksuM=H3IV5PqPKFCpuVikiJyUkA%3d%3d
- Pharmacy Board of Australia Continuing Professional Development (CPD) FAQ. At: <https://www.pharmacyboard.gov.au/codes-guidelines/faq/cpd-faq.aspx>

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