

## Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Audit Process Guidelines

*Document 221121*

The Professionalism and Credential Monitoring Board (PCMB) conducts an annual audit of CIA members' CPD statements and records, in accordance with the [Qualification Standard – Requirements for Continuing Professional Development](#) (QS).

The audit serves as an educational tool for members and helps improve the CIA's overall CPD program. The reporting category selected, as well as the activities undertaken and recorded by members, will be reviewed by the PCMB to ensure that the goals of the CIA's CPD program are being met and to provide members with guidance as to the appropriateness of their selected reporting category, their CPD activity choices, and their recording methods.

### Process and timeline

The PCMB will normally follow the process and timeline shown in the table below to conduct the annual CPD audit. **The audit would normally begin in May of each year and be completed by the end of September.**

Action	Time
Members are selected for review.	
An email is sent to selected members requesting the information and documents required for review by the PCMB.	30 to 45 days for response
Reminder emails are sent to those who have not responded to the original request.	Approx. 10 days before deadline
PCMB members are assigned members to review based on their practice areas, wherever possible. Any conflicts of interest (i.e., assigned member is familiar to the reviewer) are identified and resolved.	Immediately following the response deadline
PCMB members conduct their assigned reviews of the documentation submitted.	Approx. 30 days
The Education and Qualification Council (EQC) is informed of the names of members who have not responded to the request for information and are recommended for suspension.	Approx. 30 days following the response deadline (after several attempts to reach them)
The members who have not submitted their documentation are sent a letter informing them that their name has been submitted to the EQC and that their membership is being suspended in accordance with the QS.	As soon as the EQC is advised

PCMB members meet to discuss the results of their reviews and address any unusual or difficult cases that require further discussion.	At a PCMB meeting scheduled soon after the review deadline
It may be determined that additional information is required from the members being reviewed and relevant follow ups are conducted to obtain any additional information from the members.	Immediately following the PCMB meeting; approx. 10 days provided for a response
The PCMB members will review the additional information received for their respective reviewees. A PCMB discussion will only be held if there are unusual or difficult cases to resolve.	Approx. five days provided for the review
Following the review of any additional information submitted by the member, if the member is still considered non-compliant, the member will be asked to file a remedy plan by a specified deadline, to make up any deficiencies.	Approx. 15 days provided for submission of a remedy plan
Once the reviews are complete, members remaining who are not compliant and who have not provided a plan to remedy any CPD deficiencies, are recommended to the EQC for suspension.	Once all reviews are complete and submission deadlines have passed
An email is sent to each member selected for audit to inform them of the results of the PCMB's review. These notifications may include recommendations for ways to improve their CPD going forward (e.g., better variety of activities, better reporting methods).	As soon as the audit is complete
A report is prepared for distribution to members which includes a summary of the audit process as well as key learnings that could benefit all members.	As soon as the audit is complete (normally within 30 days)

**Audit selection**

Normally, 3% of the members who filed in each CPD category are selected for audit, as well as anyone who submitted a remedy plan in the previous reporting period, or who was reinstated in the last calendar year.

The PCMB may also determine that a higher or lower percentage of members in a particular CPD category or practice area, for example, is advisable based on the previous year's audit results, changes to the QS, etc.

**Conflicts of interest**

When PCMB members are assigned members to review, there may be certain circumstances in which it would be inappropriate or uncomfortable for the PCMB member to undertake such a review due to their connection to the member being audited. PCMB members should disclose any such potential conflicts of interest to Head Office. In most cases, the member would be reassigned to another PCMB member for review. In a case where there is no other

appropriately qualified PCMB member to undertake the review (i.e., specialty practice area), a second PCMB member could be assigned to work with the original PCMB member and provide a peer review, using the knowledge and expertise of the original PCMB member to guide them.

### **Review considerations**

The goal of the audit differs by the CPD category, as outlined in [Appendix C of the QS](#).

There are no specific criteria for PCMB members to use when conducting their reviews, as each case is different, and the reviewer should review the information from their own perspective which will improve the CPD monitoring process over time.

The following considerations, however, may help the reviewers better understand the purpose and goal of the audit in the various categories and circumstances:

#### **Reinstatements**

The member will have filed his or her compliance statement, as required. The review is a double-check that the filing is appropriate given their absence from the Institute, during which time they were not obligated to comply with CPD requirements. The standard considerations are applied to reinstated members in accordance with the category in which they filed their statement.

#### **Remedy plans**

The member is requested to provide an update as to the status of their plan and if they are on track to complete it as agreed, if it is not yet due to be completed. If the plan is already complete, no further action is needed since the activities will have been reviewed and accepted by the PCMB when it approved the plan.

#### **Non-residents (NRES)**

The member is asked to provide a statement and/or evidence that he or she is not a resident of Canada, is doing no Canadian work, and is complying with the requirements of another actuarial association in which he or she is a full member at the highest level.

#### **Associates who have written an exam in the past two calendar years (WEX)**

The member is asked to provide evidence of the exam that was written.

#### **Exemptions (EXAP – retirement)**

Only the retirement exemption category is audited. All other exemptions are approved by the PCMB annually, and do not require a further review. A member who has filed an exemption under the retirement category, may have done so several years ago, given that the retirement exemptions are permanent unless the member's circumstances change. The purpose of the audit in this category is to ask the member to confirm that they continue to meet the eligibility requirements for the exemption and are doing no work that would require them to be CPD compliant. If they are doing work of any kind, they will be asked to provide a description for review.

## **Reserved role (RR) and non-reserved role (NRR)**

In these two categories, the number and quality of the CPD activities undertaken by the member are reviewed. The number of hours for members who file in an RR is automatically verified when they file their compliance statement and are therefore not reviewed as part of the audit. Members who filed under the NRR category will be asked to submit their records of CPD activities during the relevant reporting period or confirm that the records in the CIA's tracking tool are up to date for verification.

The review of the member's CPD activities should include the following considerations, as appropriate in the circumstances:

- The hours meet but do not exceed the minimum requirement. It should be reviewed to ensure that the hours counted are appropriately assigned and do indeed achieve the minimum required.
- An individual CPD activity with a significant number of hours should be looked at closely to determine if there are enough details provided to properly assess the activity. Further information about a conference day, for example, may be needed if tracked as one activity. The day should be broken down by session to ensure that only appropriate CPD is recorded.
- Some unstructured hours are done over a long period of time (e.g., FCT) and the member only enters one date. Such activities should be reviewed and confirmed as appropriate.
- Variety of activities – Although not a specific requirement of the QS, to ensure an appropriate level of learning, it is recommended that a member's activities cover a variety of topics, using different types of learning. Repeat activities (e.g., reading the news or a journal one hour every day for two years) may be flagged and, as an educational opportunity, the member could be advised on why and how to vary their activities.
- Only the member can truly assess the quality of their CPD. However, if in doubt about the nature of an activity (based on the activity itself or the level of detail provided in the records), the PCMB reviewer can request additional information from the member about the activity. This also serves as an educational opportunity for the member who is asked to validate or justify their selected activities.
- Work-related meetings can be a source of CPD, but caution should be used by the reviewer if the nature of the meeting is not clear. It must "produce for the member, relevant new learning, a deeper understanding of a topic, or confirmation that the member's knowledge is current."
- Preparation for a presentation can typically be considered CPD but not the presentation itself, particularly if it is one that is done more than once.
- Reading, as a general activity, can be a source of CPD but the hours should be limited.

**New members (NM)**

No audit is conducted as the date that the NM was enrolled is automatically verified as they file their compliance statement. They are not allowed to file a statement under this category if they do not meet the eligibility criteria.

*Approved by the PCMB: September 22, 2021*