

## CPD FAQs - GENERAL

### *What is CPD?*

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is defined as learning that develops and maintains professional competence to enable members to continue to perform their professional roles.

### *How do I report my CPD compliance?*

CPD activities are to be entered into the online tool by signing into the Member Portal. Once logged in, members can access the reporting area by clicking on "Report Hours" on the main screen and then "Report Hours" on the orange alert box. Once all hours are entered, you must click the "Annual CPD Declaration" on the green alert box in order to submit your declaration(s). The reporting deadline is March 31st for the previous calendar year.

### *What activities qualify as CPD?*

Any learning and development that is relevant and appropriate to a member's work and professional responsibilities and growth as a CPA will qualify for CPD. CPD activities should develop new or existing competencies in areas that are relevant to a member's professional responsibilities and growth.

### *Am I required to take any mandatory courses?*

The CPD program does not mandate areas of study, other than the 4 hours of business ethics in every three-year rolling cycle. You should choose learning opportunities that are relevant to your professional role. Take an inventory of your skills and consider whether you allocate sufficient time to building or refreshing the various skills needed to do your job well.

Selection of learning activities should be a thoughtful, reflective process addressing your current and future professional plans, current knowledge, and skill level, and desired or needed additional competence to meet future opportunities and/or professional responsibilities.

Members who hold a public accounting licence and perform the role of an engagement partner responsible for audits of financial statements will be required to complete an annual self-assessment and declaration in accordance with national guidelines which have been established to address *IES 8 - Professional Competence for Engagement Partners Responsible for Audits of Financial Statements*. See the prescribed CPD section in the [CPD policy](#).

***Are CPD hours earned by attending CPA Nova Scotia's CPD events automatically entered in the member's record?***

CPA Nova Scotia will automatically credit the hours earned by attending CPA Nova Scotia's PD events that are virtual classroom or in-person sessions to the member's CPD record.

Please note that members will be responsible to record their own CPD time for attending any free sessions CPA Nova Scotia hosts and any on-demand sessions. Further, they will be responsible for ensuring that they receive and retain any backup documentation for these events in the event they are ever selected for verification.

***What are my CPD Requirements?***

The minimum amount of continuing professional development that a Member must complete, unless they met exemption or reduction requirements, is as follows:

- A minimum of 20 hours each calendar year, of which 10 are verifiable; and
- 120 hours in every rolling three-year calendar period, of which 60 hours are verifiable.
- A minimum of 4 hours of verifiable CPD in professional ethics in each rolling three-year calendar period.
- If the Member holds a public accounting licence and performs the role of an engagement partner responsible for audits of financial statements, they must undertake CPD related to public accounting, and will be required to complete an annual self-assessment and declaration in accordance with national guidelines which have been established to address *IES 8 - Professional Competence for Engagement Partners Responsible for Audits of Financial Statements*.

***What is verifiable CPD?***

"Verifiable CPD" refers to learning activities that can be verified objectively. Verifiable CPD documentation should:

- Describe the learning activity.
- Identify the provider of the activity, where applicable.
- Connect the member to the activity.
- Identify when the activity took place; and
- Provide a basis for concluding that the number of reported hours is reasonable.

The documents that existed or were created at the time of the CPD activity was undertaken shall support the substance of that activity. Some examples of verifiable CPD are:

- CPA Nova Scotia courses
- CPA Canada webinars
- In-house teaching or presenting on subject matter that would have resulted in a learning activity and that can be verified in presentation material, research reports or meeting agendas.
- Conferences where there is evidence of attendance and agendas/schedules.
- Research which results in a research paper, presentation or other material delivered external to the member.

### *What is unverifiable CPD?*

"Unverifiable CPD" refers to learning activities that cannot be verified objectively (i.e., no documentation) and is up to the member's discretion to determine if it is a learning activity. Members will not be asked to produce documentation for these learning activities in the event of an audit.

### *How do I determine how many hours each learning activity is worth?*

You can report the actual number of hours you engaged in a learning activity up to a maximum number of hours as estimated by the course provider for the activity. For conferences and conventions, report the amount of time that was spent engaged in activities with significant intellectual or practical content. Marketing, networking, or social activities do not qualify as CPD.

### *I had to leave a seminar early to attend to some other matters. How many hours am I allowed to report?*

You are allowed to report the number of hours you actually engage in a learning activity. Report the number of hours you spent learning at the course in-person. If you read the seminar materials on your own to learn what you missed, you can report unverifiable CPD for the actual amount of time you spent doing so.

### *How do I report the CPD hours when I complete presentations?*

Verifiable CPD hours can be reported for the preparation and delivery time of courses or educational presentations that are related to the member's professional role, but only once per calendar year for the same or similar topic. Preparation time should relate to maintaining and developing new knowledge to share with the audience. There is no formal limit on CPD hours related to presentations; however, the expectation is that the member takes a balanced approach towards CPD, and therefore does not generally derive all CPD hours from the same source or the same topic.

*What activities qualify as CPD under volunteer or pro-bono work, such as sitting on a board of directors?*

Volunteer work does not in itself qualify for CPD. To qualify as CPD, the volunteer activity must help the member develop and maintain professional competence. Our benchmark is whether the activity advances or develops the Member's knowledge and skill.

Volunteering time on community organizations or Boards, serving as a mentor for a CPA student, or facilitating a staff CPD session may not always result in a learning activity. Members are encouraged to critically assess an activity and to only report the portion of the activity that resulted in learning for the member.

When evaluating whether a volunteer activity qualifies for CPD, members should consider the following questions:

- Were any formal presentations made during the volunteer activity? If so, what was the topic and duration of each of the presentations?
- Did the presentation contain significant intellectual or practical content that provide for the development of new or existing competencies in areas that are relevant to your professional responsibilities and growth?
- Did the Member advance his or her knowledge by the preparation of the presentation (or other work product)?

The activities qualify for verifiable CPD subject to supporting documentation being available to verify the learning activity. Otherwise, it can be reported as unverifiable.

*Does on-the-job learning related to major changes in job responsibilities, involvement in special projects, or significant learning of new software, systems, procedures, or techniques, qualify as CPD?*

The activity must help you develop and maintain professional competency to enable you to perform your professional role. The activities qualify for verifiable CPD subject to supporting documentation being available to verify the learning activity.

*What qualifies as technical reading and self-study?*

The following are examples of items which qualify for technical reading:

- Professional magazine articles relating to accounting, taxation, finance, management, or other technical subjects.
- Newspaper articles relating to your current and/or future field or industry.
- Self-study of published materials
- Self-study courses

*If I qualify for a reduction in my membership dues, do I automatically qualify for an exemption from CPD?*

No. The criteria for a dues waiver and a CPD exemption are not the same; therefore, qualifying for one does not mean you automatically qualify for the other. You must apply for each separately.