

CPD event approval at the Royal College of Anaesthetists

A guide for CPD Assessors

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Introduction

In common with many other Medical Royal Colleges, the RCoA offers external, independent review of CPD events. Approved events are included in the [RCoA CPD Online Diary](#) and CPD web app and also in the [directory of approved national events](#) on the RCoA website, and the RCoA's revalidation logo, which is a registered UK trademark, can be used in the promotional material and on the delegate attendance certificates for approved events.

This independent review process provides assurance to doctors that the approved activities are of sufficient quality, free from bias and relevant to their learning needs. External approval might also be used to support study leave requests. The same review process is applied to events run by the RCoA, and by the Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine and Faculty of Pain Medicine.

Details of over 800 events each year are submitted to the RCoA for an evaluation for CPD credits and so there is a continuing need for CPD Assessors to assist in the event reviews. Performing the role of a CPD Assessor is an approved personal activity for CPD, and to assist with this the RCoA Revalidation and CPD Team produces an annual report on the number of events reviewed for each CPD Assessor to present at their annual appraisal.

This guide outlines the criteria for CPD approval – including the role of the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges and the CPD Board, and the support provided by the RCoA Revalidation and CPD Team. A 'person specification' for a CPD Assessor is included in Section 2.2, and Section 3 provides a step-by-step guide for the review process.

1.1 The role of the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges

The [Academy of Medical Royal Colleges \(AoMRC\)](#) speaks on standards of care and medical education across the UK. It comprises the 20 Medical Royal Colleges and Faculties across the UK and Ireland and one of its key roles is to advise on the development and administration of CPD. The AoMRC has produced a core model for CPD schemes: [Standards and Criteria for CPD Activities – A Framework for Accreditation](#) and the RCoA, as a member of the AoMRC, has mapped its own CPD review process to this document – please see the RCoA [Guidance for Event Providers seeking CPD approval](#).

1.2 The role of the CPD Board

The CPD Board, which is hosted by the RCoA, consists of members from a number of specialist societies and associations and it has the key responsibility for the quality assurance of CPD approval across the specialty. The RCoA Revalidation and CPD Team produces an annual quality assurance report for the Board which includes information on the average time taken by the CPD Assessors to complete event reviews and the outcomes of these reviews. The most recent quality assurance report can be [seen here](#).

The CPD Board also reviews the specialist areas covered by the CPD Assessors and confirms their appointment on an annual basis.

1.3 How event providers apply for CPD approval at the RCoA

Event providers seeking CPD approval are invited to complete an [online application form](#) on the RCoA website which requires the submission of certain mandatory information including a copy of the event programme, a list of the speakers and their post / title, and a copy of the delegate evaluation form which is going to be used.

The RCoA website includes an [example delegate evaluation form](#), and event providers are encouraged to use a scale of 1 to 4 when requesting feedback and also to include questions which encourage reflection on how the event's learning outcomes have been met and how the experience gained can be used in the doctor's practice. Event providers are also invited to review the RCoA [CPD Matrix](#) and indicate which code(s) will be covered per topic in their programme.

The CPD Assessors

2.1 Role in reviewing events for CPD approval

CPD Assessors have the key role of assessing each application to the standards specified by the AoMRC, and awarding the appropriate number of CPD credits. As a guide, we anticipate that a typical review will take around an hour to complete.

Section 3 details the processes followed during an event review / the information which should be checked, and all applications are sent by email to a CPD Assessor who has expressed a particular interest in the content covered by the event programme.

CPD Assessors submit their review by completing a Word form (template included in [Annex 1](#)) which should be emailed back to the RCoA CPD & Revalidation Co-ordinator at cpd@rcoa.ac.uk, and we request that reviews are completed within two weeks. The CPD Revalidation & Co-ordinator liaises with each CPD Assessor to ensure that event applications are not sent at an inconvenient time for them – e.g. examination weeks or holiday periods. An online process for the completion of event reviews is planned.

We would expect a minimum commitment to completing at least four event reviews per year, and many CPD Assessors complete one event review each month.

2.2 Person specification

The following person specification is appropriate for the role of CPD Assessor:

Essential

- Hold a substantive specialty doctor/SAS-Grade or consultant post in the NHS or similar University appointment.
- Hold the Fellowship of the RCoA (FRCA).
- Shall currently be active in clinical practice.
- Can demonstrate relevant clinical experience.
- Can demonstrate active involvement in education of those in the specialty.
- Shall demonstrate a special interest(s) directly relevant to the balance of expertise required.

Desirable

- Have previous experience of evaluating courses and meetings.

Completing an event review

The functional map in [Annex 2](#) shows the processes which are followed when an application for CPD approval is received. All applications are received at the RCoA and forwarded to the CPD Assessors by email, accompanied by the required documentation from the event provider (i.e. the event programme, list of speakers and delegate evaluation form).

An example email is included in [Annex 3](#) and this should be referenced in conjunction with the following sections, which provide a step-by-step guide to the review process.

3.1 Initial administrative check by the RCoA Revalidation and CPD Team

Before emailing an application to a CPD Assessor, the RCoA Team will check the following:

- The event title, start and finish times, providing organisation's name, fee details, venue location and contact details in the online form match the information supplied in the attached programme.
- The correct categories have been used for the activity type information, and the hyperlink for further information about the event (if applicable) is working.
- The target audience, conflict of interest and CPD Matrix code fields (as applicable) have been completed.
- The attached event programme, list of speakers and delegate evaluation form have the required information – e.g. timings have been supplied for each programme topic and the evaluation form allows for feedback to be provided on each individual speaker/topic.

The following components of the application should be reviewed by the CPD Assessor, making reference to the information in the online form and in the attachments. The headings and the bullet point list reference the standards specified by the AoMRC and these headings are included in the Word form which is completed by the CPD Assessors.

3.2 Is the content of the event relevant to the CPD of career-grade doctors

- All topics addressed should be listed together with any materials/products/ technologies to be used.
- The activity should have a scientific or educational purpose only.
- Educational content should aim to be authoritative, accurate, based on balanced evidence and free from unjustifiable claims or bias.
- Clinical content must follow all appropriate patient consent and confidentiality policies and the principles outlined in the GMC's Good Medical Practice guidelines.
- The event/course should be structured with appropriate breaks for delegates.
- The event/course should be awarded a maximum of six credits per day (credits are only available for 'contact' / guided learning time and so excluding registration time, refreshment and lunch breaks etc.)

Note: some events aimed at trainees are also advertised to/attended by consultants. A note to this effect will be added to the online application form as applicable and these events can be considered for CPD approval if their content is relevant to career-grade doctors.

3.3 Are the event's learning outcomes clearly defined, and do they reflect the overall aim(s) of the event?

- There should be a clear statement of what a participant is expected to learn and of how the learning is to be demonstrated.
- The learning aims must be specifically defined to indicate what knowledge or skills the participants are expected to obtain as a result.
- The learning aims should be measurable.

3.4 Are the teaching delivery methods appropriate to the learning aims?

- There should be a clear statement about what delivery methods are used (lectures, presentations, discussions, master-classes, etc).
- The subject information should be up-to-date and accurate, with appropriate language, style and pace.
- The teaching methods used should be relevant to the defined learning aims.
- There are processes in place to encourage self-reflective learning, for example, using keypads.

3.5 Do the Faculty presenters have relevant experience to deliver the programme?

- The presenters/teachers/facilitators should have relevant expertise, knowledge and skills to deliver the education programme within the specific subject (s) identified.

Note: The CPD Board has previously considered whether or not all event providers seeking CPD approval should supply 'mini biographies' in addition to the post/title for each of their faculty. This suggestion was not supported by the majority of the Board however, with views expressed that this requirement might slow the approvals process and that a detailed biography did not necessarily equate to good presentation skills. It was also felt that it was the responsibility of the event organiser to choose subject experts.

However, this detailed information can be requested from an event provider (via the CPD & Revalidation Co-ordinator) if the CPD Assessor feels it is necessary.

3.6 Does the event include an appropriate process for evaluating the intended learning?

- There should be a clear statement outlining how the organiser will conduct an evaluation of the activity. If an organiser is applying for the accreditation for the first time, a detailed description of the evaluation process should be included. Subsequently if the same organiser is applying for the accreditation, the results of previously conducted evaluation should be included in the application.
- Any form of assessment used within the educational programme of the activity should be stated and clearly described.
- Each attendee should be asked to evaluate the course/event and speaker:
 - Were the printed learning aims and outcomes of the course met?
 - Was there any bias or conflict of interest evident in the course?
 - Was the instructor/speaker organised and knowledgeable?

3.7 Does the event content match the stated RCoA CPD Matrix categories?

The CPD Matrix is designed to assist anaesthetists and appraisers in their appraisal discussions and to help guide individual CPD requirements as part of the personal development plan. As many doctors use the Matrix codes to log their CPD activity, and to assist individuals in selecting appropriate CPD, the RCoA encourages event providers to map their programme content to the Matrix although this is not mandatory for CPD approval to be awarded.

Where this information has been provided, CPD Assessors are requested to check that the CPD Matrix codes are relevant and appropriate to the content of the event, suggesting any additional codes (as applicable) which it might be appropriate for the event provider to include.

3.8 Comments from the CPD Assessor

The Word review form includes a space for any additional comments which the CPD Assessor may wish to make. This section should be completed if the CPD Assessor feels that further information is required from the event provider before a decision can be made. The RCoA CPD & Revalidation Co-ordinator will then liaise with the event provider and report back to the CPD Assessor.

3.9 Review decision

The final section of the review form asks the CPD Assessor to approve the event (together with the amount of CPD credits awarded), or to provide a reason(s) if the event has been declined. The RCoA CPD & Revalidation Co-ordinator will then liaise with the event provider accordingly and update the RCoA information systems.

Note: should an event provider appeal a decision made by a CPD Assessor, the final arbiter will be the Chair of the CPD Board.

Next steps and further information

Having read this guide, we hope that you will be interested in assisting the RCoA as a CPD Assessor and we would be pleased to hear the following information from you:

- How many applications you would be willing to review each year.
- The topics from the CPD Matrix which you have a particular interest in, or would prefer not to review.
- Any times of the year when event applications should not be sent to you.

Please reply with the above information to Chris Kennedy, CPD & Revalidation Co-ordinator at cpd@rcoa.ac.uk, tel: 020 7092 1729. Chris will also be pleased to provide further information about the review process.

Annex 1 CPD Assessor review form



Event review for CPD approval

Name of CPD Assessor:

Name and Date of Event:

Please mark each box below with 'x' and email the completed form to cpd@rcoa.ac.uk.
Thank you for your help.

1. Is the content of this event relevant to the CPD of career-grade doctors?

YES NO *If No, please give further details below:*

2. Are the event's learning outcomes clearly defined, and do they reflect the overall aim(s) of the event?

YES NO *If No, please give further details below:*

3. Are the teaching delivery methods appropriate to the learning aims?

YES NO *If No, please give further details below:*

4. Do the Faculty presenters have relevant experience to deliver the programme?

YES NO *If No, please give further details below:*

5. Does the event include an appropriate process for evaluating the intended learning?

YES NO *If No, please give further details below:*

6. Does the event content match the stated College CPD Matrix categories?

YES NO *If No, please give further details below:*

7. Are there any other comments you wish to make?

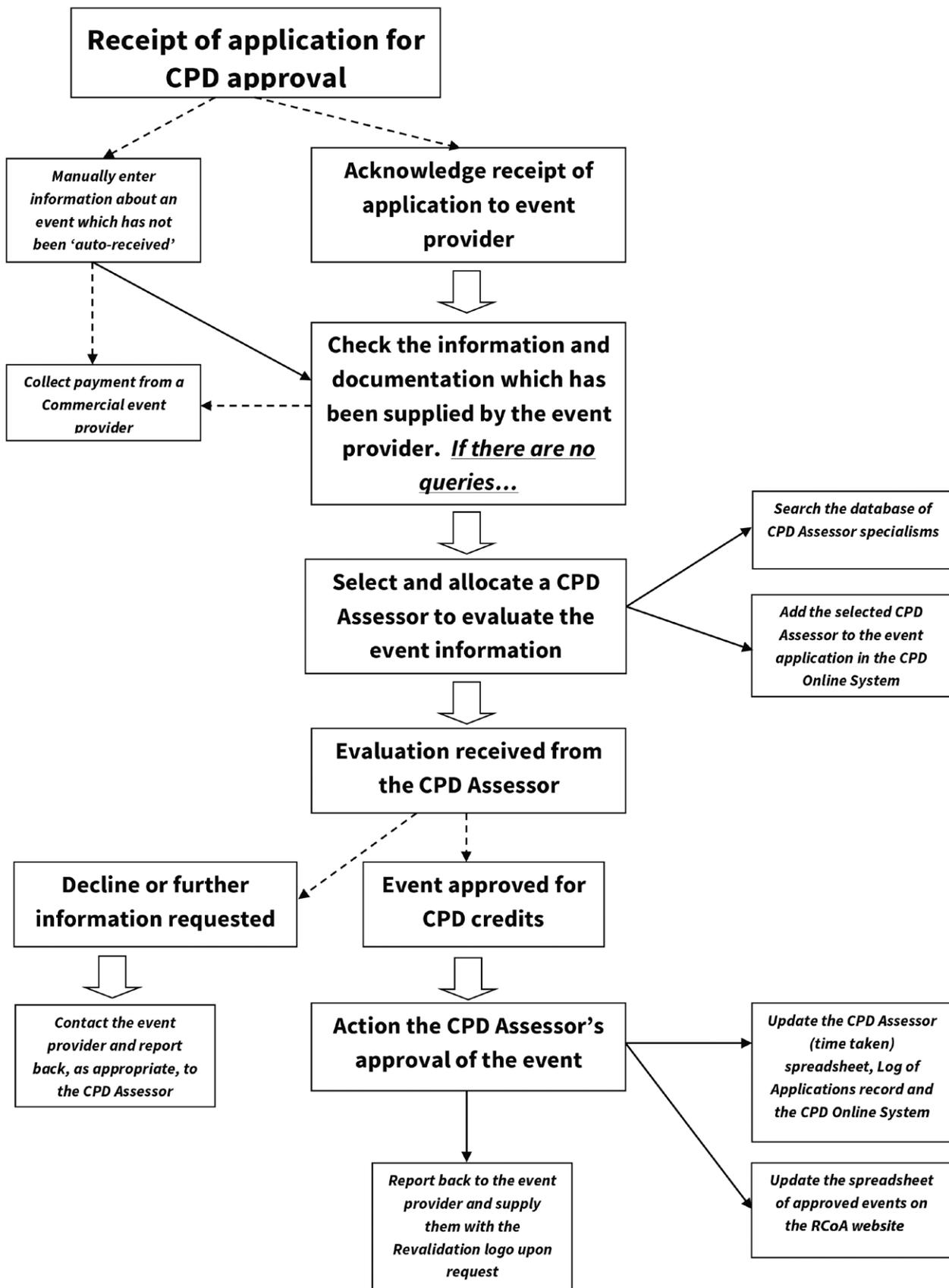
8. Do you approve this event for CPD credits?

YES CREDITS AGREED:

NO REASON(S):

Annex 2

Functional map – the CPD approval process at the RCoA



Annex 3

Example email for an event review sent to a CPD Assessor

Dear XXXXXXXXXXXX,

Your assistance is requested in reviewing an event for CPD approval:

Title: Patient Safety Conference 2014

Start date: 01-10-2014 09:00

End date: 01-10-2014 16:30

Activity type: Courses and Events

Is the activity internal or external: External

Is the activity clinical or non-clinical in nature: Clinical

Providing organisation's name (Origin): RCoA Safe Anaesthesia Liaison Group

URL to details/booking page for this event:

www.rcoa.ac.uk/education-and-events/patient-safety-conference

Venue name and location: The Waterfront, 2 Lanyon Place, Belfast, BT1 3WH

Leading organiser: Dr Tom Clutton-Brock

Fee Details: £215 (£160 for RCoA registered trainees)

Nominated sponsor(s): None

Nominated contact: Emily Young (eyoung@rcoa.ac.uk)

Target audience: Career Grades

Target audience - geographical area: National

Overall aim of the event/topics covered: The Safe Anaesthesia Liaison Group are delighted to host the annual Patient Safety Conference in Belfast this year. Highlights include:

- Support For The 'Second Victim'
- Managing risk and resilience
- 7-Day Working and Surgical Safety
- Implementation of the Surgical Never-Events Taskforce Recommendations
- Safe Sedation in Dentistry

Anticipated learning outcomes of the event: Information on and discussions around topical issues in the area of patient safety.

Fixed Credits: 5.0

What teaching methods will be used? Discussion groups, Lectures

Have you held a similar event previously? If yes, please provide details: This is an annual event and has previously been approved for CPD.

Conflict of Interest: None

CPD Matrix Categories: 1101: Critical incident reporting

1105: Quality improvement

3A07: Sedation practice

3100: Other clinical

***** Until an electronic form is available, please can you provide feedback by using the Word form - a copy of which can be downloaded from the bottom of the page at www.rcoa.ac.uk/revalidation-and-cpd/applications-cpd-approval

Could I also ask that the assessment is returned to cpd@rcoa.ac.uk within 2 weeks - please do let me know if this will not be possible.

Thank you for your help.

Chris

Chris Kennedy
CPD & Revalidation Co-ordinator
Royal College of Anaesthetists