



Institute for **Outdoor Learning**



*Steps to
Continuing
Professional
Development*

*A guide for outdoor instructors, teachers, managers or
leaders choosing next steps in development or training
as a professional in outdoor learning*

Seven Steps to CPD

A guide for outdoor instructors, teachers, managers or leaders choosing next steps in development or training as a professional in outdoor learning.

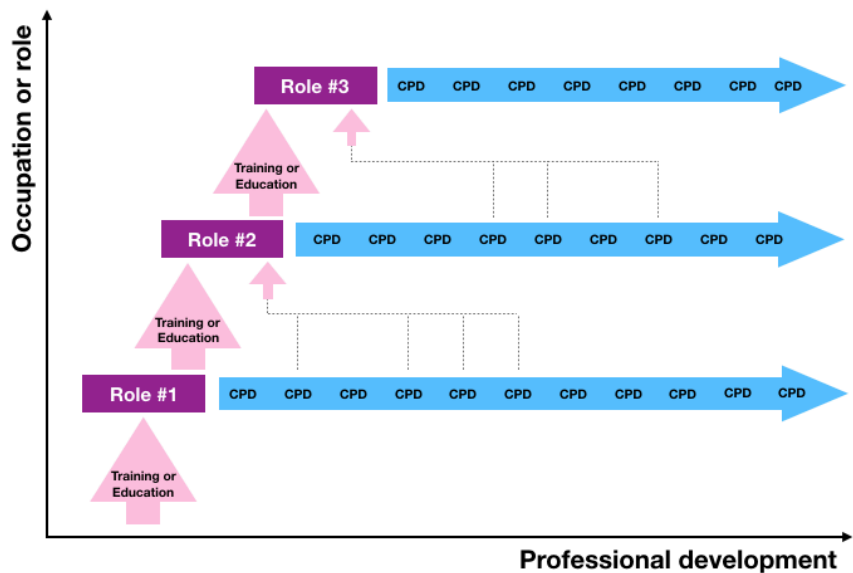
A Definition of CPD

“Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is an on-going commitment to broadening or further developing competence in outdoor learning.”

For instructors, teachers, managers and leaders in the outdoors, competence in a particular role comes from the ability to combine learning, skills, experience and knowledge and operate safely.

Training or education courses are usually part of the process of acquiring competence and gain the skills to meet the requirements of a particular occupation or role.

Experiences that contribute to broadening or further developing competence can be considered CPD.



Courses, voluntary work on a committee, watching video, reading books, online courses are all valuable forms of professional development. In general, it is not the content of an experience, the reading an article or attendance on a course that makes something CPD – it is someone has applied learning to broaden or develop their practice.

The seven steps in this guide describe an approach to CPD that is designed to support the needs of individual members of IOL, NGBs, employers, and representative organisations.

Recommendations for CPD

It is good practice across the sector for instructors, teachers, managers and leaders in the outdoors to engage in a range of on-going CPD activities.

CPD supports you in being professional in your approach, whether working full-time or part-role in the outdoors, or in a voluntary capacity.

Many membership bodies, awarding bodies and national governing bodies of sports (NGBs) require CPD to keep awards current or as a condition of membership. IOL strongly recommends regular annual CPD.

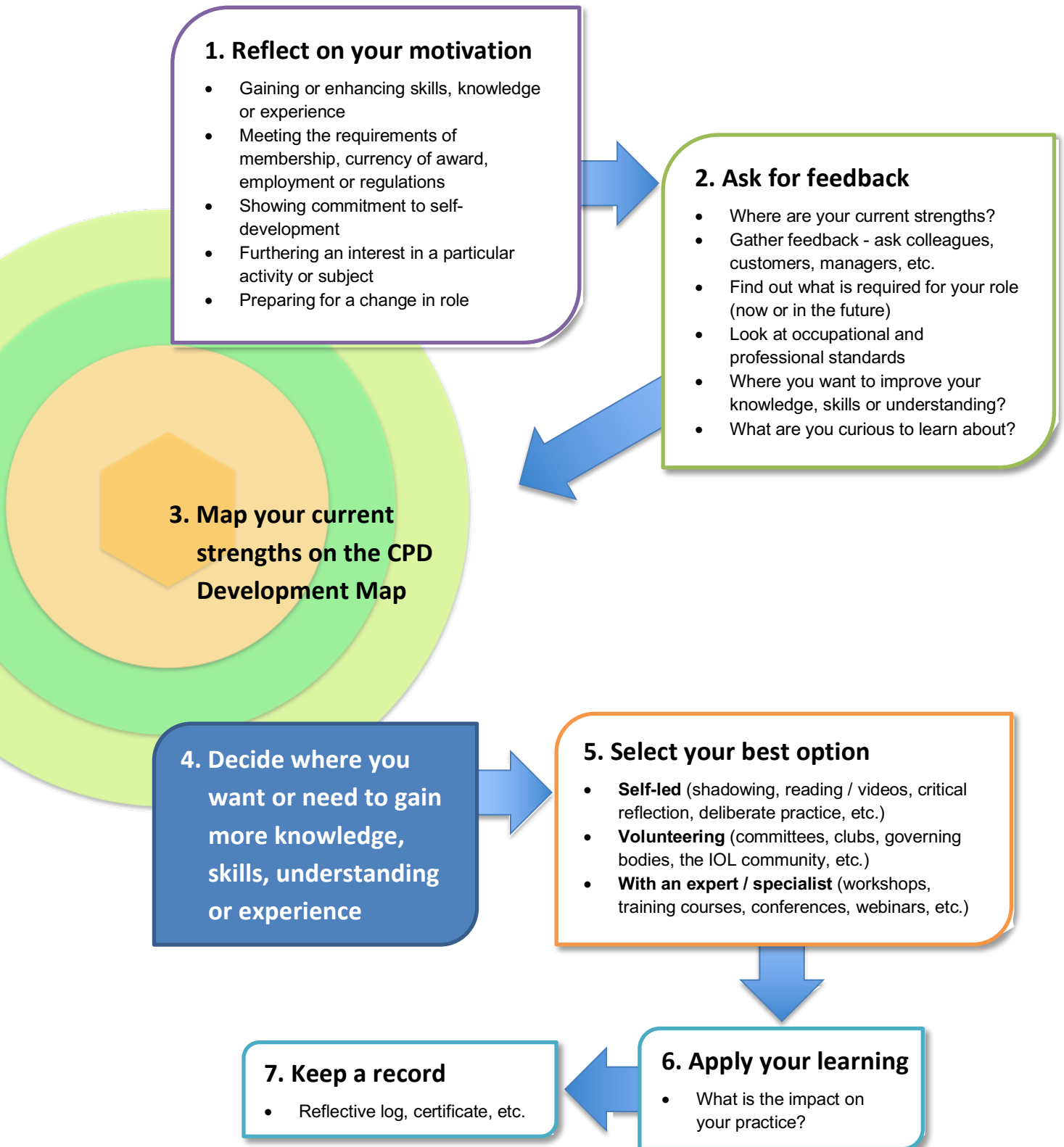
IOL Membership category	Suggested CPD over 3-year period
Student and Affiliate members of IOL	Encouragement to complete CPD
Registered Members of IOL	Equivalent of 10 hours CPD per annum
Accredited Members of IOL	Equivalent of 20 hours CPD per annum
Leading Members of IOL	Equivalent of 50 hours CPD per annum

Some further statements on CPD:

<i>CPD is the means by which members maintain, improve and broaden their knowledge and skills and develop the personal qualities required when using their awards.</i>	<i>British Canoeing considers it best practice for coaches to pursue regular development of their knowledge, skills and understanding in the following areas - Coaching Aspects and Safe Practice.</i>	<i>Through creating conditions which inspire and support, British Cycling consider CPD to be coaches, leaders and instructors taking responsibility for their personal development by engaging with a culture of continuous improvement and lifelong learning.</i>
Mountain Training	British Canoeing	British Cycling

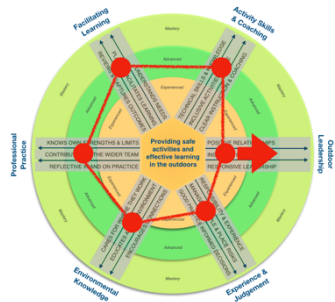
<i>Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is the means by which members of professional associations maintain, improve and broaden their knowledge and skills and develop the personal qualities required in their professional lives.</i>	<i>As a member you commit to undertaking CPD that has an impact on your practice, each year. This demonstrates that you are improving your relevant knowledge and skills in your subject area and teaching or training.</i>	<i>Plan for personal and career development. Take part in a range of CPD activities relevant to current or future practice. Ensure CPD contributes to quality of service delivery. Reflect on CPD activities. Maintain a continuous and up-to-date record.</i>
Professional Associations Research Network	Society For Education And Training	Chartered Institute For The Management of Sport and Physical Activity

Overview of the Seven Steps to CPD



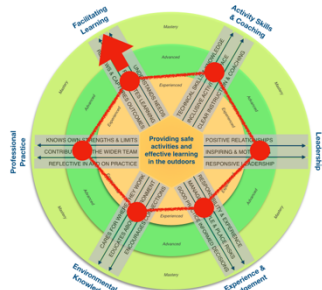
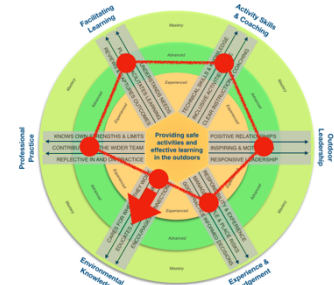
Examples of the 7 Steps in Action

Jo is an instructor at a multi-activity residential centre and has just started her second season there. Her line manager went through the development map with her and suggested that to increase her activity skills she should find a way to further her interest in a particular subject or activity. Jo decided to join a local canoe club and take advantage of the free skills coaching provided to members.



Sandra is a teacher who is an expert in her subject area and when delivering learning inside the classroom. She wanted new ways to tailor her approach to meet the needs and motivations of others when leading groups outdoors. The development area grid guided her to choose to attend a workshop at an IOL regional conference where she learned more about leadership styles and practiced applying the six categories of intervention.

Chip is a freelance instructor with a range of NGB awards under his belt. He has always been sought-after by his current clients for his advanced activity expertise but he realised he was lacking the environmental knowledge to be able to work for more providers. He looked at the CPD options and decided to volunteer at a field studies centre in order to gain a good understanding of the flora and fauna of local habitats so he could broaden his work-base.



Misha is a new to her role as deputy manager at a medium size outdoor education centre. At the centre she designs, plans and evaluates programmes. Misha identified she didn't need a mastery level in delivering learning for her role but wanted to follow her personal interest in the process of learning and also show a commitment to her self-development. She enrolled in a Diploma in Teaching at a local college to complete alongside her role at work.

The Seven Steps to CPD

The seven steps are a practical tool for instructors, coaches, managers and leaders

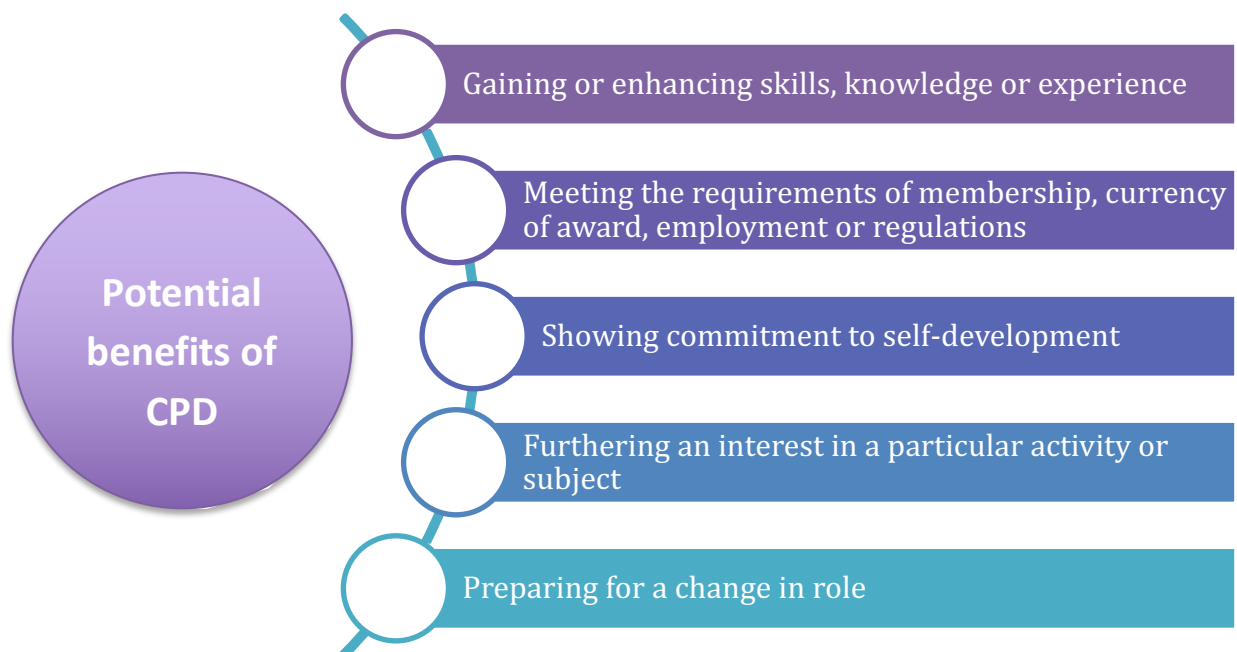
- Use the 7 steps for yourself to evaluate your current and desired areas of competence and choose CPD activities to meet your needs.
- Use the 7 steps with your colleagues as part of reviewing performance and future planning.

The steps are designed to be complimentary and supportive of any specific requirements set out by employers or awarding bodies (NGB's etc.). The 7 steps tool can be particularly useful when considering CPD for instructors or managers whose practice covers several activities or subject areas.

1. Reflect on your motivation for CPD

What is driving you to explore CPD options at the moment? Perhaps it is that time of the year again where you have the time and space to invest in development. With continual changes in policy, funding and the development of good practice many people engage in CPD to keep up-to-date with opportunities and current in their knowledge. For others, CPD can be triggered by a particular piece of work which has highlighted a need to upskill or gain new perspectives.

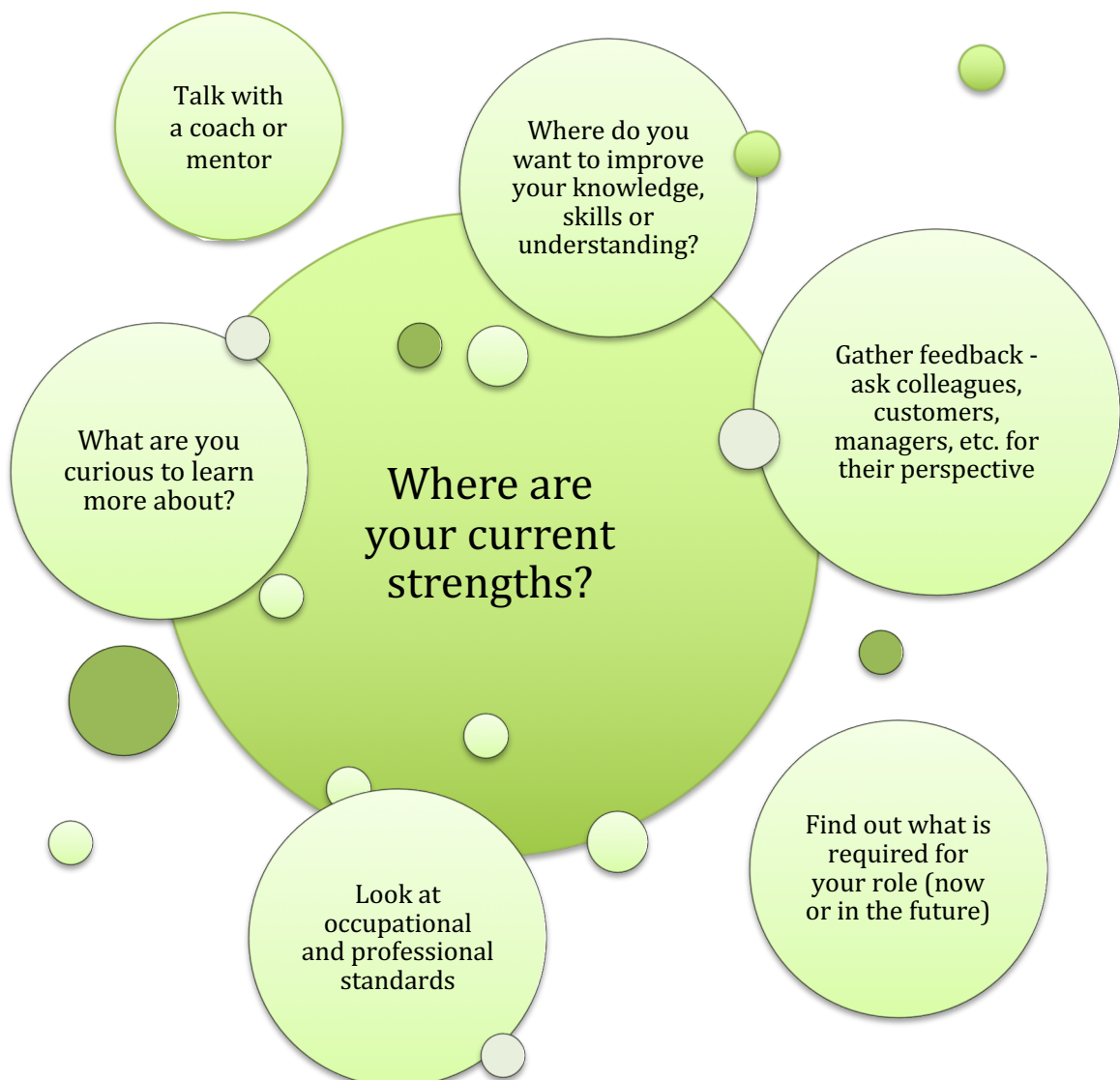
Knowing why you want to complete CPD can help you to choose the most motivating option for you.



2. Ask for feedback

With many opportunities for development it is essential to work out the best fit for your needs. Take some time to ask others for their perspective and to reflect on your own interests and needs.

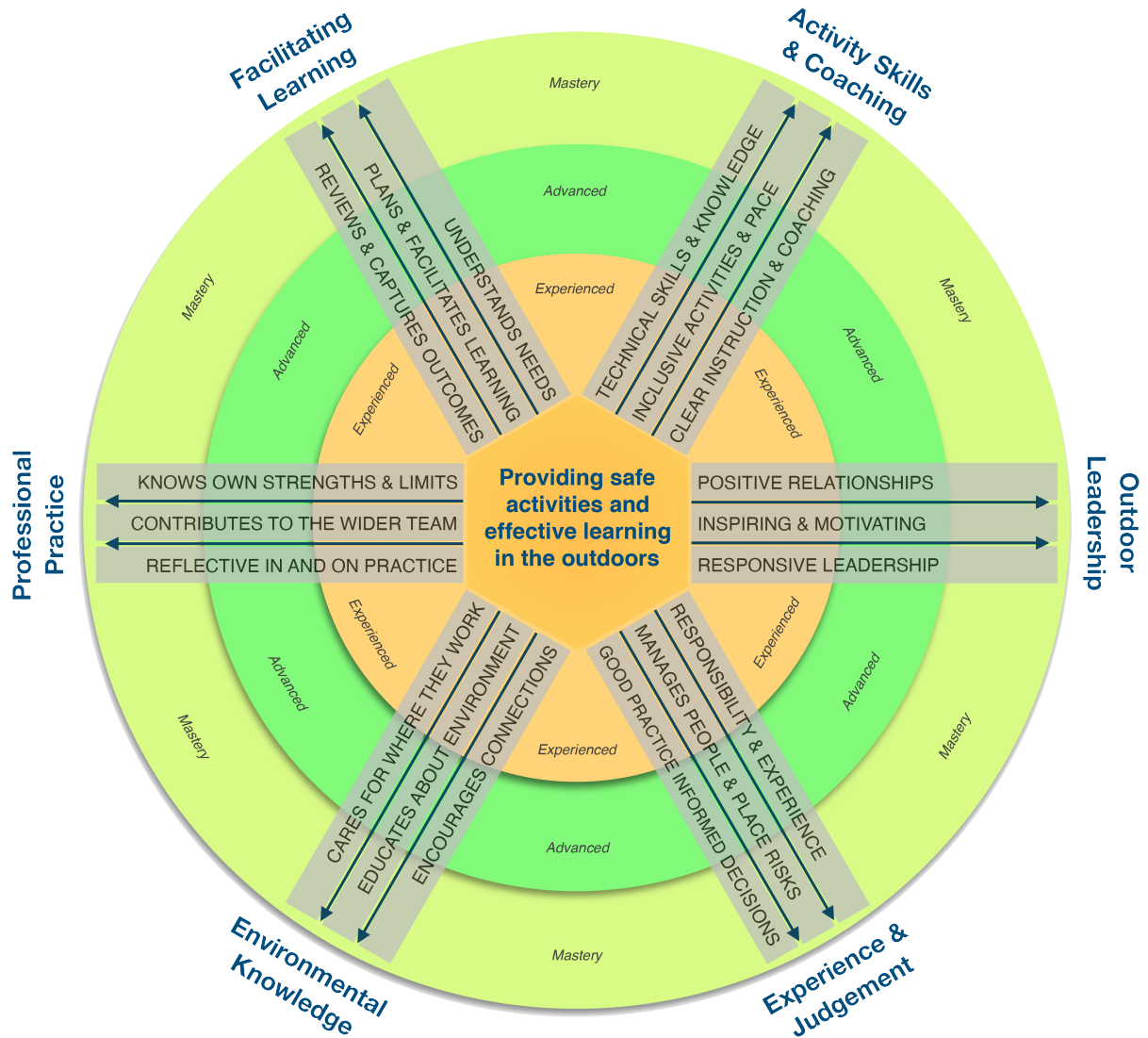
Review your job description, the IOL Outdoor Professional Profile, and relevant Occupational Standards and identify which activities or subject areas are central to your current role and future aspirations. Talking with a coach or mentor can help identify areas where you could develop.



<https://www.outdoor-learning.org/jobs/The-Outdoor-Professional>
<https://www.outdoor-learning.org/jobs/The-Outdoor-Professional/Occupational-Standards>

3. Map your current strengths

Place a mark in each area of the IOL Development Map to indicate your current capability – capable, experienced, advanced or mastery. Use the feedback you have gathered and be honest so you don't over-estimate or under-estimate your experience and abilities.



To lead the activity	TECHNICAL SKILLS AND SUBJECT KNOWLEDGE including coaching options for changing pace, locations, safety, equipment, inclusive and high-quality instruction, etc.
To lead learning	TEACHING / FACILITATION TO ACHIEVE OUTCOMES including identifying needs, planning sessions, giving feedback, reviewing, assessing, evaluating, sequencing, etc.
To lead the group	FLEXIBLE LEADERSHIP APPROACH including building positive relationships, equality, diversity, managing behaviour, communication, role modelling, etc.
To be safe	EXPERIENCE AND JUDGEMENT including risk-benefit assessments, decision making, policies and procedures, awareness of current good practice, skills fade, etc.
To champion the outdoors	ENVIRONMENTAL KNOWLEDGE including local knowledge, venue choice, passion for outdoors, restoration work, global issues, sustainability, building connections, etc.
To be professional	VALUES AND REFLECTIVE PRACTICE including ethics, self-awareness, personal philosophy, social responsibility, supporting colleagues, contributing to sector, etc.

4. Decide your development goals

Look at the development map and decide where you want or need to develop knowledge, skills or understanding. There are many ways to develop your competence from capable to experienced, advanced or mastery - this grid illustrates a few of the possibilities across seven common areas for CPD.

	Capable	Experienced	Advanced	Mastery
Technical skills	Effective skills to perform activity and keep self and others safe	Skills that offer a choice of strategies for different circumstances	Skills that give flexibility when needs change or unexpected events occur	Consistent, repeatable and reliable skills for challenging circumstances
Activity / subject knowledge	Basic grounding and understanding in the subject / activity	Can describe and apply knowledge drawn from several relevant sources	Identification and evaluation of links with other theories, models, activities, or data	Depth of study in the subject and breadth of related knowledge and thinking
Facilitating learning	Planning and delivering sessions where all participants learn effectively	Providing differentiated or tailored learning for individuals or groups	Can identify, design, plan, deliver and evaluate learning	Applies a well-considered pedagogy / andragogy
Leading others	Able to organise inspire and direct groups and individuals	Tailors approach to meet the needs and motivations of others	Leads with flexibility, models reflective practice, involves others	Leads with a strategic awareness and inspires respect and commitment
Working effectively with others	Builds effective relationships, knows own strengths	Promotes friendly open co-operative climate. Reflects and learns from experience	Is skilled at winning people over. Actively seeks ways of resolving conflict	Builds trust through reliability and authenticity. Mobilises others.
Contributing to the organisation	Meets operational and legal requirements, serves customers	Behaviour exemplifies company values. Customer focussed attitude	Balances customer needs, business implications and legislation. Learns from other sectors	Anticipates trends that may impact the organisation. Turns ideas into active proposals.
Providing high quality experiences	Operates ethically, respectfully and is aware of their impact on others	Connects with their personal principles and values, uses critical reflection	Seen as a role model or go-to person at their level, engages beyond their role	Innovates and influences others at work and in a wider context, shapes standards

5. Select your best option

CPD supports you in being professional in your approach, whether working full-time or part-role in the outdoors, or in a voluntary capacity.

Use the self-led, volunteering, or expert / specialist-led examples below as a starting point when choosing CPD that best suits your learning needs and preferences. Aim for a balance of CPD activities over each 3-year cycle.

Examples of CPD options within outdoor learning community	Present a conference workshop
	Write for a professional magazine (Horizons)
	Coach or assess others for RPIOL, APIOL or LPIOL
	Attend a regional or Professional Practice Group event
	Be active on the committee of a local club, sports group, etc.
	Serve on the committee of a club or representative body (NGB)
	Contribute to a sector or subject area development project
Examples of self led CPD options	Critical reflection on personal experience
	Critical reflection on on-the-job experience
	Observing others practice
	Voluntary work experience
	Join a club and participate
	Discuss and share good practice with peers
	Reading books, journals or credible online articles
Examples of specialist / expert CPD options	Complete an in-sector award (MTA, BC, RYA, Etc.)
	Complete an out-of-sector award (ILM, OCN, PGCE, etc.)
	Complete a programme of formal study (FE, HE)
	Complete an IOL Individual Accreditation Award (RPIOL, APIOL, LPIOL)
	Attend a short course or workshop
	Complete an online training course

Advice when selecting a training course or workshop

When selecting courses the IOL Accredited Course criteria can be used to assure you the course has a clear aim and learning outcomes, is relevant to you work as a practitioner and is delivered by trainers with appropriate experience and knowledge.

Other formal endorsements may come from NGB's or awarding bodies.

Informal recommendations from peers can be valuable though it can be worth remembering their reasons for choosing a particular event may differ from yours.

6. Apply your learning

CPD is a process, not an event. It is the process of selecting, engaging, and applying what you learn to your practice that will broaden or further develop your competence.

Ongoing reflective practice can help you get the most from CPD activities. Example questions to ask are:

1. What have you learned?
2. How did you learn it?
3. How could the ideas/techniques make a difference in your work?
4. What is most useful to you about what was covered?
5. What situations can you see yourself using some of the ideas/techniques?
6. When would you not use some of the ideas/techniques?
7. With which participants will this be most helpful?
8. When can you see a first opportunity to put some of the ideas into practice?
9. What has happened as a result of this new information, skill or approach?
10. What impact has there been on your practice?
11. What impact has there been on your self-awareness?
12. Has your learning had an impact on a wider group of people?

7. Keep a record

For each person the precise records they will need to keep will vary according to the purpose for completing the CPD. At a minimum, we recommend you record:

- What you did
- When you did it
- The application/impact on your practice

Whilst the topic of CPD may cover several areas of practice (e.g. feedback) the application of the learning from CPD in your practice will vary according to your activity focus. For this reason your CPD records should be specific to the needs of those who may require them.

- The following **Professional Development Record** is a useful way to record CPD

Professional Development Record

Use this sheet to keep a record of CPD you have completed

<i>CPD</i>			
<i>Date</i>		<i>Hours</i>	

1. What led you to this CPD?

- Gaining or enhancing skills, knowledge or experience
- Meeting the requirements of membership, currency of award, employment or regulations
- Showing commitment to self-development
- Furthering an interest in a particular activity or subject
- Preparing for a change in role

2. Before you started the CPD, were you clear about ...

- Your strengths?
- What is required for your role (now or in the future)?
- Where you wanted to improve your knowledge, skills or understanding?

3. Which areas of the CPD Development

Map were you expecting to cover?

- ACTIVITY SKILLS & COACHING
- FACILITATING LEARNING
- OUTDOOR LEADERSHIP
- EXPERIENCE & JUDGEMENT
- ENVIRONMENTAL KNOWLEDGE
- PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE



4. Where have you gained more

knowledge, skills, understanding or experience?

- ACTIVITY SKILLS & COACHING
- FACILITATING LEARNING
- OUTDOOR LEADERSHIP
- EXPERIENCE & JUDGEMENT
- ENVIRONMENTAL KNOWLEDGE
- PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

What have you learned so far?

What would you like to learn more about?

5. Was the CPD?

- Self-led reading, videos, deliberate practice, etc.
- Volunteering with a committee, club or the IOL community, etc.
- With an expert / specialist at a course, conference, webinar, etc.

6. What will be the impact on your practice?

#1

#2

#3

7. Keep this sheet as your record of CPD

Development of This Guide

Version 1 - 10 October 2016

The guide was developed from an IOL research project looking at CPD across the outdoor sector. A core group met three times through 2015 with the aim of creating a shared definition and approach to CPD that would be of value to practitioners and providers of outdoor learning. This unified description is designed to be broad enough to support NGB's, employers and other organisations who hold their own specialist advice, guidance and requirements for CPD.

Principal representatives to the core research group have included: IOL, AHOEC, British Canoeing, Royal Yachting Association, Field Studies Council, PGL, World Challenge, Inspiring Learning, British Cycling, Mountain Training and have also been involved in this project.

This document was presented at the IOL National Conference October 2016, and circulated with a wider group for comment and future revision.

Version 2 – June 2017

The guide was updated to reflect the revised IOL Development Map. The structure remained the same and wording updated to match that used by the Outdoor Trailblazer Apprenticeships and IOL Professional Standards in development. 7 Steps to CPD reflection was added.

Version 3 – October 2019

The CPD Development Map was reformatted to align with the knowledge and skills and behaviour areas in the IOL Outdoor Activity Instructor Occupational Standard and Outdoor Profession Profile. Clarifications were added to the 7 steps to make more applicable for all roles within outdoor learning. The revised document was reviewed by British Canoeing, Royal Yachting Association, British Cycling and Mountain Training and launched at the 2019 Sector Strategic Forum in Birmingham.

If you have any comments or would like to be involved in the future discussions for the project, please get in touch with the chair of the IOL CPD Research Group - neal.a@outdoor-learning.org

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