

Implementation framework for the allocation of CPD credits

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Introduction

There is currently a paradigm shift in knowledge acquisition and the competitiveness of the markets, which has engendered the need for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) by professionals who want to maintain their technical competence.

The Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA) has defined CPD as “the systematic maintenance, improvement and broadening of knowledge and skills, and the development of personal qualities necessary for the execution of professional and technical duties throughout a person’s engineering career.” Registered engineering professionals in South Africa are required to formally show evidence of CPD every five years to renew their registration.

Registered persons are required by the ECSA Code of Conduct to practice strictly within their area of competence and to maintain and enhance this competence. They must therefore keep abreast of developments, knowledge, and skills in their areas of expertise to maintain the minimum standards of practice. In addition to maintaining their own competence, they should strive to contribute to the advancement of the body of knowledge with which they practice, and to the profession in general.

Furthermore institutions are accredited as centres for the provision of short courses etc, to ensure that a reasonable number of outlets exist as service providers to the scheme. Universities and other tertiary institutions as well as industries with structured training programmes can serve as CPD centres. Critical to the success of this scheme is the relevance of the CPD programme to the upward mobility of the staff as well as their remuneration. If there is no impact of the CPD training on the remuneration of the professional then although there are benefits in terms of the professional growth of the staff the participation in the scheme may not be that attractive.

Description of scheme

The categories of activities that will be eligible for CPD points are :

1. developmental,
2. work-based and
3. individual activities.

Work-based activities

These refer to the following :

engineering work,

the mentoring of candidate engineers, and in-house skills training of staff and career guidance.

Individual activities cover a wide range, including: membership of a recognized voluntary association, various types of committee work and presenting a paper at a conference.

Developmental activities include: lectures, seminars and conferences, courses, refresher courses, large group workshops, and involvement with tertiary education institutions.

Allocation of CPD points

1. People applying for the renewal of their professional registration will be required to collect an approved minimum of CPD points over a given period.
2. The points must come from at least two different categories of activities.

These are summarized in the following table.

Table 1: Summary of CPD categories of activities

Category	Activity	Maximum Credits per year	Hours
Category 1	Developmental activities	4 credits	40 hours (10hrs/credit)
Category 2	Work-based activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engineering Work • Mentoring of candidate practitioners 	2 credits 1 credit	800 hours (400hrs/credit) 50 hours (50hrs/credit)
Category 3	Individual activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership of a recognised voluntary association • Other activities 	1 credit 3 credits	(not linked to hours) 30 hours (10hrs/credit)

Transitional Provisions¹

- (1) Unless exempted, all registered persons must commence with CPD activities from 1 January 2006 and record such activities as required by these rules.
- (2) The persons who were registered in the year listed in Column B of Table 2 must apply for renewal of registration within three months prior to their particular *expiry date* in 2007 (row 9), and must have accumulated at least five CPD points during 2006 (row 10).
- (3) For purposes of further illustration, persons who were registered in the year listed in Column C of Table 2 must apply for renewal of registration within three months prior to their particular *expiry date* in 2008, and must have accumulated at least 10 CPD points during 2006 and 2007.

Table 2

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	Year of first Registration			1969	1970	1971
2		1972	1973	1974	1975	1976
3		1977	1978	1979	1980	1981
4		1982	1983	1984	1985	1986
5		1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
6		1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
7		1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
8		2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
9	First Renewal of Registration	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
10	Number of credits required for First Renewal of Registration	5	10	15	20	25
11	Second Renewal of Registration	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016

- (4) Following the same principle as in sub-rules 12(2) and (3), the persons registered during the years listed in columns D, E and F, must apply for renewal of their registration in the years indicated (in the respective column) in row 9, and must have accumulated the required CPD points indicated (in the respective column) in row 10.

A specific example is as follows :

¹ Curled from BOARD NOTICE 131 OF 2005, The Engineering Council of South Africa. Rules: Continuing Professional Development and Renewal of Registration

It should be noted that at ECSA, the compulsory CPD policy started in 2007 but was launched in 2006. In this case to ensure compliance, a phasing-in procedure was instituted over the first 5-year cycle for the initial CPD-based renewal of registration.

By way of an example, a registered person who registered for the first time on 15 March 1983, will have to renew his /her registration by 15 March 2008. That person will be required to have 10 credits for the first renewal of registration. That registered person's second renewal will be in 2013, where the normal 25 credits will be required. With the start of the system being 1 January 2006, that person will be required to submit details of his/her CPD activities within 30 days after 14 March 2007 for the first year up to 14 March 2007. The application for renewal will need to be lodged with ECSA 3 months prior to the expiry date of that person's registration on 15 March 2008, which means lodging the application by 15 December 2007.

Table 3. Framework for determining year of CPD-based renewal

Year of first Registration			1969	1970	1971
	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976
	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981
	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986
	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
First Renewal of Registration	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Number of credits required for First Renewal of Registration	5	10	15	20	25
Second Renewal of Registration	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016

Implementation strategy for PERC

It is proposed that this scheme takes effect from 1st January 2017. Table 4 provides the route that members will have to take in ensuring the CPD conditions are met for the initial and continuing renewals of their registration based on a 5-year cycle. It is recommended that annual renewals will be continued. However renewal on the fifth year will be CPD based and Table 4 provides a reference on the renewal requirements depending on the date of initial registration of the member. 1990 is used coinciding with the year the PERC was enacted.

Now referring to Table 4 we can therefore see that for members who registered in years listed in Column B, if the 5-year cycle of CPD had been applied when they registered, their next registration would have been in 2017, the year of commencement of this scheme. In this case starting 1st January 2016 such members should start recording their CPD points and forwarding the completed form to the Secretariat for its record on their database. In 2017 when renewal is due they must have scored at least 5 credits to be eligible for renewal. Submission of their completed final credit Form should therefore reach the Secretariat against October 2016, i.e. three months prior to the expiry of their membership.

For those in Column C their next five-year CPD cycle will be in 2018. Similarly all documentations must have been submitted against October 2017 and so on. For the second CPD renewal all of these categories must have scored the maximum of 25 credits when the scheme will have stabilized and the normal 5 credit minimum per five-year period will then be required.

Table 4. 5-year cycle CPD-based renewal

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	Year of First Registration				1990	1991
2		1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
3		1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
4		2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
5		2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
6		2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
7	First Renewal of Registration	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
8	Number of credits required for First Renewal of Registration	5	10	15	20	25
9	Second renewal of Registration	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026

Action required.

1. Seek advice on the Legal implications – PERC Act 1990’s provision or revision
2. Initial Sensitization campaign – Emails, letters, consultative conference/workshop
3. Implementation date. Council agreed on a start date of 2017

Sample forms and other documents are enclosed in this submission.

Conclusion

The discussion on a CPD-based renewal of registration has been with us since 2009. Council has decided that the scheme is acceptable. The legal instruments as well as public disclosure and consultations should now be the next steps. This will have to be on a large scale especially considering that the start date of 2017 has been approved by Council.