

CPD Policy and Guidance Note

Continuing Professional Development



IRISH LANDSCAPE INSTITUTE
INSTITIÚID TÍRDHREACHA NA hÉIREANN

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1. Overview

1.1 Introduction and Purpose of this policy and guidance note

The mission of the Irish Landscape Institute is to promote excellence in the practice, understanding, and advancement of landscape architecture in Ireland. The Institute is committed to upholding high professional standards, supporting the development of knowledge, and encouraging innovation across the disciplines of landscape architecture, landscape planning, and landscape management on the island of Ireland.

For members of the Irish Landscape Institute (ILI), Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is both a professional responsibility and a means of sustaining competence throughout their career.

CPD supports reflective practice, reinforces professional credibility, and ensures alignment with national and international standards. Through ongoing learning, members are better equipped to respond to evolving professional challenges, including (but not limited to) climate action, biodiversity restoration, green and blue infrastructure, community engagement, and design innovation.

By embedding CPD within professional practice, the ILI aims to ensure that its members remain informed, capable, and ethically grounded practitioners. In the context of accelerating climate change, biodiversity loss, and environmental degradation, landscape architects have a distinct responsibility to protect, restore, and enhance the natural environment.

Continuing Professional Development enables members to make informed, creative, and evidence-based decisions that contribute to ecological resilience and improve the quality of life for present and future generations.



In-person attendance at site visits and walking tours

1.2 What is Continuing Professional Development?

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is

“ the maintenance and enhancement of the knowledge, expertise and competence of professionals throughout their careers according to a plan formulated with regard to the needs of the professional, the employer, the profession, and society.

- Madden & Mitchell, 1993

It is the responsibility of the individual professional to maintain and develop their skills through CPD.

This enables members of the ILI to maintain and enhance their professional competence, respond effectively to evolving challenges, and uphold the highest standards of practice in serving clients, communities, and the natural and built environments.

1.3 The Role of Continuing Professional Development

As set out in the ILI *Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct*, members of the institute are expected to protect the interests of their clients, the wider public, and the environment through the competent performance of their professional duties.

Active and consistent participation in CPD, along with engagement in research, innovation, and the dissemination of knowledge, ensures that members remain informed and capable in the sustainable planning, design, construction, and management of the physical environment.



Formal learning events such as the ILI conference

1.4 What is the Purpose of CPD?

Continuing Professional Development is considered essential within the Irish Landscape Institute; the purpose of CPD is to:

- Maintain professional competence and high standards of practice, in recognition of the requirement that “In accordance with the procedures specific to each Member State, continuing education and training shall ensure that persons who have completed their studies are able to keep abreast of professional developments to the extent necessary to maintain safe and effective practice”. [Article 22, European Directive 2005/EC on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications];
- Protect the interests of the public and clients by ensuring informed, responsible decision-making;
- Enhance individual job satisfaction and support career development and progression;
- Improve the effectiveness, resilience, and quality of professional practice;
- Respond to rising professional indemnity insurance costs and increasing litigation;
- Strengthen competitiveness in national and international markets;
- Support the growing use of formal quality assurance systems;
- Reinforce credibility and professional standing, particularly in relation to the registration of title;
- Promote the overall performance, reputation, and long-term sustainability of the profession.

1.5 Requirements for Irish Landscape Institute Members

The ILI recognises that maintaining and enhancing professional competence is essential to the integrity and effectiveness of the landscape architectural profession. To support this, all Corporate and Graduate members, (excluding Affiliate, Retired and Student members) are required to undertake a minimum of 20 hours of Continuing Professional Development per annum.

Members are required to maintain an accurate record of their CPD. Each year, the ILI will undertake a CPD audit of a randomly selected proportion of members to verify compliance.

Note: The year ending March 31st 2026 will operate as a transitional period: members are required to have logged a minimum of **15 CPD points** by the end of the financial year on 31st March 2026. From 1st April 2026 onwards, the standard annual CPD requirement will apply, with all members required to complete and record 20 hours of CPD each year.

CPD is not only a means of maintaining technical competence but also a demonstration of professional accountability. Members are required to undertake professional services only within the scope of their education, training, and experience, and to ensure that any work they certify or endorse is carried out under their direct professional knowledge and supervision.

Regular engagement in CPD allows members to assess and expand these competencies, keeping pace with evolving professional standards, legislation, environmental challenges, and societal expectations.



Participation with IFLA Europe's Executive Council



Self-directed learning and reflection alongside experts

2. Approach

2.1 Categorisation and Calculation of CPD Points

Activities qualifying for Continuing Professional Development points fall into two main categories:

- **Structured Professional Learning, and**
- **Professional Contribution and Academic Learning**

These categories reflect the diverse ways in which professionals acquire and apply knowledge, skills, and values throughout their careers.

Category 1 Structured Professional Learning

Participation in organised learning events such as training sessions, lectures, site visits, seminars, conferences, workshops, and other structured learning activities aimed at developing professional knowledge, technical competence, and ethical awareness. These may be delivered in person or online and should relate directly to landscape architecture, landscape planning, or landscape management.

Category 2 Professional Contribution and Academic Learning

Activities that support ongoing professional growth through professional contribution, self-directed learning and formal academic involvement. This recognises learning that may be structured less formally but contributes to the advancement of knowledge, reflective practice, and the landscape architecture profession.

Examples can include formal contribution to third-level education and accredited academic programmes; mentoring students or peers; contributing to ILI or

IFLA Europe committees or working groups; delivering lectures or presentations relevant to the member's work and discipline; publishing articles or research; participating in design reviews, public consultations, policy reviews, or development plans; engaging in professional advocacy or public education; undertaking independent study and reflective practice; reading and reflecting on professional journals, research papers, and policy documents; reviewing legislation, technical guidance, and design standards; undertaking site visits or project-based research; and exploring emerging practices, tools, and technologies relevant to landscape architecture and associated fields of work.

Activities that form part of a Member's normal work duties do not, in themselves, constitute CPD. Work-based activities may only be claimed as CPD where the Member can demonstrate that the activity was non-routine and contributed meaningfully to the development of their professional knowledge, skills, or competence as a professional.

For further details regarding the distribution of CPD points, please refer to the table in Section 3, which provides a breakdown of categorisation, a range of qualifying activities and their respective values.



Every effort is made to ensure that many accredited events are available for members both in person and online

2.2 Selection of Appropriate CPD Activities

The ILI has identified a range of key areas of learning – each of which is important to the professional development of Landscape Architects in Ireland.

Together, these areas reflect a wide scope of professional practice and represent the knowledge, skills, and competencies that members are expected to maintain and enhance throughout their careers.

Landscape Design and Planning

Planning and design processes, sustainable and regenerative design, accessibility and inclusive design, urban design, rural and regional landscapes, and green and blue infrastructure.

Landscape Sciences

Landscape ecology, horticulture and planting design, environmental sciences, soils and hydrology, environmental management and assessment processes, climate science, and site engineering.

Personal Skills Development

Individual training needs, professional judgement, leadership, communication skills, ethical decision-making, and opportunities for specialisation within the field of landscape architecture.

Project Management

Brief development, procurement routes and building contracts, cost planning and cost management, project management methodologies, risk management, dispute resolution, and facilities and asset management.

Community Engagement

Communication and consultation processes, stakeholder engagement, facilitation skills, participatory design methods, and collaboration with communities and interest groups.

Health and Safety

Mandatory training such as Safe Pass and other health and safety courses relevant to a member's professional duties. This includes legal compliance, site safety, risk assessment, and risk management.

Social Context

The context and requirements of cultural and heritage landscapes, recreation and play, inclusive and accessible environments, public realm, wellbeing, and communal and social aspects of the landscape.

Practice Context

Codes of conduct, professional ethics, best practice, cultural and historical context, understanding the client brief, practice law, contract law, environmental law, planning policy, and contract administration.

Construction Skills

Construction methodologies, technical innovations, specification writing, material selection and performance, statutory requirements, inspection and supervision, and cross-professional and interdisciplinary working.

Practice Management

Business administration, employment legislation, marketing and professional services, quality management systems, risk management, staff leadership and management, taxation, finance and VAT, and time and resource management.

Information Technology

Digital tools and workflows, computers and multimedia, digital photography, geographic information systems (GIS), building information modelling (BIM), computer-aided design (CAD) where relevant, product information and specification, digital techniques, detailing, terrain modelling, and documentation.

3. Method

3.1 Approved Activities Events, Courses and Programmes

A range of professional, educational, and commercial organisations deliver programmes and events of value to members of the ILI. Many of these may be approved for CPD purposes, confirming their relevance to the professional development of landscape architects.

Approved providers include — but are not limited to — professional bodies and Competent Authorities, academic institutions, and environmental and ecological organisations and agencies whose activities focus on landscape, biodiversity, sustainability and the built environment. These include the following:

- Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland (RIAI)
- Engineers Ireland (EI)
- Irish Planning Institute (IPI)
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- Landscape Alliance Ireland (LAI)
- Garden and Landscape Designers Association (GLDA)
- University College Dublin (UCD)
- University of Limerick (UL)
- Technological University Dublin (TU Dublin)
- Irish Wildlife Trust (IWT)
- An Taisce
- Rewilding Ireland

Members are also encouraged to participate in events organised by international or sister professional bodies, such as the Landscape Institute (UK) and the European Federation for Landscape Architecture (IFLA Europe), where activities contribute to professional learning and can meet ILI CPD standards.

3.2 Maintaining your individual CPD Record

Members are required to maintain a clear and up-to-date record of their CPD activities. Each entry in the ILI member’s CPD tracker will include the following:

- Date of activity
- Category of CPD
- Type of activity and description
- CPD hours
- Written reflection and learning outcome
- Any supporting evidence

Records should be maintained in a manner that allows for ease of review during routine audit. Members are encouraged to regularly update their CPD record, and to include a diverse range of activities to reflect a balanced approach to professional development.

	CPD Activity	Points
Category 01 (minimum 10 points)	One full day of attendance at an ILI or an ILI-approved formal learning event	8 points
	One full day of attendance at a non-ILI or non-ILI-approved (or equivalent) event	6 points
	Half a day of attendance at an ILI or ILI-approved (or equivalent) learning event	4 points
	Half a day of attendance at a non-ILI or non-ILI-approved (or equivalent) learning event	3 points
	Recorded attendance at an in-person ILI walking tour, site visit, or professional workshop	2 points
	One hour at an ILI or ILI-approved (or equivalent) formal learning or training event, or seminar	1 point
Category 02 (minimum 6 points)	Member of the elected ILI Council, or a member of the elected IFLA Europe Executive Council	10 points
	Academic mentoring / teaching: part-time involvement in third-level course through full semester	10 points
	Member of an ILI sub-committee, or a member of an IFLA Europe working group / committee	8 points
	Academic mentoring / teaching: one day involvement as part of an accredited third level course	3 points
	Self-directed learning: reading journals, design guidance or legislation, or site-specific research	5 points*
	Broader professional learning and written reflection on those themes outlined in Section 2	5 points*

* 5 points **maximum**: proof of completion is to be demonstrated by way of a summarised written reflection

3.3 Monitoring your CPD record

The ILI recognises that the CPD system relies primarily on self-assessment. It is therefore essential for the Institute to monitor the operation and implementation of the CPD system to maintain its integrity and ensure fairness and consistency among members in fulfilling their CPD obligations.

CPD monitoring is carried out annually. Each year, the ILI selects a random sample of members and reviews their CPD logbooks for the preceding year. Where necessary, members may be asked to provide supporting evidence to verify their records, such as confirmation from event organisers, attendance records, CPD certificates, booking confirmations, training materials, or other documentation. Each entry in the CPD logbook should include a brief explanation of the learning outcome achieved by the member.

Members included in the random sample who do not meet CPD requirements in any given year will be subject to a follow-up audit in the subsequent months.

The ILI continuously reviews its CPD policy to ensure that it remains accessible, relevant, and practical for all members. The ILI welcomes constructive feedback from members, employers, and other stakeholders on CPD topics, methods, and improvements to strengthen the effectiveness and value of the CPD programme.

3.4 Non-compliance of recording CPD

If a member is found not to have met the ILI's CPD requirements, the Institute will issue a formal notification by letter and/or email. From the date of this notification, the member will have a period of three months to submit their outstanding CPD records or provide a satisfactory explanation for non-compliance.

During this period, the ILI will offer support and guidance to help members address any genuine practical difficulties that may have prevented them from fulfilling their CPD obligations. This may include advice on acceptable activities, extensions, or other reasonable adjustments.

Any Corporate or Graduate member, after this three-month period, who has not complied with the ILI's CPD policy and has not provided an acceptable explanation will be subject to the ILI Disciplinary Process for breach of the ILI Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct.

3.5 Limited Availability Maternity / Paternity Leave or Illness

It is recognised that members on maternity or paternity leave, shared parental leave, adoption leave, or those affected by illness (either personally or while caring for someone else) may have limited time and resources to fulfil their CPD obligations.

In such circumstances, members are exempt from CPD requirements for up to six months, or during the period of approved leave. Members who are unable to meet their CPD obligations due to illness or caring responsibilities should contact the ILI to discuss their situation and agree an appropriate adjustment.

Members not working full-time shall still engage in CPD through flexible and accessible activities, such as:

- Reading and research to stay up to date with developments across the wider industry;
- Keeping-in-touch days or part-time engagement with the workplace;
- Formal and informal discussions with peers, colleagues, or mentors (face-to-face or online).

The ILI encourages members in these circumstances to use such opportunities to maintain professional knowledge, skills, and engagement with the wider landscape community, even if their normal CPD workload is reduced temporarily.

3.6 Retired Members

Members who have formally transferred to the category of retired membership are not required to fulfil the CPD obligations of the Irish Landscape Institute.



In-person CPD events hosted by the ILI can offer a social learning environment for attendees.