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**How to write
a CPD Plan**

This guide is designed to help you write, revise and get the most out of your CPD Plan, please refer to it when you come to write your plan.

What is a CPD Plan?

The purpose of the CPD (continuing professional development) Plan is to help you develop yourself from where you are to where you want to be in the future.

A CPD Plan will help you to:

- focus your efforts on four or five achievable goals
- secure and make the most of opportunities at work
- manage your workload.

Your CPD Plan helps you set realistic goals for the next two years in order to bring you closer to your long-term career aspirations – whatever they may be. Your future aspirations could be anything from being more satisfied and fulfilled in your current role, to taking a completely different direction in your career.

By following this guidance and working with your mentor you should be able to write your CPD Plan. All CPD Plans look forward and cover a two-year period.

During your AMA you will write at least three CPD Plans.

Original Plan

This is written early on in your AMA and will need to be assessed and approved by the MA.

Revised Plan

You should revise your plan at least once, either when you come to write your Interim Summary or if your circumstances change, eg you change job.

Future Plan

This is written at the end of your AMA and should be submitted as part of your final paperwork.

The CPD plan will help you to:

A

Identify where you are now and where you aspire to be five years in the future



B

Create four or five **goals** that you will work towards over a two-year period. These goals will bring you closer to your aspirations



C

Identify the skills, knowledge and experience you **need** to develop in order to fulfil each **goal**



D

Identify specific **activities** you will undertake that will help you satisfy each **need**

A blank copy and example of the CPD Plan can be downloaded from www.museumsassociation.org/cpdresources

Writing the CPD Plan:

A. Where you are and where you want to get to

If you look at a blank CPD Plan you will see that the first section you should complete is Box A this is where you set out the main areas of your current role and your future career aspirations.

The purpose of Box A is to summarise what you are doing at the moment and use this to help you shape where you would like your career to be in five years time.

Current role

In order to examine your current situation take a look at your job description and list what you currently do under a few broad headings. Remember to consider your actual responsibilities, duties and activities not just what is written.

When you have done this write three or four key areas of your current work in Box A on your CPD plan.

Future aspirations

When you are shaping your future aspirations, consider:

- the types of roles you are good at and those that you enjoy
- talking to people who work in areas that interest you
- your personal circumstances
- work that would be challenging and rewarding – don't limit yourself
- your career values.

When you have done this write your future aspirations in Box A of your CPD Plan.

Example of CPD Plan

A. Current role and future aspirations

Summarise the key areas of your current role

State your long-term career aspirations.

B. CPD goals

Set out the four or five significant steps you are going to take over the next two years that will bring you closer to your career aspirations

C. Development needs

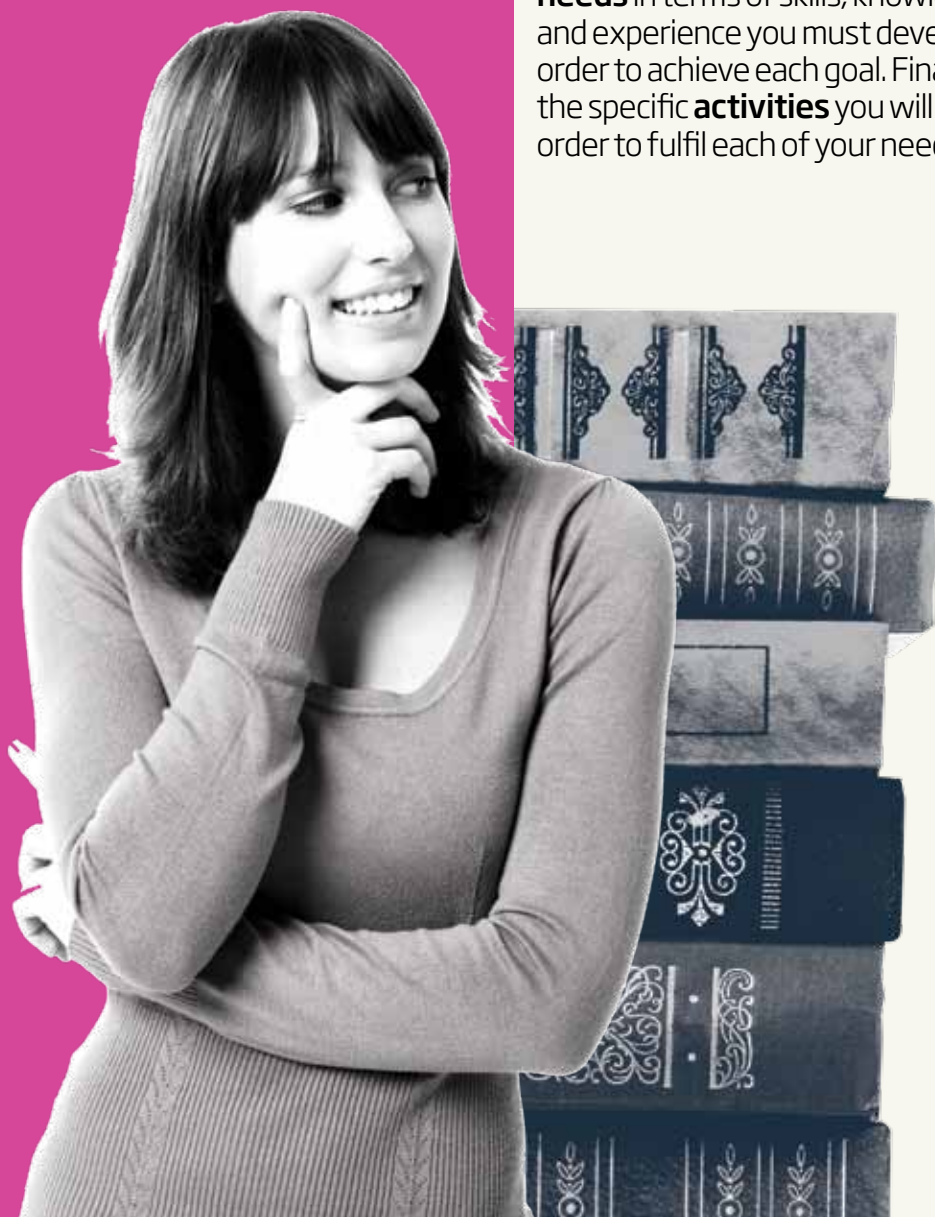
What specific skills, knowledge and experience do you need to develop in order to achieve each goal?

D. CPD activities

What are you actually going to do, to fulfil each need? Activities should be SMART (see page 6)



Writing the CPD Plan: Columns B, C, D



Now that you have an idea of where you are and where you would like to get to in the future, it is important to set out how you plan to get there. To do this you need to develop four - five **CPD goals** that will bring you closer to your aspirations. Next identify the **needs** in terms of skills, knowledge and experience you must develop in order to achieve each goal. Finally list the specific **activities** you will do in order to fulfil each of your needs.

The diagram below shows how each goal has a number of needs that can be fulfilled by certain activities undertaken.



In the CPD Plan these steps are arranged into columns

B	C	D
Goal	Needs	Activities
		Activities
	Needs	Activities
		Activities
	Needs	Activities
		Activities

Writing the CPD Plan:

B. Setting your CPD goals

What is a CPD goal?

Your CPD goals are the four or five areas that you plan to focus on over the next two years that will bring you closer to your future aspirations. Each CPD goal describes a specific area you want to develop and is Specific, Measurable Achievable Realistic Timed (SMART).

Things to consider when writing CPD goals

- Carry out a SWOT analysis (see additional resources at the end of this pdf) to identify any specific areas you need to develop or particular opportunities arising from your current situation.
- Reflect on your future aspirations, what skills or knowledge do you need to develop?

- If you have identified a specific role in your future aspirations have a look at some personal specifications for this type of job. Can you identify any areas where you do not meet the specification?
- Once you have identified the four or five areas you want to develop, think about the degree to which you need to develop them. Are you starting from scratch or do you already have some level of understanding or experience that you plan to build upon?
- Consider how you will know if you have achieved your goal, eg will you be able to publish an article? Will you be able to successfully manage a team of volunteers?
- Finally, double-check that your goals are achievable within the next two years and are realistic in the context of your current job role.



Writing the CPD Plan:

C. & D. Breaking down your goals into specific needs and activities



What are your developmental needs?

Column C of your plan is where you should note the specific skills and knowledge you need to learn and the experience you need to acquire in order to fulfil each goal.

What are CPD activities?

Column D of your plan is where you note down the actual activities you plan to undertake in order to fulfil each of your developmental needs.

When defining your activities ensure they are clear, detailed and explicit. For example, state the actual course/conference/training session you would like to attend and be specific about who will be involved and when the activity is likely to happen. It is important to put a time frame on each activity to help you prioritise and make your plan realistic.

Example of how developmental needs can be broken down into CPD activities

B. CPD goal	C. developmental needs	D. CPD activities
Develop my people management skills in order to become a better manager of volunteers.	To understand how to manage a team of volunteers effectively	Attend the course 'Managing Volunteers' Dec 2013
	To understand how to meet and deal with the needs and expectations of volunteers	Interview at least two senior managers to discuss management techniques and styles by April 2014
	To have confidence in my ability to manage people	Review and rewrite the volunteer induction programme by Sep 2014 Evaluate the programme by March Dec 2014

CPD activities

It is essential that you undertake a range of activities, therefore your plan needs to include a range of:

- work-based activities
- professional activities
- formal learning activities
- informal learning activities

Once you have written a draft of your plan

- read it through checking that:
 - each CPD activity meets a developmental need
 - your developmental needs will enable you to achieve the CPD goal they are linked to
- discuss it with your mentor
- submit it to the MA for assessment

Examples of the different types of activities you could undertake:

Work-based activities

- secondments (inside and outside the organisation)
- special projects
- shadowing others
- contributing to planning, such as strategic or forward planning
- liaising with other organisations.

Professional activities

- joining an AMA support group
- involvement with a regional agency or federation, a specialist group or MA or ICOM committee.

Formal learning activities

- professional or vocational courses
- attending short courses, conferences, seminars and workshops
- lecturing
- writing or reviewing conference papers
- running or contributing to seminars, workshops or conferences.

Informal learning activities

- reading and reviewing journals, books, newspapers
- using other learning materials eg DVDs and podcasts
- using the internet
- study visits.



Revising your CPD Plan

As you complete CPD activities your knowledge, skills and experience will increase; it's important that your plan reflects this development. Your circumstances or future aspirations may also change, so it's important to regularly revise your CPD Plan particularly if your job changes significantly. Please note that you do not have to complete all activities or fulfil all goals before revising a plan.

You are required to revise your plan at least once whilst undertaking the AMA but there is no limit to the number of times you can revise your plan. Any periods not covered by a CPD Plan will not count towards your AMA.

Table showing example timescales for CPD Plans:

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Original CPD Plan (submitted 2013)					
Revised Plan (written 2014)					
Future Plan (Submitted at professional review 2015)					



Assessment

Once you are happy with your original plan and your mentor has discussed it with you, you should submit it to the MA for assessment (accompanied by an email of approval from your mentor).

Once your plan is approved you can start undertaking CPD activities and actively accruing the 24 months of CPD needed to complete your AMA. You should also start keeping a log of CPD activities.

In the case that your plan is not approved, you will receive feedback on how to improve it. You should work with your mentor to implement this feedback and resubmit your plan for assessment.

Additional resources

You can download a blank CPD Plan from **www.museumsassociation.org/cpdresources**.

Audio guides that will help you visualise your future self and set goals can be found at **www.museumsassociation.org/cpdresources**.

The SWOT framework helps you identify your strengths, the areas you would like to develop and where the greatest opportunities lie.

Further information about SWOT analysis can be found at **www.museumsassociation.org/cpdresources**

See **www.museumsassociation.org/cpdresources** for additional information and copies of the plans.

