

# Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for Forensic Anthropology and Aligned Professionals



## CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD) FOR FORENSIC ANTHROPOLOGY AND ALIGNED PROFESSIONS

### 1. COMPETENCE:

The requirement for the demonstration of competence in forensic practice is enshrined within the Forensic Science Regulator's Code of Practice (point 4)<sup>1</sup> and it is quite clear that it will be part of the requirements for all forensic practitioners working within the criminal justice system in England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland. This also fits directly within the manual for regulation also published by the Forensic Science Regulator<sup>2</sup> and with the RAI Code of Practice, Ethics and Professional Standard for Forensic Anthropology

The RAI has adopted the Skills for Justice definition of competence<sup>3</sup> endorsed by the Forensic Science regulator and by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO)

*"The skills, knowledge and understanding required to carry out a role, evidenced consistently over time through performance in the workplace".*

Skills for Justice have developed a competence assessment framework within which mechanisms for the assessment of various knowledge and skills are suggested<sup>3</sup>.

### 2. CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Continuing professional development (CPD), encompasses a wide range of activities which contribute to lifelong learning in support of career development and the maintenance (and in some cases demonstration) of competence in practice. It includes a wide range of formal learning (leading to an assessed award or certificate), Informal learning and experiential

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Revised code of conduct and practice : <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/agencies-public-bodies/fsr/codes-practice/>

<sup>2</sup> Manual of regulation, <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/agencies-public-bodies/fsr/manual-of-regulation>

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.skillsforjustice.com/websitefiles/Skills\\_for\\_Justice\\_work\\_in\\_UK\\_Forensic\\_Science\\_Sector.pdf](http://www.skillsforjustice.com/websitefiles/Skills_for_Justice_work_in_UK_Forensic_Science_Sector.pdf)

learning. CPD activities promote and demonstrate professional growth rather than include what would be considered as normal business activities.

CPD can be used as a demonstrative mechanism for some of the requirements for evidencing continued competence within the Skills for Justice and other frameworks. However, it should be noted that, while CPD will fulfil some of the requirements of competence demonstration, it is not of itself sufficient to demonstrate all aspects of competence. Other mechanisms such as knowledge tests, casework peer review and dip sampling are also suggested as normal professional activities in this regard.

Continuing professional development forms a vital part of any professional accreditation and competence assessment system. It is also a normal part of the requirements for membership of a professional body.

### 3. PROPOSED CPD SYSTEM FOR FORENSIC ANTHROPOLOGY AND ALIGNED PROFESSIONS

Forensic Anthropology has devised a simple yet comprehensive CPD system, designed to be achievable across the various practitioner levels and different practitioner backgrounds (academic, museum/public sector based or full time professional practice). The scheme is designed to encourage practitioner development through the three levels of practitioner adopted by the RAI and the Forensic Regulator and fit for purpose in terms of addressing the requirements of a CPD system as a means of demonstrating competence (in part) suggested by Skills for Justice and the Forensic Science Regulator.

The proposed CPD system is not a points based system, rather practitioners are required to present a three year professional development plan on registration onto the scheme and maintain a continuous record (portfolio) of their professional development against this plan. Practitioners may, if they wish, produce an annual audit of their CPD activities and this can be tracked against their development plan as part of their normal internal annual review process (if applicable). This is aimed at facilitating and encouraging short and medium term career development planning.

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#### 3.1 REQUIREMENTS

There are two tiers of CPD activity designated as Level 1 and Level 2. These activities are separated to reflect the different skills levels expected with differing levels of practitioners. The activities within each grouping have been designed to ensure that the exercise is achievable by the relevant practitioners irrespective of their working environment (police force, academic, forensic science provider etc) over the 3 year period. Practitioners will be expected to submit proof that they have achieved the designated number of activities dependent upon their practitioner level during the 3 year CPD period.

Each of the three practitioner levels have a different number of designated Level 1 and level 2 CPD activities on a sliding scale designed to allow individual practitioners freedom of choice of activity, thus reflecting and acknowledging the different work environments within the profession. Each activity from each level will only be counted once within each 3-year CPD period. Activities must be spread across the three year period (for example undertaking courses on an annual basis rather than in the same year).

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## 3.2 CPD ACTIVITIES AND REQUIREMENTS

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### LEVEL 1

- Publication of, or acting as editor of a book/book chapter, evidenced by an appropriate reference.
- Publication of a research article in a peer-reviewed journal in which the practitioner is NOT the lead author or corresponding author evidenced by proof of acceptance of the paper or the published paper.
- Oral Presentation at a professionally appropriate conference, evidenced by appropriate reference in conference program.
- Presentation of a poster (either as first or other author) at a professionally appropriate conference, evidenced by a copy of the poster and appropriate reference in conference program.
- Attendance at and completion of, a professionally relevant course/specialist training/workshop with no final assessment, evidenced by a certificate of attendance.

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### LEVEL 2

- Publication of a research paper in a peer-reviewed journal in which the practitioner is either the lead author or corresponding author (proof of acceptance of the paper or the published paper is required). It is acknowledged that there is variability inherent in peer review publications, not least dictated by the impact factor of the target journal and nature of the publication. However, in order to be as inclusive as possible, and being mindful of the range of practitioner backgrounds, peer review publications will be accepted from any recognised journal and can include technical notes and case studies. This requirement **must** demonstrate the acquisition of new knowledge rather than the condensate of existing knowledge as one would expect in book chapters or edited works. As such book chapters, review papers, edited works and professional magazines will not be accepted as fulfilment of these criteria.
- Attendance and successful completion of a professionally relevant course/training/workshop which culminates in a final assessment, evidenced by a certificate of completion and proof of successful completion of a final examination.

- Successful Completion of a relevant proficiency test\*
- Acting as an external examiner for a professionally relevant course (not necessarily forensic science based and can be in a relevant topic e.g. osteology) or acting as an external examiner for a postgraduate research degree (MSc/MA by research or PhD), evidenced by an appropriate letter of appointment.
- Acting as a peer reviewer for a professional journal evidenced by an email acceptance of the review.
- Membership of RCUK peer review panel or similar.

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### 3.3 CPD REQUIREMENTS OVER 3 YEARS

	<b>CPD activities</b>	
<b>Practitioner</b>	<b>Level 1</b>	<b>Level 2</b>
FA III	3 out of 5	2 out of 6
FA II	3 out of 5	1 out of 6
FA 1	3 out of 5	N/A

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### 3.4 CPD PORTFOLIO

A portfolio containing a record of CPD activities should be maintained and prefaced with a professional development plan, submitted at the time of registration for the CPD scheme. This can be submitted, either as a paper copy or online. It is recognised that the original CPD development plan may change and such changes should be updated within the portfolio.

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### 3.5 CPD ASSESSMENT

CPD will be formally assessed every three years against the requirements balanced to the individual's practitioner level. The assessment will be by submission of their portfolio and

appropriate evidence of attainment of the activities claimed. It is envisaged that the assessment will be carried out by a CPD group of BAFA but this is yet to be decided.

\* The exact nature of any proficiency tests have yet to be fully discussed.