



Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service

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**Brigade Order
Training
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Part 9

**Continual
Professional
Development
Scheme**

Part 9 – Continual Professional Development Scheme

Purpose

Many employees covered by the NJC's Scheme of Conditions of Service (Grey Book) are entitled to apply for a Continual Professional Development (CPD) payment. This Order identifies which staff are able to apply and sets out the criteria for both applying and for assessing the validity of such applications

Strategic Aims and Objectives

Not applicable

Roles, Responsibilities and Review

The **Assistant Chief Officer** is responsible for ensuring this Order is implemented across the Brigade.

Human Resources Manager will be responsible for the day to day operation of the Order.

The **Human Resources Manager** will review this Order biennially in **October** and as and when organisational changes take place.

Introduction

Employees covered by the NJC's Scheme of Conditions of Service (Grey Book) who have served the minimum period of time following attainment of 'competent' level in their respective role (Firefighter to Area Manager and Control equivalents) may apply for a Continual Professional Development (CPD) payment.

All employees who meet the criteria above will have an equal opportunity to access such payments which will sit outside both the IPDS basic pay structure and any provision for additional responsibility allowances.

The Scheme is designed to recognise and reward experienced employees who are able to demonstrate CPD over and above that required at 'competent' level under each of the national standards set out in the attached *Guidance to Applicants* document (*appendix A*).

Eligibility

Firefighters/Fire Control Operators who have completed a minimum of five years service following the attainment of 'competent' status by the 1st of July may apply for CPD in March of that year. Employees who joined the Service prior to the introduction of the NVQ process to assess competence but who have been deemed competent for pay purposes under the 2003 Pay and Conditions Agreement must complete a minimum of eight years service (this service is counted irrespective of which brigade/s the individual has served in or the duty system they worked).

Promotion

CPD payments may be retained on promotion; this applies to permanent promotion, temporary promotion and acting up. Employees who have successfully completed an ADC process and subsequently been appointed to a substantive position and who were previously eligible for CPD will be required to re-apply for CPD at the next opportunity using evidence from both their former and current roles. Evidence in the current role **must** include confirmation that they are actively and consistently engaged on their development programme.

Payments

The level of payment in each Service has been determined by the National Joint Council.

CPD payments will be paid monthly commencing in July and will be treated as basic pay for all pay related purposes i.e. maternity leave, annual leave, pension and sickness. On return to work following any period of unpaid

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maternity leave and individual's CPD payment will be reinstated and will become subject to the normal reassessment process.

Application

Following national agreement on the introduction of the Scheme all employees who were eligible for a CPD payment were given the opportunity to apply in March 2007 by completing the application form **FB328**. Employees who become eligible in subsequent years must also complete this form. Once successful, there will be no requirement to complete the form each year, however all applicants **must** have taken part in an Individual Performance and Development Review in accordance with the relevant Brigade Order.

New applicants

Employees will be able to submit their application for payment (**FB328**) by 1st of March in the year in which they become eligible. Decisions will then be notified by 1st of June. The application form should be completed in accordance with the guidance provided and must include specific examples of success/achievement against each of the criteria under the national standard.

The completed application form will be submitted to the appropriate designated assessment manager who will consider the application and refer his/her recommendation to the verification manager for final decision. A decision on whether to make a payment or not must be communicated to the applicant in writing by 1st of June

The attached matrix (appendix B) shows the appropriate assessment and verification managers for operational personnel and should be considered as good practice for other departments.

Renewal of payments

It is expected that employees awarded the payment will maintain this high level of CPD and commitment to the job necessary to achieve payment. The individual's suitability for payment will be based on performance in respect of the national standards and will be reviewed annually by the line manager in March/April each year. The Manager will review the employee's record over the previous twelve months and complete the Annual CPD assessment form (FB355). A supplementary page and guidance for line managers when assessing an employee's suitability for continued payment of CPD whilst completing this form is attached as appendix C

Unsuccessful applications

Individuals are entitled to raise the decision not to award/continue the payment through the grievance procedure on the following grounds:

- Proper account was not taken of the material presented

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- Account was taken of irrelevant or inaccurate factor Unfair treatment
- Failure to take fully into account all evidence to justify continuance of payment.

Employees whose application has been unsuccessful can reapply only after a period of 12 months from their previous application.

Part-time employees

Part-time employees including those on the retained duty system will not be treated less favourably than wholetime employees in the assessment process. All such employees will be paid on an individual pro-rata basis, subject to a minimum payment of 25% of the full-time equivalent. The assessment is based on hours worked not cover provided therefore any part-time employee who can demonstrate that they consistently work in excess of 10 ½ hours per week should include this information when applying.

Wholetime-retained

Wholetime employees who also operate the RDS are entitled to apply in respect of both contracts provided they meet the criteria in each case and should submit separate applications as set out above. Evidence in each application should relate only to the role for which the application is made therefore, with the exception of annual modular training courses, evidence given as part of a RDS application should not include information relating to their wholetime role. Wholetime Firefighters who already meet the criteria in respect of time served since competent in the primary role will automatically meet this aspect of the criteria when joining the RDS service. Control staff who join the RDS will have to meet this criteria separately.

CONTINUAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

GUIDANCE NOTES FOR APPLICANTS

This guidance is designed to help you complete the application form for the continual professional development payment. In order to qualify for the payment, you will need to demonstrate continual professional development over and above that required at 'competent' level under each of the national standards.

High continual professional development is reached under each national standard by demonstrating that continual professional development against each of the criteria.

For each of the national standards you are required to provide evidence of how you have continually professional developed. Evidence, which should include specific examples where appropriate, will result from the acquisition of experience and knowledge. This may be acquired through day to day experience in the role, training courses, or a mixture of both. You will be judged on the quality of the evidence not the length of the submission.

The national standards and their related criteria are as follows:

(i) **Professional competence**

- Effective organisation of work to meet the demands of your role
- Commitment to health and safety requirements
- Experience

(ii) **Commitment to the job**

- Commitment to achieving your Fire and Rescue Service's objectives
- Commitment to personal and professional development
- Commitment to achieving high levels of attendance

(iii) **Relations with the public and colleagues**

- Promoting equality, diversity and human rights in working practices
- Contributing to your Fire and Rescue Service's objectives, recognising the needs of all relevant communities
- Working as part of a team

(iv) **Willingness to learn and adjust to new circumstances**

- Making best use of available technology
- Demonstrating an openness to change

The Application Process

You will find attached to this guidance an application form for you to complete. Remember, the onus is on you to show how you have achieved continual professional development over and above that required at 'competent' under each of the national standards.

Care should be taken in completing this form to ensure fair and appropriate decisions are made. If you have any questions that are not covered in this guidance please talk to your line manager before submitting the application form.

For each national standard you are required to provide sufficient evidence to enable a fair assessment to be carried out. This does not necessarily mean that you must provide an example for every indicator under each standard.

Eligible employees may submit their applications by 1st March in the year in which they become eligible. Decisions will be notified by 1st June. To be eligible, applicants need to have served for five years following attainment of 'competent' level in your current role.

You are not required to prepare a portfolio of supporting evidence. Please do not attach additional pages to the form. Use only the space provided. If your line manager or the verifier requires additional supporting information, they will ask you for it.

From the second anniversary onwards the respective fire and rescue service will review and assess those in receipt of a Continual Professional Development payment to determine their on-going eligibility. Individuals will be notified of the outcome prior to 1 July each year. The expectation is that non-renewal of the payment will be the exception.

The Assessment Process

A designated appropriate manager will assess your application. It will then be passed to a higher level manager who will act as a verifier for review and to determine whether or not payment should be made.

PERSONAL DETAILS

Please enter your name, role, employee pay number, and the date at which you attained 'competent' level in your current role.

Under this national standard, you will need to demonstrate continual professional development and results appropriate for your role. Using only the box provided for your comments, set out clearly and concisely your achievements against the evidence for which managers and verifiers will generally be looking for. The areas that you will need to consider are:

National Standard (i): PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE

Effective organisation of work to meet the demands of your role

You should indicate, for example, how you:

- Make sure that all matters relating to the processing of information are

carried out in a prompt, efficient manner and in accordance with policy and procedure.

Commitment to health and safety requirements

- A copy of your Fire and Rescue Service's health and safety requirements and risk assessment for your role may be obtained from your Fire and Rescue Service.

Experience

You should indicate the acquisition and application of knowledge and understanding gained through experience, beyond that required for 'competence'.

National Standard (ii): COMMITMENT TO THE JOB

Under this national standard, you will need to show how you have, to the necessary standard, demonstrated commitment to your job in the role in which you have achieved competency and are currently in.

Using only the space provided, set out clearly and concisely how you have shown the sorts of achievements that assessors will be looking for. The areas that you will need to consider are:

Commitment to achieving your Fire and Rescue Service objectives

You should indicate, for example, how you:

- Take personal responsibility for your actions;
- Are focused on achieving results;
- Demonstrate sound judgement;
- Identify, implement and monitor development activities to enhance your own performance.

Commitment to personal and professional development

You should indicate, for example, how you:

- Keep yourself up to date with changes affecting your role;
- Assess your skills and identify potential personal development needs;
- Undertake continuous self-development activities;
- Obtain and utilise feedback from relevant people.

Commitment to achieving high levels of attendance

You should indicate, for example, how you:

- Achieved a satisfactory level of attendance in accordance with local policy and/or targets. In making such a judgment Fire and Rescue Service's will wish to be mindful of any reasonable circumstance which may have impacted upon an individual's ability to achieve this, and the individual's usual attendance record.

National Standard (iii): RELATIONS WITH PUBLIC AND COLLEAGUES

Under this national standard, you will need to show, to the necessary standard, how you have achieved good relations with members of the public and with your colleagues. The areas that you will need to consider are:

Promoting equality, diversity and human rights in working practices

You should indicate, for example, how you:

- Develop and maintain positive working relationships;
- Ensure that members of the public and your colleagues are treated fairly;
- Treat colleagues and members of the public with dignity and respect, including behaving in a way that demonstrates that you value difference and diversity in relation to gender, sexuality, ethnicity, religion, disability, age and nationality.

Contributing to your Fire and Rescue Service objectives, recognising the needs of all relevant communities

You should indicate, for example, how you:

provide a service that is responsive and sympathetic and recognises the needs of all relevant communities

Working as part of a team

You should indicate, for example, how you:

- Work co-operatively with team members and colleagues;
- Seek to ensure that team objectives and performance indicators are achieved;
- If you have management responsibility, supervise short and medium term objectives, develop plans, monitor work activities, and regularly assess the performance of teams and individuals

National Standard (iv): WILLINGNESS TO LEARN AND ADJUST TO NEW CIRCUMSTANCES

Under this national standard, you will need to show how you have, to a high level of continual professional development, demonstrated a willingness to learn new skills and adjust to new circumstances. The areas that you will need to consider are:

Making best use of available technology

You should indicate, for example, how you:

- Make best use of available technology in support of your role;
- Ensure correct operation and compliance with your Fire and Rescue Service policy and requirements.

Demonstrating an openness to change

You should indicate, for example, how you:

- Are adaptable and have a positive attitude towards change;
- Are flexible and can adapt to new ways;
- Understand the need for, and co-operate with, change suggesting changes to existing systems.
- If you have management responsibility, actively promote and lead your team positively to take change forward.

* Note: Providing evidence against this list should not preclude an individual from raising concern about change through recognised channels.

Remember, use only the space provided. Do not attach additional pages of evidence to the form.

Once you have completed the application form, sign and date the form and submit it to your appropriate line manager.

Continual Professional Development Assessment and Verification Guidance for Managers

The matrix below sets out which managers carry out the functions of 'Assessor' and 'Verifier' for the process of confirming staff have demonstrated CPD.

Wholetime Stations		
Candidate	Assessor	Verifier
Firefighter	Watch Manager	DSO
Crew Manager	Watch Manager	DSO
Watch Manager	DSO	H of District Performance
DSO	H of District Performance	Deputy Chief Fire officer

RDS Station (North and South District)		
Candidate	Assessor	Verifier
Firefighter	Officer in Charge	DSO
Crew Manager	Officer in Charge	DSO
Watch Manager (who is not OiC of station)	Officer in Charge	DSO
Officer in Charge	DSO*	District Officer
District Officer	H of District Performance	Deputy Chief Fire officer

*denotes temporary DSO i.e flexi duty or 42hr Officer who attends on drill nights

RDS Station (Central District)		
Candidate	Assessor	Verifier
Firefighter	Officer in Charge	DSO
Crew Manager	Officer in Charge	DSO
Officer in Charge	DSO	H of District Performance

Notes for Assessors

Assessors should read the evidence given by the candidate for each section. In the comments box they should indicate that the evidence provided is a true and proper example, provided that they can:

- a) Confirm that the applicant has served sufficient time to be eligible to apply.
- b) Confirm that the evidence is appropriate for the area concerned.
- c) Confirm that the evidence provided is accurate and applies as stated to the applicant.

If, after seeking clarification from the individual concerned, they feel unable to confirm a to c above they should enter a note to that effect.

Notes for Verifiers

Verifiers should concern themselves that the assessor has properly interpreted a to c above and discuss any applications in which they feel this is not the case or in which the Assessor has raised concerns about the validity of the application.

Line Managers must complete form (FB355) in respect of any team member who has applied for or is eligible for the continuation of a CPD payment. The form, which should cover the period of the previous twelve months up until 28th February must be completed between the 1st of March and the 30th of April when it should be forwarded to the Human Resources section. For new CPD applications this form should be attached to the FB328 and forwarded as soon as possible

Guidance on factors which may affect eligibility

National Standards	Factors which may affect eligibility
Professional competence	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Effective organisation of work to meet the demands of your role• Commitment to values of the Fire and Rescue Service• Commitment to Health and Safety requirements	Breaches of discipline Failure to maintain adequate levels of fitness
Commitment to the job	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Commitment to achieving your Fire & Rescue Service's objectives• Commitment to personal and professional development• Commitment to achieving high levels of attendance	Breaches of discipline Failure to attend necessary training courses Failure to complete IPDR Failure to satisfactorily complete IDR Poor attendance record
Relations with public and colleagues	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promoting equality, diversity and human rights in working practices.• Contributing to your Fire & Rescue Service's objectives, recognising the needs of all relevant communities• Working as part of a team	Breaches in discipline
Willingness to learn and adjust to new circumstances	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Making best use of available technology• Demonstrate an openness to change	Breaches in discipline related to attitude

Annual Continual Professional Development Assessment

1. IPDR	The Line Manager must have an opportunity to formally review the performance of team members and confirm their ongoing and sustained commitment to continual professional development. Therefore, the applicant must have received an Individual Performance and Development Review during the year to be eligible for the continued CPD payment
Has the employee completed an IPDR during the period?	
2. IDR	All operational/Control staff are required to maintain an individual development record. These are reviewed periodically by line managers and heads of department. Where it has been necessary to routinely prompt an individual to maintain this record it will be unlikely that they have demonstrated CPD
Has the employee completed the IDR consistency and with due diligence?	
3. Training courses	Failure to attend routine training courses or courses specifically related to the role without exceptional circumstances is likely to suggest a failure to maintain CPD.
Has the employee attended all relevant courses nominated?	
4. Attendance	The brigade order on sickness absence management sets out the process for supporting staff with potential ill health issues but also contains the formal steps necessary to deal with continued poor attendance. Where an individual's attendance is cause for serious concern it is unlikely that they will be able to demonstrate CPD. Therefore an employee who is subject to a formal interview will be deemed not to have met the criteria for eligibility. Employees who are absent due to long term sickness for a period exceeding six months in any rolling twelve month period (unless exceptional circumstances i.e. on-duty injury) will also fail to meet the criteria.
Has the employee been subject to the formal steps described in the guidance or been absent from work for more than six months?	

5. Fitness assessment	Failure to attend an annual fitness assessment or allowing levels of fitness to deteriorate so significantly (without other contributory medical reasons) that the individual must be taken off operational duties means the individual is unlikely to meet the criteria for CPD
Has the individual successfully completed a fitness assessment within the last 12 months?	
6. Breaches in discipline	The discipline process aims to change poor performance or behaviour and an individual's involvement in discipline will not necessarily remove their eligibility for CPD. However, an award of written warning or greater or a number of lesser awards (including informal action) which relates to conflict with the values of the organisation or is contrary to behaviour commensurate with equality and diversity and working as part of a team is unlikely to support CPD.
Has the employee been subject to disciplinary measures such as those described above?	

Important note for Line Mangers	If you have concerns that behaviour covered in sections 1 to 5 above is likely to affect your staff's ability to demonstrate CPD and therefore qualify for payment you should endeavour to bring this to their attention in good time and provide opportunity for them to rectify the issue. Matters of behaviour likely to require discipline must always be raised with the individual at the earliest opportunity.
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Line Manager (Assessor)

Having considered the employee's performance in respect of the areas above I consider the application for CPD is valid:

YES/NO

Name (print)

.....Signed.....Date.....

Section Head (Verifier)

Name (print)

.....Signed.....Date.....

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