

Personal Development Plan – guidance

The GOC personal development plan consists of two elements:

- The personal development plan
- Scope of practice.

At the start of the cycle, you are required to complete a personal development plan (PDP) in your MyCPD account and answer scope of practice questions.

The purpose of the personal development plan is for you to set your own agenda for CPD, and help you plan your CPD so that it meaningfully reflects both your scope of practice and your aspirations for learning and professional development. It will also be used in the mandatory reflective exercise which you will complete within the last six months of the CPD cycle.

You should review and update both your PDP and your scope of practice questions regularly throughout the cycle.

To assist you with completion of your PDP, your answer to the final question of your reflective exercise from last cycle will be shown at the top of the 'create a learning outcome' page.

Scope of practice

To help you understand all aspects of your current professional practice, you will need to answer your scope of practice questions. These answers will help you to think more widely about your professional role and aspirations when constructing your personal development plan, and to consider what learning outcomes you need to achieve. The GOC PDP online form asks for the following information:

- Which settings do you spend most of your time in
- Which enhanced areas of practice you undertake, where applicable
- Professional interests or opportunities you wish to pursue
- What may be different in your work in three years' time

Personal Development Plan

Your personal development plan helps you to consider your intended learning outcomes over the CPD cycle. You can enter both clinical and non-clinical outcomes. The GOC PDP online form helps you to contemplate many areas. These are shown below with a brief explanation.

- Learning outcome - What is the learning outcome to be achieved?
- Date for completion - What is your target date for completion and review?
- How does this relate to my scope of practice? - How does this support my knowledge and skills for my current or aspirational scope of practice?
- How will I achieve this? - What CPD activities will I complete to achieve the learning outcome?
- Why is this learning outcome important? - What specifics led you to identify that this learning outcome is necessary?
- How will I know when this has been achieved? - How will you measure achievement?
- How has this impacted my practice? - What do I do differently now?

Learning Outcomes

As part of your Personal Development Plan, you must initially create at least one learning outcome. You may find it beneficial to create more to help structure your CPD activities throughout the cycle.

- The learning outcomes you wish to achieve
- A plan detailing how you will achieve your intended learning outcomes through provider-led or self-directed CPD
- A time frame for completion of each learning outcome you have identified

Learning Outcome entry guidelines

- To publish a learning outcome, all fields must be completed
- You cannot archive a learning outcome if there is only one created in your PDP, you must create a new one first
- Once you have published your learning outcomes they cannot be edited, but they can be archived
- Published learning outcomes can be archived but cannot be deleted
- Draft (saved but not published) learning outcomes can be deleted
- CPD can be added to published learning outcomes
- Learning outcomes must have different titles to existing published learning outcomes.

Once you have uploaded CPD you can add your chosen CPD to your learning outcome by clicking the box 'Add CPD to learning outcome'.

You can navigate to link your CPD to your learning outcome with your recorded CPD by selecting the published learning outcome drop down box (archived learning outcomes will be greyed out) then click the box 'assign to learning outcome'.

You can view your CPD from the learning outcome section or delete the link to the CPD from the learning outcome.

Once you have started your PDP you will be able to download this as a PDF for your own personal reference.

You will find inclusion of your PDP requirement within your dashboard which will show you if you have successfully published your PDP.

Helpful guidance for your personal development plan

There are three stages to undertake when creating your PDP: [Analyse](#), [Identify](#), and [Plan](#).

1. [Analyse](#)

This stage analyses where you are currently in your professional role and career, and what your development needs are.

Think about your strengths and weaknesses – are there any gaps in your knowledge? To help you fully analyse your areas for development you could use a previous PDP, create a SWOT analysis to consider your strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities, or discuss your development needs with your colleagues or line manager. A SWOT analysis grid is provided in the appendix.

2. [Identify](#)

Once you have analysed your development needs, you need to identify what learning outcomes you wish to achieve, why these are important to your development and how they relate to your scope of practice. Applying **SMART** objectives will ensure your learning outcomes are focused.

Specific – The learning outcome should be specific. If the outcome is too broad, the outcome is often unfocused and can lead to poor results.

For example, a poor, non-specific learning goal would be “to learn more about spectacle lenses”. A more specific learning outcome would be “to learn about advances in technology used in the latest generation of varifocal spectacle lens design and the resultant optical benefits for the wearer”.

Measurable – A clearly defined learning outcome allows you to measure the progress you have made and if the outcome has been achieved.

Achievable – Is the learning outcome attainable and achievable? Would it be more achievable if it were broken into smaller outcomes? Do you have the resources available – time, budget, tools, or support?

Relatable – Does the learning outcome relate to your scope of practice and development needs? Why is it important to you, your role, or your patients?

Time-bound – Can you set a timeframe to complete the learning outcome? A clear timeframe helps you to prioritise your learning and recognise when learning outcomes are still to be met.

You may identify and set as many learning outcomes as you wish. We suggest you should aim for a minimum of 4 or 5 learning outcomes to be achieved in the cycle.

Once you have identified your learning outcomes, you can now link these in your personal development plan considering “How does this relate to my scope of practice?” and “Why is this learning outcome important?”.

3. Plan

The final stage is to consider how and when you will achieve your learning outcomes. People learn in different ways, and it is important that you choose a method of learning or professional development that suits your development needs and preferred learning style. Think about what CPD or learning you have undertaken in the past – what method of worked best for you? Is the learning outcome best achieved through provider-led or self-directed CPD, through hands-on or theory-based learning? You may need more than one learning method to achieve some learning outcomes.

Evaluating learning outcome impact

The last column of the PDP should be completed when the specific learning outcome has been achieved. It requires you to reflect on how completing the CPD and achieving the learning outcome has impacted the way that you practice. You may find it useful to look at the reflection statement you have completed for the CPD activities related to this learning outcome or create a reflection statement for this if you have not already done so. The following questions may also aid your evaluation:

- What do you do differently as a direct result of achieving the learning outcome?
- Has this learning outcome had an impact on the actions and learning of others?
- How has the learning outcome benefitted your patients, processes, or practice?

Any information you upload to MyCPD may be viewed by the GOC if you are selected for registrant review, but it will not be used in any fitness to practice proceedings.

Appendix

Example SWOT analysis grid

Strengths	Weaknesses
<i>What am I good at?</i>	<i>What do I find difficult?</i>

Opportunities	Threats
<i>What resources and opportunities are available?</i>	<i>What barriers might I experience?</i>