



Mining and Metallurgical Society of America

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MMSA Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Program FAQs

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Who is required to report CPD hours to MMSA?

Those MMSA Members who have received QP status must participate in a CPD program. The MMSA CPD LogV9, while recommended, is not mandatory for use by our QPs. If a QP prefers to use a form from another professional entity such as the AIPG, AusIMM, etc., that is acceptable as long as it addresses ethics, continuing education, and professional practice and development. Other Regular MMSA Members may voluntarily participate. [Return to Contents.](#)

What are CPD Hours?

CPD hours should focus on learning and activities in areas relevant to a professional’s technical and management disciplines that are *over and above* normal work-related activities. This covers a very broad range of activities and the CPD main activity areas and the **CPD look up table.xlsx** file on the MMSA website can help identify and categorize CPD activities. Whether a particular activity should qualify as CPD is left up to the individual QP’s judgement although when your CPD log is assessed for compliance, questions can be asked and a particular activity might be disallowed.

CPD hours are contact hours recorded in one of several CPD main activity areas. The CPD main activity areas and their 2-letter codes used in MMSA’s CPD LogV9 are:

- FE: Formal education** (tested and untested) classes lasting ≥ 4 hours. Report the hours spent in classes and labs as well as hours spent in study and research.
- SC: Short Courses and webinars** (external and internal) as a participant; variable lengths and can be several days. The courses can be technical or courses with a mining or related theme run by commercial organizations, and do not have to be taken for credit. Report the hours spent in the short courses and webinars.
- CM: Conferences & Meetings:** technical conferences and professional society meetings and field trips report the hours spent in conferences, meetings, and field trips. Participation

in the organizing committee for a meeting, conference, or field trip could be logged as CM or SI.

CK: Contributing to knowledge including preparing or updating publications, presentations (and peer review thereof), and technical courses or lectures; reading and research done in connection with preparing or updating a publication, presentation, technical course, etc. CK can include hours spent creating and leading field trips.

SE: Skill Enhancement or Maintenance can include courses or meetings needed to meet or maintain required regulatory safety, certification, operations, and other programs. For example, the courses could include company, MSHA, or EPA training; first aid courses, computer software training, etc.

PR: Private Reading: self-directed private reading professional journals, books, and similar publications. You may also report reading to support ancillary professional skills like computing skills.

SI: Service to Industry including hours spent on society committee meetings or work, public outreach activities, etc.

OT: Other types of CPD including mentoring, foreign language study, etc.; describe what was done.

Experience has shown that a particular activity could be counted in two or more of the above CPD activities. Pick a category; the summary of the CPD activity should let reviewers/auditors know what you were doing. As the revised Geological Society of London CPD program notes, “Because an attempt is being made to classify and group a wide range of diverse things [CPD activities], it is necessarily an artificial and imperfect grouping; there are other equally valid ways of ‘slicing the cake’.” A fuller discussion of this topic is contained in the *MMSA CPD Program Introduction V5 8-19.docx* file on the MMSA website.

Professional ethics CPD activities can be part of any of the main CPD activity areas. See the “How do I acquire Professional Ethics hours?” and “How do I report Professional Ethics hours?” FAQ topics. [Return to Contents.](#)

How do I determine which CPD main activity area code to use? The CPD look-up table.xlsx

“Because an attempt is being made to classify and group a wide range of diverse CPD activities, it is necessarily an artificial and imperfect grouping; there are other equally valid ways of ‘slicing the cake’.” The names of the main CPD activities are less important than a log of CPD activities that shows participation in variety of activities and in more than one main area. Experience shows that a particular activity could be counted in two or more of the CPD main activity areas. For example, if you prepare and present a webinar, the hours spent in preparation and presentation of the webinar could be logged under SC, short courses and webinars, or CK, contributing to knowledge. As

Some professional organizations have formal mentoring programs and include mentoring as a main CPD activity, others, including MMSA, do not. Mentoring activity, whether formal or informal counts as professional development. Geological Society of London’s CPD Mind Map, 2017.

another example, time spent as part of the committee planning and organizing a technical conference or meeting could be logged as CM, technical conferences, etc.; or as IE, industry engagement; or as CK, contributing to knowledge. Pick a category. The summary of the CPD activity should let reviewers/auditors know what you were doing. Assigning all CPD activities the same weighting factor, something more CPD programs are moving towards, eliminates the need to make arbitrary choices. More important than assignment to a particular CPD main activity area is the description of what you were doing in the Summary of CPD Activity column of the CPD log. In order to help both identify the wide range of potential CPD activities and select an appropriate CPD main activity, the ***CPD look-up table.xlsx*** file, which is periodically updated, is posted on the MMSA CPD website. [Return to Contents.](#)

How many CPD Hours do I need? What if I have QP status in two expertise areas?

Those MMSA members wishing to maintain their **QP** or **CP** status must participate in MMSA's CPD program with the goal of logging a rolling average of 150 CPD hours over a 3-year period including a minimum of 3 professional ethics hours as this amount of CPD may become a requirement for QP or CP status. If you have been endorsed for QP status in two or more expertise areas, you will need to log a minimum of a rolling average of 150 CPD hours over a 3-year period in each expertise area. The requirement for a minimum of 3 professional ethics hours over 3 years is not affected by having QP status in multiple expertise areas.

A particular CPD activity can contribute to more than one QP area. For example, an MMSA QP who works on the SME Resources and Reserves Committee that reviews and periodically updates *The SME Guide for Reporting Exploration Information, Mineral Resources, and Mineral Reserves* could report the time in two QP areas, for example geology and ore reserves or mining and ore reserves because of the coverage of the *SME Guide*. The time spent preparing and giving a talk on the geology and ore reserves of a particular deposit would also count towards both geology and ore reserves QP time. Attending a national mining industry meeting can also result time that can be logged in 2 or more QP areas.

MMSA's CPD system also recognizes that many professionals accumulate more than the minimum required CPD hours each year. If you are diligent in reporting your CPD hours, you may find that you accumulate 100 to 200+ CPD hours each year. [Return to Contents.](#)

Converting Semester/Quarter/CEU hours to CPD hours

The academic world focuses on semester or quarter credit hours and an assumed equivalent, Continuing Education Units (CEUs), because these measures focus on the number of class hours per week and the length of an academic term. Most organization's CPD programs, including MMSA's, count the far more easily identified actual contact hours. Most CPD activities occur outside the academic realm: committee meetings, time spend reading professional journals, etc. Academic credit courses are easily converted to contact hours. For example, a 3-semester hour course meets over 13 weeks, so the semester hour to contact hour conversion is:

$$3 \text{ semester hours} \times 13 \text{ weeks} = 39 \text{ contact hours} = 39 \text{ CPD hours}$$

Labs and field trips may add to this total.

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Keeping track of CPD activity hours

The experience of other professional organizations is that the most difficult part of CPD reporting is keeping a log of one's CPD activities. While the required number of CPD hours seems large, it isn't when the professional geoscientist keeps track of the relevant hours. Keeping track of CPD hours is similar to keeping and turning in time sheets, a necessary part of getting paid (including preparing client bills). Keeping track of your CPD hours is simplified by keeping track of your CPD activities on your personal computer rather than having to log on the MMSA website.

Keeping an easy and simple log of the CPD activity provides the data needed to fill out any CPD reporting log. Use a OneNote™ or Evernote™³ page with a table format that is easily ported to Excel or other worksheet at year's end for classifying and summarizing information can be used. The data can consist of the following: the date of the activity, the hours spent on the activity, a description of the activity, and the sponsoring organization's name, if relevant. The following list is an actual log for January 2018. The Codes are described in the "What are CPD Hours?" FAQ.

ethics	Code	date	hours	CPD Activity Description
	SI	1/2/18	1	MMSA QP Committee conf call review applicant for QP designation
1	CK	1/5/18	1.5	Ethics paper in AusIMM Bull draft for review
1	SI	1/8/18	1	Review docs for AusIMM Ethics Comm meeting
	CM	1/8/18	1	Denver Mining Club Napoleon coins & 19th century values
1	SI	1/8/18	1.25	AusIMM Ethics Committee conf call
	SI	1/8/18	2	2018 AIPG Annual meeting calls, etc. Reed, Carpenter, Duran
	SI	1/9/18	1	AIPG Colo Section ExCom
1	SI	1/10/18	1	AusIMM Ethics Committee, comments on draft letters
1	SC	1/10/18	0.5	AIPG-AGI GOLI course on ethics codes development
1	CK	1/11/18	1	AusIMM Ethics code versions emails with Helen Milovanovic
1	SC	1/11/18	2	AIPG-AGI webinar prep development of geoscience ethics codes parts 1 & 2
1	SC	1/15/18	3	AIPG-AGI webinar prep development of geoscience ethics codes
	CM	1/15/18	1	DMC subarctic diamond mining

This example log records 17.25 hours of CPD activity for the first half of January alone. The left-hand "Ethics" column contains a "1" used as a flag for time devoted to professional ethics, which totaled 11.25 hours during this period.

³ OneNote™ is part of Microsoft Office™ and is a handy program for electronically capturing all sorts of information and synchronizing it between your computers and smart phones and tablets. Evernote™ is a similar program that is free at the basic level. Both programs are easy to use.

The MMSA's CPD LogV9.xlsx workbook and "Keeping Track of Your CPD Activities" headings in the *MMSA CPD program introduction V5 8-19.docx* file contain instructions on filling out *MMSA's CPD log V9.xlsx*. [Return to Contents.](#)

Complete one CPD worksheet per year

MMSA's CPD Log V9.xlsx is set up to record the CPD activities of a single year on a single worksheet. Multiple worksheets (tabs at the bottom of the workbook) allow the reporting of multiple years of CPD activity. The Blank worksheet can be copied and pasted into a new worksheet tab for each new year. Note that each year has 480 rows for reporting CPD activities each year. When reporting for a year is completed, the remaining blank rows can be deleted, particularly if you are going to print your CPD on paper or PDF. [Return to Contents.](#)

Do I need to record CPD in all main CPD activity areas?

No. One need not record CPD activity in all 8 CPD main activity areas each year or even over the 3-year rolling average period. However, it is desirable to record CPD hours in several (3+) main CPD activity areas each year. The fact that a specific CPD activity can be logged in more than one CPD main activity area is part of the reason for this flexibility. The summary of each CPD activity provides a record of the variety of activities engaged in and is one of the items that CPD auditors will first check. [Return to Contents.](#)

If all CPD activities are weighted the same, why have main CPD activity areas?

There are three reasons for having main CPD activity areas. First, is that CPD programs from a variety of organizations have included main activity areas and want to see them when reviewing an MMSA CPD log. Second, the main CPD activity areas are a means of broadly categorizing CPD activities and help one in thinking about the variety of activities that qualify. The CPD Look Up Table worksheet helps identify CPD activities in far more detail. Third, when a CPD log is audited, the distribution of the number of activities and the percentage of time shown in the CPD summary at the top of each year's log is the first thing an auditor will look at. Participation in a variety of main CPD activities is desirable. While the distribution of activities and time will vary from year to year and how one logs a particular activity, the CPD summary provides a quick snapshot of what was logged and can help focus the more detailed review of an audited CPD log. [Return to Contents.](#)

Recording CPD activity dates

Different CPD activities occur over different time periods. For activities that occur over a full year, enter only the year in the date column, *e.g.* 2017. For activities lasting several months, enter the months and year, *e.g.* May-Aug 2017 and for activities lasting several days, enter the date range, *e.g.* 02/05-08/17. [Return to Contents.](#)

Do I need to obtain certificates of attendance for my CPD hours?

Some CPD programs ask participants to obtain and submit certificates of attendance/participation to document their attendance/participation in professional meetings, short courses, webinars, etc. MMSA does not require such documentation. We believe in the basic honesty of our members.

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How do I acquire Professional Ethics hours?

Professional ethics hours can be acquired in a variety of ways. Being aware of the ethical aspects of talks, articles, discussions, etc. is the key to identifying activities that will count as professional ethics. Professional ethics includes a wide range of topics. For example, studying the details of a mineral resource and mineral reserve reporting code with which one must comply, or some aspect thereof, can count. Papers on social licensing issues are a potential example. The following list covers some the activities that may count:

- Reviewing professional ethics or conduct codes from various organizations, particularly as these are updated. Compare and contrast the codes. Does a newly revised code contain (a) provision(s) that MMSA's Ethical Guidelines should consider adding?
- Meeting programs—professional organization meetings are increasingly offering talks, short courses, webinars, etc. addressing professional ethics.
- The columns published in professional magazines/journals, such as the President's column, sometimes address professional ethics issues. Reading articles or book on ethical issues in the general media can count. The "Professional Ethics & Practices" column in *The Professional Geologist* is the most obvious example.
- Ethical issues usually do not involve specific technical details—look outside the mining world.

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How do I report Professional Ethics hours?

Professional ethics hours can be obtained in a variety of ways that will easily fit within one of the CPD reporting activities. Professional ethics hours should be recorded in the appropriate activity. However, increasing numbers of professional organizations are requiring the reporting of some minimum number of ethics hours. The MMSA CPD Log contains an "Ethics" column and a "1" should be entered in this column for each activity that qualifies as professional ethics. The "Ethics hrs" summary cell automatically sums all the hours that have been flagged with a "1" in the "Ethics" column. [Return to Contents.](#)

What happens if I don't record enough CPD hours?

MMSA will not suspend a QP designation without reading what the QP reports in an explanation of a CPD Activity Log. There are many good reasons why QPs might not log enough hours in a particular period, for example, parental leave, extended illness or injury, or a break in employment. Your CPD activity can help you keep up with your profession through such periods. MMSA is not

looking to withdraw QP recognition from those who are clearly trying to comply with MMSA's CPD program. However, repeated and flagrant failure to adequately report CPD information can result in the termination of QP status. [Return to Contents.](#)

I spend most of my time managing staff—how can I accumulate CPD that is recognized by MMSA?

As many of us progress in our profession we spend increasing amounts of time managing staff. MMSA recognizes the immense value that senior professionals bring to management roles in organizations, and it is entirely appropriate to enter CPD activities that reflect the acquisition of management skills and experience. However, even though most of one's time may be in management, keeping up with developments within the mining industry is also needed. Reading professional journals, etc. and keeping current with refresher courses in health and safety are requirements for effective managers. [Return to Contents.](#)

I am recording CPD using another professional organization's CPD system or my employer's CPD program; do I also need to record on MMSA's CPD reporting log?

If you are recording on an alternative CPD reporting system and do not wish to re-enter CPD data using the MMSA CPD log, you can let MMSA's CPD Committee know what CPD reporting system you are using when your CPD reporting log is requested. Because most CPD programs recognize the same basic types of CPD activities, if another organization's reporting requirements allow ready confirmation that you have met MMSA's CPD reporting requirements, you may submit that other organization's reporting log. However, in MMSA's biased opinion, MMSA's CPD LogV9 is the most easily completed and comprehensive CPD log when compared to other CPD programs. [Return to Contents.](#)

I work in industry; how can I contribute to knowledge?

Writing papers for publication is not your primary work product and hence you may only occasionally be involved in this area of CPD when you publish a paper/report or give a presentation at a technical meeting or conference. Your contribution to knowledge may more commonly be 'in house' where you transfer knowledge to your colleagues. Such time can be reported as a contribution to knowledge. [Return to Contents.](#)

I work in academia; can I record all my teaching time as 'contributing to knowledge'?

Contributing to knowledge is the primary function of academic work; hence most teaching time can be classed as your normal professional activity and is not contributing to knowledge in the sense of developing and presenting new material to the profession. Time spent producing published papers or giving papers at professional conferences or lecture tours at various universities or professional organizations would be classed as contributing to knowledge. It is important that a balanced

portfolio of activity is recorded with the learning associated with research activity likely to fall into the category of CPD in Professional Practice. Also see “[What about teaching?](#)”. [Return to Contents.](#)

What about teaching?

If you teach, regardless of level, you will increasingly do so within the framework of recognized skills development. University staff can record activities associated specific learning and achievements in teaching as CPD. Reading and learning in order to develop courses fits under Informal learning. Development of new courses counts as CPD. Presentations and attendance at conferences are CPD. [Return to Contents.](#)

I audited a university course that should qualify for CPD credit. How should I report the time spent on this course?

While those auditing courses are not tested, this is a formal course and can be reported under activity FE, Formal Education. Alternatively, reporting attendance at an audited course as activity SC, the untested category, will result in the same amount of CPD credit. Report your CPD activity in the activity category that makes most sense to you. [Return to Contents.](#)

I am recording CPD hours for an uncommon activity that I believe constitute valid CPD. How do I report and receive credit for this activity?

The OT, Other main CPD activity category is available to such uncommon PD activities. Then in the cell in which you report the uncommon activity provide enough description and information about the activity so that an MMSA CPD Auditor can understand what your activity is and why it should be allowed. You may also wish to contact MMSA’s CPD Audit Committee as soon as you contemplate reporting this unusual activity to determine whether this activity will be accepted. Note, mentoring or being mentored along with foreign language study are specific examples of activities that can be reported in the OT category. [Return to Contents.](#)

Part of my work involves preparing a Web page for a professional organization that involves internet research, fact checking, editing, etc. How should these activities be recorded for CPD purposes?

One can view such activities as either professional practice (of an administrative variety) or contributing to knowledge. If these activities are a routine part of one’s professional time, it may be more appropriate to log these activities as professional practice. This collection and summarization of technical information is acceptable as CPD hours if it is indeed contributing new knowledge to both the compiler of this information as well as the reader of such information. In addition, it could be argued that reviewing technical information on the Internet is like reading an industry magazine or journal. Those reviewing hours could be reported as private reading. The individual geoscientist

will be expected to use his/her professional judgement in determining how to record these activities and be prepared to justify his/her decision should a CPD Auditor ask about the activity.

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How much time can I report for putting a professional/technical paper or presentation together?

Putting together a professional/technical paper or presentation involves researching the topic, gathering and assembling the data and information you wish to present, then writing the paper or preparing the PowerPoint™ or other type of presentation. This time plus the time spent actually presenting a talk can also be counted as CPD hours. [Return to Contents.](#)

Where do public outreach activities fall?

In the current MMSA CPD reporting system these activities could be logged under either Contributing to Knowledge (activity CK) or Service to Industry (activity SI). The exact nature of the work being done will assist in determining the appropriate category but the decision is your choice. Public outreach and presentations made to a general public audiences are similar sorts of activity. Washington Fly-ins and similar activities should be reported as Service to Industry (activity SI). [Return to Contents.](#)

Why is my birth month needed?

Your birth month (cell E4) is requested so that if the number of CPD program participants becomes large, it may be necessary to require CPD log reporting on your birth month-year basis rather than on a calendar-year basis. [Return to Contents.](#)

Questions and Comments about MMSA's CPD Program

David Abbott is the principal author of MMSA's CPD Program. He will be happy to answer your questions about the program. If you have suggestions for program improvements, he'd like to receive those as well. Contact him at dimageo@msn.com. [Return to Contents.](#)

These FAQs will be updated periodically. See the Web site www.MMSA.org/cpd for the latest version.