



BDIA Code of Practice for Dental CPD

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The BDIA Code of Practice for Dental CPD has been developed to provide assurance to users of dental Continuing Professional Development that a particular provider is committed to using quality controls in line with the legal requirements set out by the General Dental Council.

General Dental Council requirements

The GDC stipulates that, in order for verifiable CPD (vCPD) to be included by a registrant on their CPD Record, there must be documentary evidence that they have undertaken the activity and that it has:

- concise aims and objectives;
- anticipated learning outcomes; and
- quality controls.

The GDC does not undertake any quality assurance activities itself, nor does the law define what 'quality controls' should be in place. Instead, the onus remains with the registrant to be proactive in ensuring that the vCPD they undertake is subject to adequate quality controls.

If requested by the GDC, a registrant must be able to provide their CPD Record complete with the documentary evidence detailed above. By undertaking vCPD with a provider that has signed up to the BDIA Code of Practice for Dental CPD, a registrant can be confident that this documentary evidence will be provided, and that an activity is underpinned by certain quality controls as set out in the Code.

About the Code

Implementation of the Code is overseen by the British Dental Industry Association (BDIA). The BDIA represents and supports manufacturers and suppliers of dental products, services and technologies, to the benefit of members, the dental profession and the public.

The Code sets out what a user can expect from a vCPD activity offered by a subscribing provider. This includes what information will be provided on the CPD certificate, what quality controls are in place before, during and after the activity and how any issues arising with the activity can be raised.

The Code has been designed to be applicable to all formats of vCPD, including (but not limited to) seminars, workshops, publications, online activities, exhibitions, conferences, training and workplace sessions. The Code is applicable to all types of vCPD, whether paid for or free of charge.

The measures set out in this document are not themselves legal requirements; they represent identified best practices intended to satisfy the legal requirements for vCPD.

Whilst these measures have been designed to reassure users of dental vCPD that the provider's activities meet the GDC's requirements for vCPD, it is the registrant's responsibility to ensure that any CPD they undertake to maintain their professional registration meets the GDC's requirements.



1 Using the Code

- 1.1 In accordance with the GDC's legal requirements, verifiable CPD (vCPD) activities must have quality controls in place in order for registrants to include them on their records. In the absence of a description of specific quality controls required, providers commit to following the requirements of the Code.
- 1.2 Any Full, Provisional, Affiliated or Group member of the British Dental Industry Association (BDIA) that offers CPD activities, whether doing so constitutes its main business activity or is conducted alongside other activities, is eligible to sign up to the Code on a voluntary basis. Other companies may also sign up to the Code, but will not be eligible to use BDIA logos or branding.
- 1.3 Signatories of the Code must provide access to the Code for current and prospective users of vCPD activities. This provision should take the form of one or more of the following:
 - (a) Publishing a copy of the Code in a publicly accessible location on the provider's website
 - (b) Publishing a link to the BDIA webpage containing the Code on the provider's website
 - (c) Providing a copy of the Code, or a link to the BDIA webpage containing the Code, with vCPD activity invitations or marketing material.
- 1.4 Signatories of the Code may use the BDIA Code of Practice for Dental CPD logo on activity and promotional materials so long as they remain Full, Provisional, Affiliated or Group members of the BDIA.
- 1.5 The Code is not proactively enforced by the BDIA; the Association does not routinely audit signatories for compliance with the Code. However, in the event of complaints relating to the vCPD activities of a signatory being received by the BDIA (*see Section 9 Enforcement and Handling of Complaints*) the Association will take steps to address any issues with that provider. Failure to comply with the requirements of the Code may result the company's status as a signatory being terminated.
- 1.6 In order to sign up to the Code, prospective signatories will be supplied with an application form and documentation outlining their commitments under the Code. Upon receipt of a satisfactorily completed application, the BDIA will register the company as an official signatory and issue a certificate and any supporting materials.
- 1.7 The Code remains subject to revision by the BDIA at any time. In the event of any changes, signatories will be notified and a revised version of the Code issued. Signatories will be required to sign an updated declaration confirming that they agree to the revisions.

2 Supply of Documentary Evidence

- 2.1 All vCPD submitted by a GDC registrant must, by law, be accompanied by documentary evidence. This consists of evidence that the registrant has undertaken the activity and that it has concise educational aims and objectives, clear anticipated outcomes and quality controls.
- 2.2 When fulfilling the GDC's requirement for the supply of this documentary evidence, providers should, wherever practicable, issue the necessary information in the form of CPD certificates.
- 2.3 Where a provider chooses not to supply this documentary evidence in the form of a certificate, the format used must nonetheless meet all of the requirements laid out in sections 2.3 and 2.4 below.

2.3 Issue of Certificates

- 2.3.1 The delivery method for CPD certificates may be determined by the provider, provided that the certificates comply with section 2.4. For example, certificates may be posted or emailed directly to each participant by the provider or a system may be put in place whereby participants can access their certificates themselves.
- 2.3.2 CPD certificates should be made available to participants as soon as possible after the activity has finished, and in any case within three months.
- 2.3.3 CPD certificates should only be provided to a user in cases where their attendance or participation has been confirmed in accordance with paragraph 5.2.
- 2.3.4 Copies of CPD certificates, and all associated documentary evidence, must be kept by the provider for a period of five years following the activity and made available to participants upon request.

2.4 Content of Certificates

The design of CPD certificates should be such that they are concise, unambiguous and easily understood. The specific design of the certificate shall be left up to the provider. However, the following should be included:

- (a) Name and GDC number of the participant
- (b) Date and title of the activity/activities undertaken
- (c) Duration of the activity/activities undertaken, excluding any breaks
- (d) Concise aims and objectives of the activity/activities undertaken
- (e) Anticipated learning outcomes of the activity/activities undertaken
- (f) Description of quality controls in place, if not including (h) and (i)

Additionally, certificates may include:

- (g) Point of contact within the provider organisation for any CPD queries/comments/feedback
- (h) BDIA Code of Practice for Dental CPD logo
- (i) URL of the provider or BDIA webpage containing the Code.

3 Advertising, Promotion and Description of Activities

- 3.1 Providers should ensure that all promotional presentations, including product claims and comparisons, are accurate, balanced, fair, objective and unambiguous. They should be justified by appropriate evidence where applicable. Statements should not mislead the intended audience. Advertisements should always be clearly recognisable as such.
- 3.2 The following information must be available to be viewed in advance by users and potential users of a vCPD activity, as well as being contained in any activity materials:
 - (a) Concise educational aims and objectives of the activity
 - (b) Anticipated learning outcomes of the activity
 - (c) Expected duration of the activity and any break periods
 - (d) Identification of the intended audience of the activity
 - (e) Person(s) responsible for delivering the activity and/or preparing activity material, including a short description of their relevant experience and qualifications
 - (f) Contact information for a named individual within the provider organisation with responsibility for the vCPD activity.

4 Design of CPD Activities

- 4.1 The primary purpose of all CPD activities should be education or training that can reasonably be expected to advance a person's professional development as a dentist or Dental Care Professional and not the promotion of commercial interests.
- 4.2 When delivering vCPD activities directly to learners, providers should give consideration to the appropriateness of the venue. vCPD activities should be conducted in clinical, laboratory, educational, conference, exhibition, or other appropriate settings, including providers' own premises or commercially available meeting facilities that are conducive to effective transmission of knowledge and any required 'hands-on' training. The training staff should have the appropriate expertise to conduct such training.
- 4.3 The individual(s) selected to deliver the vCPD activity and/or produce activity materials should be selected on the basis of their knowledge of the relevant subject area(s). This could be reflected in the form of relevant professional qualifications or appropriate professional experience.
- 4.4 When designing vCPD activities, providers should give consideration to feedback received in relation to past activities, as outlined in section 6.
- 4.5 When designing online or publication-based vCPD, the activity should be robustly tested to determine a reasonable length of time required to complete it. The resulting time should be the one used in paragraph 3.2 (c).
- 4.6 All activity material prepared by a third party or individual(s) selected to deliver the activity must be reviewed for suitability by the provider.
- 4.7 The content of vCPD activities should be evidence-based and refer to supporting materials where relevant. Where practicable, supporting materials should be made available to users upon request.

5 Delivery of CPD Activities

- 5.1 The educational aims and objectives of the vCPD activity should be made available to participants before delivery as well as copies being distributed on the day where applicable, or displayed prominently in the case of online or publication-based vCPD. It will remain the participant's responsibility to ensure that the stated educational aims and objectives are relevant to their professional practice or intended practice.
- 5.2 When delivering a vCPD activity, the provider must ensure that there is a system in place to confirm participation. Participation information must be kept by the provider for a period of five years after the activity has taken place.
- 5.3 Where such information has not been provided in advance of the activity, the provider should collect the contact information and GDC number of each participant.
- 5.4 The duration of vCPD activities delivered directly to learners must be recorded.

6 Feedback

- 6.1 Providers must have in place means by which users and prospective users of a vCPD activity can provide anonymised feedback before, during and after the activity. Multiple methods of providing feedback should be made available wherever possible.
- 6.2 All users and prospective users of a provider's vCPD activity should be made aware of the opportunity to provide feedback and how to do so, through the use of promotional and activity materials, staff instruction during the activity or post-activity communications.
- 6.3 Where feedback is provided with a name and contact information, it should be acknowledged within a reasonable period of time.
- 6.4 Providers should have in place a system by which feedback is reviewed and taken into consideration in relation to the design and delivery of vCPD activities.
- 6.5 All feedback must be kept by the provider for a period of five years after the completion of the activity to which it relates.
- 6.6 Where practicable, providers should give consideration to following up vCPD activities with an assessment of the participant's knowledge in relation to the subject matter covered. This could take place immediately after the activity or at a later date, but effort should be made to conduct such assessments at the earliest opportunity. Information gathered during this process should be anonymised and should be used as part of the review process detailed in section 7.

7 Review of CPD Activities

- 7.1 All vCPD activities carried out should be subject to a post-delivery review process to consider their ongoing relevance, appropriateness, efficacy and quality.
- 7.2 As part of this process, user feedback, both from the activity being assessed and any other relevant activity, should be taken into account.
- 7.3 For each activity, the provider must maintain a record detailing changes made to the design of the activity and the reasons for these changes. These records should be kept for a period of five years after the activity has ceased to be offered.
- 7.4 Assessments of participants' knowledge (see paragraph 6.6) should, where available, be considered in order to gauge the effectiveness of a given vCPD activity. Where these assessments suggest that the

educational aims and objectives of the activity have not been achieved by a significant percentage of participants, the activity should be subject to additional review measures such as delivery oversight by an individual responsible for CPD delivery within the provider organisation.

8 Communication

- 8.1 Providers must designate an individual within their company with responsibility for handling communications relating to the provision of vCPD activities. Details of this individual must be supplied to the BDIA, and updated should these details subsequently change.
- 8.2 If documentary evidence relating to a vCPD activity is requested by the GDC or a registrant, this should be supplied within a period of one week.

9 Enforcement and Handling of Complaints

- 9.1 Providers must have in place a system for the handling of complaints relating to their provision of vCPD activities.
- 9.2 Complaints should be handled, in the first instance, by the provider itself in accordance with its own complaints procedure. The provider must maintain a register of complaints received and forward this document to the BDIA every six months.
- 9.3 Where an individual is not satisfied that their complaint has been handled appropriately, they may refer the issue to the BDIA. In such instances, the Association will take appropriate steps to address the issue with the provider and advise the individual of the outcome where practicable.
- 9.4 Where the BDIA is investigating complaints received in relation to a provider, it may conduct spot checks of that provider's vCPD activity by requesting documentary evidence relating to specific vCPD activities.
- 9.5 Where it transpires that a provider's vCPD activities have not been conducted in accordance with the Code, either as a result of complaints or through checks conducted by the BDIA, and where the relevant issues are not adequately addressed, that provider shall no longer be eligible to claim compliance with the Code or make use of its name or logo on future marketing, course materials or websites.
- 9.6 Where companies that have been disqualified from the Code can demonstrate that all relevant issues have been adequately addressed and that they will be able to meet all the Code's requirements, they will be eligible to re-sign.

10 Data Privacy

- 10.1 Providers should ensure that confidential or personal data obtained through the provision of vCPD activities is maintained and used in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

11 Compliance

- 11.1 Providers should take measures to ensure compliance with the principles of this Code by their employees, agents and representatives.

12 Additional Measures

- 12.1 Providers are free to utilise additional vCPD quality control measures as they see fit, so long as they do not contradict any of the requirements of the Code.



British Dental Industry Association

Mineral Lane, Chesham, Bucks, HP5 1NL

T: 01494 782873

E: admin@bdia.org.uk

W: www.bdia.org.uk

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