

A Registration System for Community Learning and Development (CLD) Practitioners in Scotland

Updated October 2016

1. Background

The CLD Standards Council for Scotland was formally established in 2009 by the Scottish Government to be the body responsible for the registration of community learning and development (CLD) practitioners, the approval of training courses and the continuing professional development of the sector workforce.

Specifically, in terms of registration, the Scottish Government has tasked the CLD Standards Council for Scotland to:

Consider and establish a registration system available to practitioners delivering and active in CLD practice.

To move this forward the Standards Council has: revised the competences for community learning and development; developed a code of ethics for community learning and development practitioners; developed a continuous professional development strategy and set in place processes for the approval of professional training in community learning and development.

This registration system builds on all of this work and there are references to these other aspects of Standards Council activity throughout this document.

2. What is Registration?

Registration means becoming a Member of the Community Learning and Development Standards Council for Scotland. It is an individual commitment to professional practice according to the values, principles, competences and code of ethics for community learning and development, and to continuing professional development.

All practitioners who are willing to commit to the requirements and can evidence that commitment in their practice will be eligible for Membership of the Community Learning and Development Standards Council for Scotland, either as an Associate Member or Member depending on qualifications and experience.

3. Definition of Community Learning and Development (CLD)

In 2004 the Scottish Executive defined community learning and development as quoted below:

"Community learning and development (CLD) is learning and social development work with individuals and groups in their communities using a range of formal and informal methods.

"A common defining feature is that programmes and activities are developed in dialogue with communities and participants [CLD's] main aim is to help individuals and communities tackle real issues in their lives through community action and community-based learning."

Working and Learning Together to Build Stronger Communities – The Scottish Executive, 2004

4. The purpose of CLD

In 2012 the Scottish Government consulted on and issued Strategic Guidance for Community Planning Partnerships on Community Learning and Development. This guidance describes the purpose and principles of community learning and development as follows:

"CLD should empower people, individually and collectively, **to make positive changes in their lives and their communities, through learning.**

The principles that underpin practice are:

- *empowerment* – increasing the ability of individuals and groups to influence matters affecting them and their communities;
- *participation* – supporting people to take part in decision making;
- *inclusion, equality of opportunity and anti-discrimination* – recognising some people need additional support to overcome the barriers they face;
- *self-determination* – supporting the right of people to make their own choices; and
- *partnership* – ensuring resources, varied skills and capabilities are used effectively

The purpose and principles are embodied in the competences and ethics for CLD practice as set out by the CLD Standards Council for Scotland."

Strategic Guidance for Community Planning Partnerships: Community Learning and Development, the Scottish Government, 2012.

The competences for community learning and development, the code of ethics, the approvals process for community learning and development professional training and the continuing professional development strategy "A Learning Culture for the Community Learning and Development Sector in Scotland" can be accessed on the Standards Council website:

<http://www.cldstandardscouncil.org.uk/Home>

5. CLD Practitioners

In a sector where we recognise that increasingly CLD practitioners work in diverse roles and settings Membership will be open to practitioners who deliver community learning and development outcomes through, for example:

- community development (building the capacity of communities to meet their own needs, engaging with and influencing decision makers);
- youth work, family learning and other early intervention work with children, young people and families;
- community based adult learning, including adult literacies and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL);
- volunteer development;
- learning for vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in the community, for example, people with disabilities, care leavers or offenders;
- learning support and guidance in the community

Practitioners will include for example:

- people in public sector or voluntary sector or community based organisations,
- people working in community health, housing, arts or social enterprise situations where there is a commitment to working according to community learning and development practices,
- part time and sessional staff and volunteers who are practicing according to the requirements for registration

6. The requirements for registration

All practitioners seeking to register as Members of the Standards Council must formally commit to the following principles:

- ✓ Commitment to the values underpinning CLD
- ✓ Commitment to the Code of Ethics for CLD
- ✓ Commitment to ongoing CPD
- ✓ Commitment to practise using the CLD competences

In particular community learning and development practitioners **will**:

- Communicate with constituents, other professionals and partner agencies in an open, honest, accurate and straightforward manner
- Challenge any unlawful or unjustifiable discrimination by constituents, other community learning and development practitioners and colleagues in other professions

Community learning and development practitioners **will not**:

- Behave in such a way, inside or outside of work, that will call in to question the individual's suitability to work in community learning and development
- Behave in such a way, inside or outside of work, that will bring the profession of community learning and development in to disrepute

While the application to register will require evidence of that commitment there will be a presumption of continuing commitment unless otherwise demonstrated.

7. Registration categories

There are two categories as follows:

Registered Associate Member of the CLD Standards Council for Scotland

Associate Membership is available to full-time, part-time and voluntary practitioners in community learning and development who commit to the principles as stated in the requirements for registration. For example it may be appropriate for people who:

- have completed an approved professional qualification but still have to gain the practice time component for Member status as detailed below
- are students,
- hold qualifications below degree level
- volunteers or practitioners who work according to community learning and development principles and practices, and have yet to embark on accredited CLD training
- have qualifications in other disciplines
- have no formal qualifications

Registered Member of the CLD Standards Council for Scotland

The standard entry requirements are a Standards Council approved degree level qualification plus two years verified practice in a community learning and development setting, working to the values and principles, competences, ethics and the commitment to CPD as described in section 11 of this document.

This category will include practitioners who meet the qualification and practice requirements and will include for example people who:

- Are employed by voluntary or public sector organisations
- Are volunteering in a community learning and development context
- Are supporting or managing staff or volunteers in voluntary or public sector organisations
- Are operating at a strategic level within voluntary or public sector organisations
- Are on management boards of voluntary sector organisations
- Are at a senior management level within voluntary or public sector organisations that are delivering community learning and development services
- Are delivering professional level CLD training

7. Registration categories (cont.)

For the purposes of Membership professional practice is defined as:

- Adherence to the requirements for registration including the commitment to a recommended minimum of 35 hours/ year CPD
- Full time equivalent community learning and development practice equating to 2 years X 40 weeks/year X 35hours/week = 2,800 hours. In normal circumstances we would expect this to be the registrant's most recent practice or to have been achieved within the five year period prior to registration. Where this is not the case then the Individual Recognition Process will apply
- Practice that has been achieved according to the values, principles, ethics and competences and is verified by a competent referee or referees.

The two year practice period can include experience acquired prior to enrolment on the degree course and other paid or voluntary community learning and development practice experience. This practice will be in addition to on-course placement practice directly related to study.

Practitioners who have been delivering to a high standard and have demonstrated a commitment to competent, ethical CLD practice and continuous improvement will be eligible to request consideration for full Member status through the Individual Recognition Process.

8. Individual Recognition Process

During the consultation on the draft registration model there was a clear call that a process should be developed that will allow suitably qualified and experienced individuals who do not hold a Standards Council approved professional qualification to achieve full Member status. For example, there are some practitioners whose qualification to practice pre dates the introduction of the approved degree level qualification.

It has been decided that applicants for full Membership who do not hold a Standards Council approved degree qualification must be able to evidence that their practice is equivalent to that expected of an applicant who has such a qualification and two years practice experience.

This will require a robust individual recognition process (IRP). The Standards Council is committed to the development of such a process and expects to do so within one calendar year of the launch of this registration system and to do so in consultation with its growing Membership.

9. What is a competent referee?

A competent referee must have a good understanding of community learning and development and in particular of the values and principles, the competences, the code of ethics and the CPD strategy.

He/she must have a sufficient knowledge of the applicant's working practice to be able to verify their commitment to the requirements for registration.

He/she could be:

- Your line manager
- Another Standards Council Member
- A member of your Management Committee/ Management Board
- A colleague from a partner organisation
- Your Head of Service
- Your Chief Executive Officer

This is meant to be an indicative rather than an exhaustive list, if in doubt please contact the Registration Development Officer.

10. The role of the referee

The role of the referee is crucial to the credibility of the Community Learning and Development Standards Council for Scotland as a representative professional organisation. Referees will be asked to confirm that they have read and understood the values, principles, competences, code of ethics and commitment to CPD as described in the requirements for registration. They will be asked to confirm that the applicant meets the requirements and is a suitable person to be a Member of this professional body.

The Standards Council expects that referees will exercise their professional judgement in relation to applicants' suitability and be prepared, where necessary, to recommend to applicants additional CPD or practice prior to gaining their approval, or to decline to endorse the application for membership.

11. What we mean by a commitment to CPD

The Standards Council in “A Learning Culture for the Community Learning and Development Sector in Scotland” use the terms continuous and continuing professional development with the acronym “CPD”. Within this registration system document the term CPD will be used as interchangeable with other terms currently in use such as professional learning, professional development or other descriptions for reflection on practice and learning in a professional context.

The Scottish Government has tasked the Standards Council with the development and establishment of a model of supported induction, CPD and training opportunities. The Standards Council is fully supportive of the professional graduate, post-graduate and CPD learning opportunities in further and higher education institutions in Scotland and has a robust approvals process in place in this area of growing demand.

Continuing professional development can take many forms from self improvement through planned reading to e-learning to training courses, job shadowing and beyond. For further information on what CPD is please see A Learning Culture for the Community Learning and Development Sector in Scotland, the Standards Council’s CPD Strategy, accessible at www.cldstandardscouncil.org.uk/files/CPD_Strategy_for_CLD

The Strategy states clearly that practitioners should:

- Ensure they maintain and develop their competence through reflective practice and CPD
- Integrate CPD directly with personal development plans
- Take responsibility for their own learning

A figure of 35 hours CPD per year for those in full time CLD occupations is a minimum recommended by the Standards Council as being both realistic and achievable, pro rata for part time staff or volunteers. This is in addition to any initial training or required or regulatory training and is also consistent with the CPD requirements of similar professional areas.

Practitioners should be able to undertake, reflect upon, record and be able to evidence their commitment to CPD. Good employers will have in place mechanisms for workforce development that will include opportunities for CPD and the means to record it. All CLD practitioners can already access the new CLD Standards Council CPD system – see below.

For those seeking information and opportunities for CPD the Standards Council has created i-develop, an electronic CPD framework for the sector. i-develop also offers the facility to plan your CPD journey, record your CPD activity and log progress of your personal development in relation to each of the Competences for Community Learning and Development. I-develop can be accessed here www.i-develop-cld.org.uk

12. Benefits of Registration

Benefits of registration will include:

- Being a Member of a professional body that will act as a voice for the community learning and development sector in Scotland
- Being able to influence the direction, priorities and areas of activity of the Standards Council
- Opportunities for professional dialogue both nationally and locally
- Participation in and the development of peer led learning opportunities
- Prior notice and personal invitations to Standards Council events
- Priority access to Standards Council events
- Being consulted directly on Standards Council policy initiatives, responses and developments
- Regular updates on Standards Council activities

13. Registration fees

In the short term registration will be free of charge. We will consult with our Members in due course on appropriate fee levels for Members and for Associate Members. Discussions will also include the length of term of Membership, frequency of renewal and individual or set renewal times. Members will be given timely notice of the introduction of fees for Membership

14. Application Process

The process will be as follows...

- Form to be completed and submitted to the CLD Standards Council
- Copies of qualifications, referee statements and any other evidence to be attached
- Application details scrutinised by Registration and Membership Development Officer
- For straightforward applications, members details added to the register
- For more complex applications Development Officer to carry out any required conversations/investigations/ interviews – if application approved – member details added to the register
- If application not approved – applicant informed and referred to appeals or IRP process
- Appeals to be heard by representatives from the Registration and Membership Committee (or a sub group thereof)
- The applicant will be informed in writing

A system will be developed to enable applicants to complete the registration form and to attach copies of qualifications or other evidence in hard copy format or on-line.

15. De-registration process

The register of Members of the CLD Standards Council for Scotland represents a body of professional individuals from across the sector who are committed to ethical practice in their dealings with their constituents in the communities in which they work.

The Standards Council is committed to the development of a process that will ensure that Members who do not meet the requirements will be de-registered. This process will be established in consultation with its growing Membership.