

CUMANN SICEOLAITHE EIREANN

**THE PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF IRELAND**



*An introduction to the Society's  
Professional Learning and Development Policy  
23<sup>rd</sup> January 2017*

<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page no</b>
<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Professional Learning and Development outlined</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3. The Learning scheme outlined</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>4. Learning credit allocations</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>(1.) Professional Education</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>(2.) Activities related to the Development of the Profession</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>(3.) Research and Publications</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>(4.) Lecturing and Teaching</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>(5.) Notes for psychologists not working full time</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>5. Typical Learning logcredit profiles</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>6. Guidelines for awarding PSI Learning Standards credits for events</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>7. A reflective process to self-evaluate Learning needs</b>	<b>16</b>

## 1. Introduction

A system for monitoring Professional Learning and Development (Learning, previously CPD) has existed within PSI since 2004. In January 2005, following a vote of members in November 2004, Learning became mandatory for all Chartered members of the Society. The first Learning cycle covered the years 2004, 2005 and 2006. The second 3 years cycle began in 2007 and was completed in December 2009 with logs due for submission in January 2010.

Following the completion of the first Learning cycle the scheme was reviewed and member's views of completing the Learning logs were obtained. We hope that his up-dated Professional Learning and Development information booklet will be helpful when completing Learning logs for the next cycle. The booklet contains a list of Learning activities and the credits allocated. This list is for guidance purposes and is not exhaustive. It does not exclude activities not accounted for. Such activities will be assessed against the list and credits will be awarded accordingly. The information booklet also contains details of how to apply for credits for PSI Learning Standards events you may wish to offer.

All the required forms pertaining to Learning activity (log books, application forms for LEARNING credits, registration forms etc) are available on the PSI website along with a current listing of all Learning events that have been awarded credits at [www.psihq.ie](http://www.psihq.ie).

## **2. Professional Learning and Development outlined**

The Psychological Society of Ireland (PSI) is the professional body for the profession of psychology in Ireland. The Society has grown significantly since its foundation in 1970 and now has nearly 3,000 members. PSI strives to promote quality psychological practice and foster learning and growth, by setting high standards of professional education and conduct for the profession.

The PSI recognises that many members regularly engage in Learning practices are now formally recognised by the Society. As the Society continues to streamline and professionalise its internal structures and external relationships, it is now acknowledged that the operation of Learning has become a core function of the Society.

PSI is the policy maker in relation to Professional Learning and Development (Learning) for psychologists in Ireland. Therefore Professional Learning and Development is a core function of PSI and it should also form a core activity of all psychologists. Learning is regarded as a way of adding value to the profession and for promoting career-long development.

The rationale for the development of a PSI Learning Standards scheme within PSI arose initially from the Society's Code of Professional Ethics which emphasises the need for psychologists to practice within their competencies.

In the Society's Code of Professional Ethics, the issue of Professional Learning and Development is specifically addressed under the issue of 'Competence'.

The Society's Code of Professional Ethics states that

## **2.0 COMPETENCE**

*Psychologists shall strive to ensure and maintain high standards of competence in their work. They recognise the boundaries of their particular competencies and the limitations of their expertise. They shall provide only those services and use only those techniques for which they are qualified by education, training or experience.*

More specifically, the Code states that psychologists shall

### **2.4 Professional Learning and Development**

*2.4.1 Maintain and develop their professional competence.*

*2.4.2 Participate in and contribute to continuing education and their own and colleagues' professional and scientific growth.*

*2.4.3 Keep themselves up to date with relevant knowledge, research methods, and techniques, through the reading of relevant literature, peer consultation, and continuing education activities, in order that their service or research activities and conclusions shall benefit and not harm others.*

*2.4.4 Perform their teaching duties on the basis of careful preparation, so that their instruction shall be current and scholarly.*

The contents of the document are based on the existing literature on Continuing Professional Development as it operates in other professional psychological societies, other non-psychological professional societies and on the research that exists in the area of Learning for psychologists.

### **Continuing Professional Development – Definitions**

Any process or activity that provides added value to the capability of the Professional through the increase in knowledge, skills, and personal qualities for appropriate execution of professional and technical duties, often termed competence. (Professional Associations Research Network, 2003).

The systematic maintenance, improvement and broadening of knowledge and skills and the development of personal qualities necessary for the execution of professional and technical duties throughout the practitioners working life. (Institute of Engineers Ireland, 2003)

Maintenance of occupational competence in their specialism and sustaining an academic knowledge base underpinning that specialism.

(Standing Committee CPD, BPS, 2000)

Planned educational activities intended to further education and training of Psychologists for the enhancement of psychological education, administration and research (APA, 2002).

### Rationale for promotion of Learning Framework

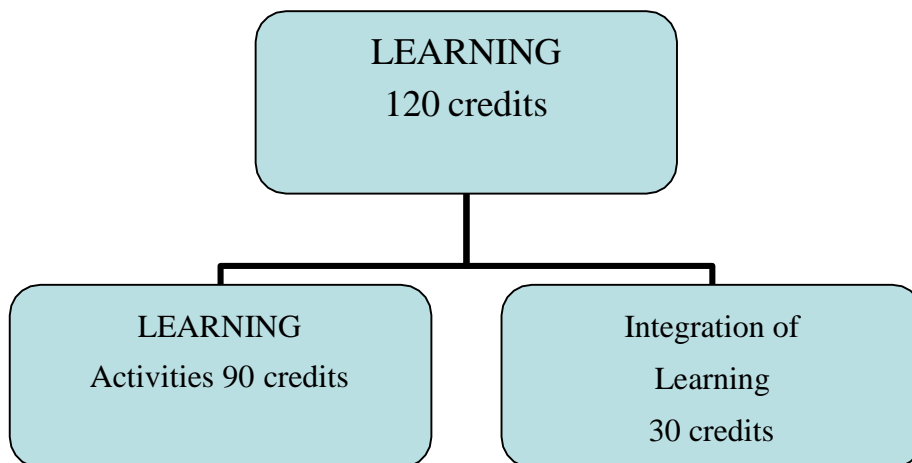
1. Improve psychological services to clients.
2. Promote the ethos of professional governance.
3. Promote the practice of professional regulation.
4. Promote the ethos of personal responsibility for professional development.
5. Promote the ethos of life-long Learning for professional psychologists.
6. Integrate the aspirations of psychologists with the needs of employers.
7. PSI Code of Ethics requires members to practice within their competencies.
8. Bring added value to the profession – enhance professional qualifications.
9. Members want it and are engaging in Professional Learning and Development without having this recognised in any formal way.
10. Statutory Registration will require it to maintain a license to practice.
11. Enable European recognition of qualifications and any license that may be awarded as a result of statutory recognition.
12. Inform employers and training organisations of the standards required by the profession in the training and employment of psychologists.
13. Set the standard for all other Learning providers to attain in the Learning services that they provide.
14. Provide the quality assurance standards for the profession of psychology in Ireland.

### 3. Learning scheme outlined

#### Core Characteristics of the scheme

- The Learning scheme operates on a **3 year cycle**. [First cycle 2004-2006; Second cycle 2007-2009]
- Members are required to accrue 120 credits over a three year period at an average of 40 credits per year. 30 Learning credits can be accrued from attendance at Learning events and 10 credits accrued from showing evidence of integrating the learning acquired. In practice this means that when members show evidence in their submitted Learning log that they have integrated the learning experience into their practice they can claim one quarter of the original credits as Learning credits.
- Members can collect credits for Learning events they attend, events that they deliver and Learning activities that they participate in alone (e.g. reading, keeping a personal reflective Learning journal).
- It is an inputs (time spent on activity) and outputs (Learning applied) model.
- Credits are accumulated for attendance at Learning events and subsequent learning from such attendances.
- Evidence of Learning is recorded in logbook form.
- PSI acts as credit awarding agency for Learning events.
- PSI acts as monitor for members’ Learning activities.

The following table summarises the credits system.



#### **4. Learning Credit Allocation<sup>1</sup>**

##### **(1.) Continuing Education**

<b>Higher education courses undertaken</b>	<b>No. of Credits</b>
Post-qualification Certificate in Psychology	12*
Post-qualification Certificate (non-psychology but relevant)	8*
Post-qualification Diploma in Psychology	14*
Post-qualification Diploma (non-psych but relevant)	9*
Post-qualification Masters in Psych by thesis	18*
Post-qualification Masters in Psychology: non-thesis	15*
Post-qualification Masters (non-psych but relevant)	10*
Practitioner Doctorate (obtained post qualification)	30**
Research Doctorate	30**

\*Credits are awarded for these activities only for the period within which the study is undertaken and cannot be awarded retrospectively.

\*\* Full Credits are awarded for doctorates for a 3 year full time period or equivalent part time

<b>Conferences/Workshops</b>	<b>No. of Credits</b>
Attendance at PSI approved (or equivalent <sup>2</sup> ) conferences per day	4
Attendance at non PSI approved conferences (per day)	2
Attendance at supervisors training (per day)	4
Attendance at PSI approved workshops (or equivalent one off events) per day	4
Attendance at non PSI approved (or equivalent) workshops per day	2
Attendance at PSI approved events lasting less than 2 hours	1
Attendance at PSI approved events lasting 2 to 3 hours	2

<b>Courses/Learning (CPD) meetings</b>	<b>No. of Credits</b>
One year course on a psychologically relevant topic	10
Local Learning (CPD) meetings – Journal Club, Peer supervision	2

<sup>1</sup> Logbooks must show that at least 75% of Learning activity is of a psychological content

<sup>2</sup> Equivalent means Learning events organised or approved by another Psychological Society.



**(2.) Activities Related to Development of the Profession**

<b>Involvement with PSI</b>	<b>No. of Credits</b>
President of PSI	40
Members of Council Executive (per year)	20
Member of PSI Council (per year)	15
Chair of Division, SIG, Standing Committee, Board (per year)	12
Cttee Member of Division, SIG, Standing Cttee, Board (per yr)	10
Member of Board of Examiners of PSI (per year)	12
Member of a Society accreditation panel	8
Attending the Society's AGM or the AGM of Divisions/SIG	2

<b>Involvement with other bodies</b>	<b>No. of Credits</b>
Chair of Advisory Body (relevant to the practice of psychology)	8
Member of Advisory Body (relevant to the practice of psychology)	6
Chair of local work group (minimum 6 months)	6
Membership of State Board or Committee	10

<b>Supervision/Psychotherapy</b>	<b>No. of Credits</b>
Personal supervision / Peer supervision received (per hour)	1
Personal supervision / Peer supervision conferred (per hour)	1
Supervision of trainee psychologists (per trainee per placement)	10
Supervision of PhD student (per year, pro rate for part time students)	10
Supervision of a Masters by research	8
Supervision of a dissertation as part of a taught Masters	5
Attendance at Psychotherapy (per hour) <sup>3</sup>	1

**(3.) Research / Publications**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>No. of Credits</b>
First author of published peer reviewed article	15
Second and subsequent authors of peer reviewed article	12
Non peer reviewed article (all authors)	7
Authorship of Book (psychological)	30
Authorship of Book (non-psychological but relevant)	15
Authorship of unpublished work related to psychology	8
Authorship of unpublished technical work	8
Paper / Poster presentation at conferences	9
Peer reviewed book reviews	6
Non peer reviewed book reviews	3

<sup>3</sup> There will be no cap on the amount of credit a member wishes to accrue through this type of activity.

Editor of psychological publications (per year)	20
Authorship of European Union Level Report	15

#### **(4.) Preparation of new material for Lecturing / Teaching**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>No. of Credits</b>
Preparation of new material for psychological lectures that are subject to objective evaluation (per 1 hour)	2
Preparation of new material for psychological lectures with no objective evaluation (per 1 hour)	1
Preparation of new material for a workshop approved by PSI (per day)	8
Preparation of new material for a workshop not approved by PSI (per day)	6

#### **(5.) Notes for Psychologists not working full-time**

- i. Learning is pro-rated to amount of time spent in work.
- ii. Use a benchmark of 35 hours per week to calculate the amount of Learning that it is necessary for you to engage in.
- iii. Pro-rating of Learning activities and credits is to be used by those who:
  - work part-time,
  - job share,
  - take parental leave,
  - are on long term sick leave, maternity leave,
  - partially retired.

## **5. Typical Learning log credit profile**

The following profiles outline some of the possible pathways to accruing the levels of Learning credit set out in the scheme. These examples are in no way meant to be prescriptive but rather give examples of the wide range of activities in which members gain credits. Where credits are awarded for an activity, one quarter of that number of credits is also awarded for the integration of that Learning into practice.

### **Targets**

LEARNING Activities: 40 credits per year (30 for activity + 10 for integration of this Learning)

LEARNING activities must include a combination of learning events you attended and activities that you undertook alone such as reading journals etc.

### **Profile 1**

Attendance at 5 days of PSI approved events over a 12-month period. 4 credits are received for each day of attendance and 2 credits for integration of this Learning. Reading the Irish Psychologist (10 issues x 1 credits per issue read), reading psychology journal (5 hours).

Total LEARNING credits:  $(5 \times 4) + (5 \times 1) + (10 \times 1) + (5 \times 1) = 40$

### **Profile 2**

Attendance at 7 days of non PSI approved events. 3 credits are received for each day of attendance and 5.25 credits for integration of this Learning. Reading the Irish Psychologist (10 issues x 1 credits per issue read), reading psychology journal (5 hours).

Total LEARNING credits:  $(7 \times 3) + (7 \times .75) + (10 \times 1) + (5 \times 1) = 41.25$

### **Profile 3**

Attendance at 2 days of PSI approved events:	8 attendance + 2 Learning =	10
Received 12 hours of supervision:	12 attendance + 3 Learning =	15
Attendance at 2 departmental LEARNING meetings	4 (4+1)=	5
Reading the Irish Psychologist (10 issues x 1 credits per issue read)		10
Total LEARNING credits:		40

<sup>4</sup> For example, a study session with colleagues in a Psychology Department

Profile 4

Attendance at 6 local Learning meetings: (6 + 1.5 for integration of	7.5
Chair of local work group: (6 + 1.5)	7.5
Attendance at 2 days of non-approved events: (6+1.5)	7.5
Preparation of new material for delivery for one day workshop: (8 + 2)	10
Personal supervision (10 hours – 10 + 2.5 integration)	12.5
Total Learning credits:	45

Profile 5

Present paper at conference: (9 + 2.25)	11.25
Give 6 hours of supervision: (6 + 1.5)	7.5
Attend 6 local Learning meetings (12 +3)	15
Member of PSI Council	15
Total Learning credits:	48.75

The credits for Learning activities undertaken outside a formal organised structure is calculated by awarding 1 credit for each hour of the activity and 0.25 for incorporating learning from the event/activity into practice. Credits are available for a wide range of activities such as studying a journal article, researching an area etc.

## **6. Guidelines for awarding credits for Learning activities**

### Objective

The objective of the PSI is to advance psychology as a pure and applied science. These guidelines exist for event organisers so that high quality, professionally relevant and practice oriented Learning activities are provided to those practicing psychology, both PSI members and non-members and members of other related professions. PSI encourages members and others who organise Learning events to promote evidence based practice and the dissemination of scientific findings for the development of the profession of psychology in Ireland.

### Procedure for Applying for credits for PSI Learning Standards Approved Events

1. At least 3 months prior to the event, the organiser should submit the completed application form for Learning credits to the Professional Learning and Development Co-ordinator.
2. A non-refundable processing fee must accompany the application.
3. The Co-ordinator will evaluate the form according to the criteria outlined below.
4. A set number of credits will be awarded to the event.
5. The organiser will be informed in writing of the outcome within one month of submission.
6. The organiser will be obliged to inform the Society of any change to the event.
7. The Society has the right to withdraw the Learning credits or change credit allocation in the light of emerging information.
8. All event organisers agree to the possibility of a staff member or a designated individual attending an event unannounced to satisfy itself that the event is being delivered according to the criteria set down by Council.
9. Event organisers will generate a list of psychologists who attend the event. This attendance list must be signed by each psychologist claiming Learning credit. The event organiser will forward the list to the PSI Office within one month of the event.

## **Criteria for awarding credits for PSI Learning Standards Approved events**

1. Evidence must be provided of a clear rationale for the event and its relevance to attendees who are psychologists.
2. The teaching objectives of the session must be clearly identified.
3. The target audience for the event must be indicated. Prior qualifications and or experience required for participation in the event must be clearly indicated on the application form.
4. The event organiser must have been advised by a psychologist in the planning stage as to the appropriateness of the content on offer to psychologists engaging in Professional Learning and Development.
5. Presenters who are Psychologists must be members of a professional psychological organisation with a clearly established governing body and code of ethics.
6. Professional qualifications of the presenters must be clearly delineated.
7. Fees for the event should be clearly advertised and state what the fees cover, e.g. attendance, lunch, handouts etc. Refund and cancellation policies must be clearly stated on advertising literature.
8. A clearly outlined programme must appear in final advertising literature.
9. Clear and concise documentation supporting the psychological content or the relevance of the topic to psychology must be included with the application.
10. Where appropriate the applicant should provide information on the empirical support for the topic.
11. The format of the presentation must be clearly outlined. State whether the format is lecture, workshop, interactive etc.
12. A clearly outlined method of event evaluation must be made available to the participants.

## **Quality Control**

- PSI retains the right to appoint an observer to any activity or event that has been awarded Learning credits.
- PSI retains the right to telephone survey a sample of attendees.
- PSI retains the right to request a copy of evaluation forms from Learning events.

## **Fee Structure**

1. For events with up to twenty attendees a processing fee of €100 is applicable.
2. For events with more than twenty attendees a fee of €200 is applicable.
3. For events that are planned on a regular and frequent basis a fee of €100 is applicable. This fee covers these events for a period of one year.
4. Professional Learning and Development events organised by Society Divisions or Special Interest Groups do not attract a processing fee.

## 7. A Reflective Process to Self-evaluate

### Learning needs Objectives

- Bring added value to the capability of individual.
- Development of professional responsibility rather than compliance.
- Develop a focus on professional outcomes.
- Generate Individualised Learning plans from the process.

### Process for Individual

1. Create a Personal Development Planner using following questions:

- a. Where am I now?
- b. Where am I going?
- c. Where should I be?
- d. How will I get there?
- e. How will I know that I am there?

2. Identification of Development Needs

- a. Statement of current role
- b. Requirements of employer
- c. Future career goals
- d. New developments in area of work
- e. Prioritise objectives

3. Identify knowledge level in each area for development

- a. Expert – High level of knowledge, skills and experience in the area.  
Requires peer supervision to affirm status of skills
- b. Skilled – High level of knowledge and skills. Experience developing.  
Requires peer supervision for new Learning.
- c. Competent – Knowledge and skills sufficient to practice independently.  
Experience limited. Requires supervision from a person of more senior status.
- d. Capable – Knowledge and skills sufficient to practice with the help of supervision from a person of more senior status who is expert in the role of being a trainer.



- e. Familiar – Knowledge present but few applicable skills. Would require further training and development.
  - f. Aware – Some knowledge but no skills. Would require basic training and a subsequent period of practice that is brought to regular supervision.
  - g. Unaware – No knowledge about a particular area even though some transferable skills may exist.
4. Identify exactly what I want to learn.
  5. Identify the activities that will meet these Learning goals.
  6. Specify a target date for activity completion
  7. Highlight a review of the process (integration of Learning into practice)
    - a. Have the goals been met?
    - b. Has knowledge base and skills portfolio changed?
    - c. Specify what in their practice is different
    - d. Have outcomes been discussed and validated by a supervisor / mentor?
  8. Evidence of achievement
    - a. Recognised qualifications
    - b. Recognition from colleague in a more senior position
    - c. Recognition from employing organisation
    - d. Recognition from colleague who is a peer
    - e. Recognition from the public arena
    - f. Self – personal targets reached