

A woman with blonde hair, wearing a white lab coat over a green turtleneck, is looking through a large, white and black microscope. She is seated at a desk in a laboratory or workshop. The background shows a white door and wooden cabinets. The image has a red overlay at the top and bottom.

Institute of Conservation CPD Recall Guide

June 2025

Icon

THE INSTITUTE OF CONSERVATION

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INTRODUCTION

Professional membership carries with it a responsibility to maintain professional standards by acting ethically, adhering to the profession's code of practice, and keeping up to date through ongoing development. Experienced professionals should also be developing broader capability and 'extended professionalism', characterised by independent judgement, involvement in a community of practice, and the demonstration of practical or intellectual leadership.

As a requirement of your Icon Accreditation, you are expected to submit a report to demonstrate how you are maintaining and developing your professional skills, and continue to align your work to the Icon Professional Standards.

WHAT IS CPD

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is the process by which conservator-restorers maintain, improve, and broaden their knowledge, skills, and professional competence throughout their careers.

It is a fundamental responsibility of professional membership and is particularly important for those accredited by Icon. CPD encompasses both formal and informal learning, including structured training, hands-on project experience, independent research, and reflective practice. The purpose is not only to stay current with developments in the field but also to cultivate broader professional capabilities such as leadership, ethical judgement, and engagement with the wider heritage community.

CPD is an ongoing, self-directed cycle of reflection, planning, action, and review. Accredited Conservator-Restorers (ACRs) are expected to regularly assess their development needs, undertake learning activities to address those needs, and reflect on the outcomes to inform future goals. Icon requires its ACR members to periodically submit CPD Reviews to demonstrate alignment with its Professional Standards and Code of Conduct. These reviews serve as evidence of commitment to professional growth and help ensure that all members continue to practise at a high standard. A learning log and action plan are essential tools in this process, supporting individuals to document, evaluate, and plan their development over time.

OVERVIEW OF THE CPD RECALL PROCESS

1. All members are required to complete the CPD Recall process when notified.
2. Selected ACRs notified of CPD recall
3. Review your CPD log / activity over the past two years
4. Attend drop-in session if required
5. Collate and submit your recall documentation online
6. Recall is shared with two CPD Readers who review and provide feedback
7. Member notified of outcome of CPD recall

Extenuating circumstances / deferring recall: Icon members who are unable to complete their CPD recall must get in touch by emailing accreditation@icon.org.uk – we can discuss your specific challenges and agree whether a deferral can be offered. Examples might include personal or family health issues, parental leave, etc.

Reasonable adjustments: It is important that the CPD Recall process is open and fair; this is not a test on how well you can complete the documentation. If you require reasonable adjustments, please contact accreditation@icon.org.uk. We will discuss your needs and agree on an appropriate course of action.

GUIDANCE NOTES

SECTION 1 | WORK CONTEXT

Briefly describe the context of your practice. What do you personally do within the main areas of your own work and your responsibilities?

This is not the same as repeating your job description. As well as briefly explaining what you do at work, you can also include any voluntary roles or activities you undertake outside of the workplace that contribute to your professional learning. Please avoid using abbreviations without introducing the full name of an organisation or activity at least once.

This section helps the CPD readers to understand how the situation in which you work, together with your personal responsibilities within it, may influence the type of professional learning you will be undertaking.

Remember CPD readers will not have the same specialism as you and so will not necessarily be familiar with terminology from your specialist area; please avoid using abbreviations and specialist technical terms without explanation.

SECTION 2 | SELF APPRAISAL

The selection of projects chosen as examples for this section can also include projects / activities outside your work. Make sure that your particular role in relation to both work and non-work projects is clear.

This section is likely to include activities that you identified in your last action plan. Please remember that if you are undertaking regular review of your professional development, 'your last action plan' should not mean the last action plan you submitted for an Icon CPD Review Recall.

Please do not contact Icon requesting to see the last review you submitted, as you should be keeping your own records of your CPD and the action plan will most likely be out of date.

Consider these aspects:

- What did you do?
- Where did you do it?
- When did you do it?
- Who was involved?
- How did you achieve it?

Remember the CPD readers will not know what you planned to do over the past 12 months to 2 years. Your review should reflect on the last two years of practice, or longer if you find that it is relevant to your

current position. If you were newly accredited two years ago, your review should follow on from the CPD section in your PACR application form.

If your professional circumstances have changed since the last action plan, then this is the place to record them (see notes from readers' meeting).

SECTION 3 | CPD ACTIVITIES

Using your CPD log, please complete one table for each CPD goal to describe and reflect on a selection of your professional development activities over the last 12 months to 2 years. You are expected to provide details on at least 3 CPD activities; however, you may include more should you wish.

Remember:

- CPD can take many forms – you may have attended a conference, but equally, you may have undertaken an informal activity such as meeting with a colleague or another professional to discuss your particular approach to a project.
- Provide specific target dates for your future learning activities wherever possible. Avoid using "ongoing" for all actions without explanation. For example, if you're registering for a course, include a proposed date or time frame.
- Use the table format in the form correctly: enter each planned activity or goal in its own table and include the date the goal was identified.
- Make a genuine attempt to identify personal development goals. Even if your goals are basic or underdeveloped, it's better to include them than to leave this section blank.
- Refer to the sample completed action plan below for help with writing goals and adding appropriate dates.
- Clearly differentiate personal professional development goals from routine job planning. Personal CPD is about your growth, not your regular duties.
- If you're retired or nearing retirement, it's acceptable to have fewer or less ambitious goals. You won't be penalised for reflecting your actual development needs.
- Understand that the action plan is not fixed — it's a tool to help you structure your development. It's normal for goals and timelines to change.
- Include enough detail about your CPD plans. Don't just list completed activities — explain how they've influenced your practice and what further development you need.

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| Activity title | Museum survey archive contract |
| Activity domain | Archival Science |
| Activity type | Half a day practicing with camera Online tutorial |
| Date From | 5 January 2026 |
| Date To | 12 January 2025 |

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| Brief description | This activity involved learning to use a new digital camera and advanced image editing software to improve the quality of visual documentation for a museum archive survey contract. I completed an online tutorial and spent time practicing photography techniques to produce clearer, more professional images for reports and annotated documents. The goal was to enhance client-facing materials and build confidence in handling digital tools. |
| What skills / knowledge gaps did you identify prior to the activity? | Needed to learn how to use new digital camera and more advanced image manipulation software for digital reports and annotated images. |
| Did you achieve your objectives? | Yes, I achieved my main objectives. I produced clearer and more professional visual documentation for clients, which improved the overall quality of my reports. My confidence using the camera and editing tools has grown. However, I recognise that I still need more practice to refine my workflow and increase efficiency. |
| If so, what did you learn? | I learned how to operate a digital camera in various lighting conditions, adjust settings for optimal image clarity, and apply basic to intermediate editing techniques to enhance photographs. I also gained insight into file management, image resolution standards, and how to incorporate visuals effectively into archival documentation and reports. This helped me understand the visual expectations of clients and how digital tools can be used to meet professional standards. |
| Will you / have you used this learning within and beyond the profession? | Yes, I have already applied these skills in other professional contexts, such as preparing visuals for presentations and internal documentation. Beyond archival work, these skills are transferable to museum exhibitions, conservation records, and even digital outreach materials. I anticipate further applying this learning to improve communication and engagement with wider audiences through more visually compelling content. |

SECTION 4 | FUTURE LEARNING ACTIVITIES

The aim of planning is to identify areas where you know or anticipate you will need to develop your knowledge, understanding or skills, or gain different perspectives (your personal goals), and to identify how you will go about this. As well as immediate requirements which can be met in the following year (general learning), you may also want to plan longer term for career development or to anticipate more distant changes (developmental learning). Where possible, you should show a connection between your action plan and your earlier comments on the form.

Remember that you are planning for your own personal and professional development (not tasks that you need to undertake). Although some learning will benefit your business or employer, a CPD review is

for you to reflect on what this learning means for you personally and how your plans meet your own development.

Your plan should indicate:

- What you want to develop or learn
- The method(s) you anticipate using
- How you intend to use it
- A realistic target date for completion and review

When planning your future learning activities, begin by identifying any skills you need to develop or personal aims you would like to achieve. Consider what you already do well and whether there is potential to build on these strengths. Reflect on any knowledge gaps you may have - such as in health and safety regulations or IT - and think about how you might address them. You may have short-term ambitions, such as achieving a specific goal within the next 12 months, or longer-term aspirations, such as moving into a senior role or starting a new business. Consider what steps you need to take to reach these goals, who could support you, and whether there are any barriers that might hinder your progress.

Goals are your personal aims—like changing jobs or setting up a business—while needs relate to addressing specific knowledge or skill gaps. Using the goals and needs identified in Section 2, list specific actions you could take to meet them and provide realistic target dates. Activities might include reading relevant literature, attending a training event, or working alongside another professional. You may add rows to the table if required. Bear in mind that different learning styles suit different people, so choose methods that work best for you. You can prioritise your goals and set target dates that are both achievable and motivating, helping ensure you make meaningful progress.

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| Activity title | Textile Conservation Techniques |
| Activity domain | Professional Development |
| Activity type | Formal training course |
| Date From | June 2024 |
| Date To | August 2024 |
| Brief description | Enrolment in a specialist training course focused on the conservation of historic textiles, including hands-on treatments, preventative care techniques and current research in textile degradation and preservation. The course includes both online theoretical modules and in-person workshops. |
| What skills / knowledge gaps you identified? | Limited practical experience in textile conservation treatments, especially with delicate or complex materials. Need for updated knowledge on modern preventive conservation methods and recent textile conservation case studies. |
| What you did / have planned to do to fill the gaps? | Registered for the textile conservation course, scheduled to begin in June. Also plan to shadow a senior textile conservator at the museum for one day per week during the course to reinforce practical learning with real-world experience. |



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Studio 32, FBC Clerkenwell, 40 Bowling Green Lane
London EC1R 0NE

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