



## **SER Feedback Report from 2007 CPD Returns**

### Introduction

During 2007 SER completed the first year of audited CPD returns. This report is being circulated to inform members of the scheme, professional institutions and other interested organisations regarding the outcome of the process. It is hoped that this information will assist scheme members with the preparation and planning of CPD in future years and assist professional bodies and training organisations with the preparation of programmes and events.

### The 2007 CPD Programme

SER Guidance Note 7 Continuing Professional Development was issued on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2007. The 2007 CPD Returns were issued to the appropriate Certifiers on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2008 with the request that they be completed online by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008.

In February 2008 there were 435 Certifiers who were notified that they were required to make a CPD return for 2007. During March 2008 two email reminders were also sent. Eventually 430 returns (98.8%) were submitted by members of the scheme.

### The Results of the 2007 CPD Assessments

Every CPD return was assessed by two members of the Scottish Registration Board. Where returns were considered borderline individuals were asked to supply further information and in some cases were referred for consideration by a full meeting of the SRB. The breakdown of the outcome of these assessments is as follows:

CPD Approved	307
CPD Inadequate	113
CPD Not Approved	10
CPD Not Submitted	5

The number of returns that were classified as “CPD Inadequate” was larger than anticipated when the procedure was being developed. It is now realised that the use of the term “Inadequate” was open to misinterpretation and has caused some concern to some of those who fell into this category. The inadequate grade has been used in the case of individuals who have made serious efforts to carry out CPD to the required standard and there were no grounds for suspending the individual from the

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scheme. However the assessment process has identified issues that SER would wish to see addressed in future years. The main reasons for allocating the inadequate grade were:

- CPD that was insufficiently focused on matters relating to structural design. Many individuals had for example spent time on Health and Safety training or management training both of which are recognised as being important but with content that may not be directly relevant and therefore did not count towards the 20 hours of relevant CPD required by the scheme.
- Insufficient explanation was provided regarding the learning outcomes from CPD activities making it impossible for the assessors to understand or assess the relevance of the activities to the role of certification.

Other matters included an over reliance on a single CPD source such as reading of Institution Journals or a lack of planning for future CPD. Those falling within the inadequate category were sent a letter advising them of the reasons for this result and a reminder that failure to rectify the situation by the next year could lead to suspension from membership.

Members of the scheme whose CPD returns were classified as “Not Approved” were invited to an interview to discuss areas of difficulty. The majority of those interviewed were able to satisfy the panel regarding their CPD and resubmitted revised returns. Those not able to satisfy the panel were suspended from membership of the scheme.

The 5 Certifiers who failed to submit a CPD return by the final deadline of 31<sup>st</sup> August 2008 were suspended from the scheme from noon on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2008 until such time that they have made a satisfactory return.

### CPD Content

Both the Guidance Note 7 and the CPD Return clearly state that the submission should only include CPD that is relevant to the role of an Approved Certifier. Many Certifiers appear to have misunderstood this basic requirement. Some examples of CPD that was included in returns but is clearly not relevant include

- Management Training
- IT Training
- SUDS/Drainage Training
- Energy Conservation Training
- Flood Assessment Training
- Social Functions attended

Many Certifiers gave only very vague details of their plans for CPD for the future year and topics that are not relevant to certification were often included. What is required is a concise statement of particular topics on which the Certifier is intending to concentrate.

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This was the first year of formal CPD assessment and it was recognised by SER that it would take some time for the system to bed in and that lessons would be learned by both scheme members and assessors. Certifiers should be aware of SER's aim that CPD should be subject to continuous improvement and that assessment of future CPD returns will be more demanding.

### Guidance for the future

Topics on which SER believes many Certifiers would benefit from CPD include:

- Ground works
- Environmental appraisals
- Soil/structure interaction
- Loadings
- Materials technology
- Disproportionate collapse
- Fire engineering
- Cladding and fixings
- Secondary structural elements
- Design for safe buildability, maintenance and demolition
- Eurocodes
- Design of timber framed structures
- Movement joints

An ideal CPD programme includes a good mix of activities and topics. Seminars and lectures are becoming increasingly accessible to all Certifiers including those who live in outlying areas. For example access can be achieved by viewing web streamed events. Both ICE and IStructE are making more events accessible in this way. However it should be remembered that such events are only one way of undertaking CPD.

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