

## CPD Models

### Introduction

This title examines models of Continuing Professional Development ('CPD'). CPD models provide archetypes for the design, administration, governance and delivery of CPD. This title discusses:

- Terms and concepts within CPD Models
- The many types of CPD Element Models, describing different activities that professionals can employ for their professional development
- The many types of CPD Scheme Models, describing the over-arching types of regime that govern professionals in their engagement with specific CPD activities.

### CPD Overview

CPD refers to mandatory education, training and development activities occurring after entry to the profession. The development can be within the existing area of professional practice (deepening current skills and knowledge), a new area of planned practice (allowing lateral career development) or a more expert, specialised or authoritative area of practice (empowering vertical career development).<sup>1</sup> It can cover standards of practice, specific competencies and issues of values, ethics and conduct. While CPD can sometimes be referred to as 'continuing professional education',<sup>2</sup> commentators generally distinguish professional learning from professional development, with the former a narrower term referring to specific changes in professional knowledge, skills, or practices, while the latter term refers to deeper and broader qualitative shifts in professionalism.<sup>3</sup>

CPD activities and regimes can be evaluated on a range of criteria (as we will see with respect to different CPD models) but their overarching objectives are to generally improve professional knowledge and skills, and to enhance personal and professional qualities. In terms of the former, CPD might aim to maintain previously learned knowledge and skills matter, to improve existing knowledge and skills (including deepening understanding and updating knowledge in line with the latest research and best practices) or to broaden the professional's expertise to new areas. The CPD can also aim to hone social and interpersonal skills, practices, scripts and practical strategies.

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<sup>1</sup> On lateral and vertical aspirations for teachers' CPD, see Orit Avidov-Ungar, 'A Model of Professional Development: Teachers' Perceptions of Their Professional Development' (2016) 22 *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice* 653.

<sup>2</sup> Other analogous terms may be used, including 'professional development', 'continuing professional training' and 'in-service education'.

<sup>3</sup> Christine Fraser et al, 'Teachers' Continuing Professional Development: Contested Concepts, Understandings and Models' (2007) 33 *Journal of In-service Education* 153, 156-57. See similarly Andy Boon and Toni Fazaeli, 'Professional Bodies and Continuing Professional Development: A Case Study' in Sue Crowley (ed), *Challenging Professional Learning* (Routledge, 2014) 31.

## Terms and Concepts for CPD Models

There are many distinct types of CPD activities, overall approaches to CPD, academic theories about CPD, and desirable outcomes of CPD. Each of these subjects can give rise to 'CPD Models'. However, there is no shared understanding of terminology. Many commentators have noted problems with 'conceptual vagueness' in the realm of CPD, and the contested nature of concepts and terms.<sup>4</sup> This applies very much to the notion of 'models' – one commentator might use the term 'model', while another might favour alternative idioms like 'approach', 'paradigm', 'concepts', 'element', 'framework' and so on.

This title will focus on the two most common types of CPD Models: CPD Element Models and CPD Scheme Models. CPD Element Models are used to describe and analyse specific activities and practices, like training workshops, university awards or mentoring. CPD Scheme Models describe and analyse larger frameworks that may incorporate an array of different elements as components. For example, the 'Input Model' describes one approach to an overall CPD scheme, a scheme that could include elements of training workshops and university awards. The wide variety of CPD models (both in terms of specific elements and over-arching schemes) being employed in different professions is important, as different professions may engage differently with CPD, depending upon the profession's situation,<sup>5</sup> and its special needs in a given context.<sup>6</sup>

The term 'CPD model' can also be applied in other ways. For example, a 'model' might refer to the comprehensive content of a specific CPD regime in a particular jurisdiction – in this way one might refer to the UK's National CPD Model for Teachers.<sup>7</sup> CPD schemes or elements might also be referred to as fitting a model if they display some specific quality – such as a 'Transformative Model' referring to any CPD practice that achieves holistic, critical change within the professional.<sup>8</sup> Finally, 'model' might be used to refer to a theoretical framework about CPD. These are academic or research-driven ways of conceptualizing or categorizing CPD, often picking out specific qualities of different CPD schemes or elements (or of the professionals engaging with them<sup>9</sup>), for the purposes of understanding, evaluating, criticizing or categorizing CPD. For examples, the Integrative Contextual Model of Career Development is a theoretical framework that focuses on the need to develop skills to achieve an integrated array of vocational outcomes.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Fraser et al, above n 3, 155-6; Avidov-Ungar, above n 1, 664.

<sup>5</sup> This consideration looms large in the comparison between law and further education discussed in Boon and Fazaeli, above n 3.

<sup>6</sup> Many commentaries on CPD from the education sector emphasize the special role of CPD for teachers. See, e.g., Boon and Fazaeli, above n 3; Marilyn Leaska and Sarah Younieb, 'National Models for Continuing Professional Development: The Challenges of Twenty-First-Century Knowledge Management' (2013) 39 *Professional Development in Education* 273.

<sup>7</sup> See, e.g., Leaska and Younieb, above n 6.

<sup>8</sup> Aileen Kennedy, 'Models of Continuing Professional Development: A Framework for Analysis' (2005) 31 *Journal of In-Service Education* 235.

<sup>9</sup> E.g., Sherri Turner et al, 'Vocational Skills and Outcomes among Native American Adolescents: A Test of the Integrative Contextual Model of Career Development' (2006) 54 *Career Development Quarterly* 216.

<sup>10</sup> Turner, above n 9, 218.

## CPD Element Models

CPD Element Models describe specific CPD activities and practices – elements that can form components of larger CPD Schemes.<sup>11</sup>

### *Training Model*

Training courses were often the first CPD activities to be used by many professions and they remain a common mode of CPD delivery.<sup>12</sup> This element model includes workshops, short-courses and themed lectures, usually occurring in standard teaching environments, and delivered by experts in the topic. They are often short-term, but they can stretch in length and depth from sandwich courses to summer courses. The Training Model can be associated with a standards or competency-based view of professional work.<sup>13</sup> The Model is particularly common in cases where professionals need to be re-skilled or re-educated in line with a new centrally-controlled reform or policy-initiative – either of their institutional employer (such as a school) or the government (such as the Department of Education).<sup>14</sup> In terms of benefits, the Training Model can be implemented fairly quickly, often relying on decentralized actors and private providers – or using specifically trained presenters (such as in the case of a new government reform). The lectures and workshops can be fitted in amongst professionals' other work commitments, and attendance at training courses can be easily recorded and checked. However, the Training Model has many critics: it can focus purely on skills and content, rather than instilling meaningful change in values, understanding and reflection; it can deal with subjects only narrowly and superficially; and, it can teach content that is irrelevant to a professional, or unhelpfully divorced from practical work situations.<sup>15</sup>

### *Cascade Model*

One special version of the Training Model is the Cascade Model. This model works by sending one professional from an institution (or area) to a training event, such as a workshop or academic conference, and then having that professional report back to local professionals, communicating the new knowledge and skills.<sup>16</sup> Special training may go into those who will spread the knowledge – for example, they may be trained as 'Key Resource Teachers' or 'ICT Champions'. This model can be comparatively cost-effective, and quickly reach large numbers of professionals – making it desirable in cases of central reform initiatives that require training many professionals.<sup>17</sup> However, it carries serious drawbacks. As well as those attending the more general Training Model, the Cascade Model suffers from the iterated staging of the training, as the later content deliverers may dilute, misinterpret or adulterate the original content. As well, the very features that make the Cascade Model most desirable – the ability to reach professionals working in far-flung and

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<sup>11</sup> See, e.g., Kennedy, above n 8. Kennedy provides nine models, of which five are noted here as Element Models, and one is noted in the next section as a CPD Scheme Model. See also text above n 8 and below n 25.

<sup>12</sup> For an overview of the history with respect to lawyers, see Boon and Fazaeli, above n 3.

<sup>13</sup> Kennedy, above n 8.

<sup>14</sup> Such reforms are particularly common in the education sector. See, e.g., Fraser et al, above n 3; Avidov-Ungar, above n 1.

<sup>15</sup> See Boon and Fazaeli, above n 3; Kennedy, above n 8.

<sup>16</sup> See Kennedy, above n 8; Harry Kipkemoi Bett, 'The Cascade Model of Teachers' Continuing Professional Development in Kenya: A Time for Change?' (2016) 3 *Cogent Education: Professional Education and Training* 1.

<sup>17</sup> Bett, above n 16.

resource-poor environments – can create its pitfalls, as the training may be unhelpful for those in very different contexts who had no role in its development.<sup>18</sup>

### *Award Model*

The Award CPD Element Model is like the Training Model, but administered, performed and assessed in universities, and typically has a much longer duration, allowing deepened exploration, reflection and understanding in the subject area. University awards hinge upon successful completion of the course, including assessment, which helps ensure genuine learning has occurred. As well as benefiting from university systems of assessment and accountability, this Model usually provides credentials that are portable, bankable and internationally recognized. While it has the advantage of allowing deepened understanding through intellectual theorizing, a common critique is the gap between academic theory and practical needs, especially in cases where there is no sustained effort to link intellectual theories with real-world practicalities.<sup>19</sup>

### *Mentoring Model*

The defining feature of this model is the one-on-one engagement between two professionals. This element includes mentoring and coaching, where there is usually a difference in hierarchical status and expertise between the two. Coaching elements tend to focus on skills and strategies, while mentoring also involves interpersonal qualities, including counselling and professional friendship, and guidance on values and ethics.<sup>20</sup> However, this Element Model can also include one-on-one development between peers, such as through work-shadowing and sharing of experiences and strategies. The Mentoring Model provides broader support and offers personalized development and growth. However, it can be time and work intensive, and may require training and special interpersonal skills by mentors.<sup>21</sup>

### *Community Model*

This model shares with the mentoring element a focus on collaboration. However, in this case the element works in a many-to-many mode, often across peers and colleagues, including activities of shared learning, group discussions, networking events and joint exercises. This model has been described as ‘bottom-across, rather than top-down’.<sup>22</sup> Its main benefits lie in developing interpersonal support networks, responding to the specific needs of professionals, and allowing greater levels of professional ownership and autonomy. Its collaborative nature can also generate new research, strategies and policies, so unlike other elements that focus on transmitting existing knowledge, community collaborations can create entirely new knowledge. The Model’s drawbacks are that it can be difficult to assess and demonstrate accountability; it

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<sup>18</sup> Bett, above n 16.

<sup>19</sup> See Kennedy, above n 8.

<sup>20</sup> Kennedy, above n 8, 242.

<sup>21</sup> Kennedy, above n 8, 243.

<sup>22</sup> John Coolahan, *Teacher Education and the Teaching Career in an Era of Lifelong Learning: OECD Education Working Paper, Number 2* (Education Directorate, OECD, 2002) 26.

can occur in an inefficient and fragmented way; and, it can require support mechanisms (including technology) that can be challenging to set up and maintain.

#### *Individual Research and Reflection Model*

Some CPD can be done purely on the professional's own initiative, and entirely on their own. This may include research work, such as reading articles from professional journals on relevant areas of practice or science. Or it may be as simple as ethical reflection on previous decision-making, and planning for new strategies to improve performance.<sup>23</sup> The advantages of the Individual Reflection Model lie in its convenience and cost-effectiveness, and the ability for each professional to take ownership and focus reflection on the areas most important to them.<sup>24</sup> Drawbacks include its isolation, and the difficulty of ensuring accountability and demonstrating improved results.

These six models cover the main elements employed in CPD regimes. However, the list is not exhaustive of all the available CPD methods.<sup>25</sup> In particular, it is worth noting that most of the models discussed above (except individual reflection) are formalised systems, usually involving planning, development, implementation and reporting. But much of a professional's actual development in their career and practice will be achieved through informal means, such as information-sharing and advice-giving that occur 'around the water-cooler'.<sup>26</sup> While such development may be spontaneous, and therefore difficult to include in official CPD regimes,<sup>27</sup> this method can still be empowered by employer, government or professional bodies – such as through the provision of web-based toolkits allowing the sharing of materials (such as examples of standards in assessment for teachers).<sup>28</sup> Indeed, the use of Information and Communication Technologies ('ICT') to share decentralized access to research and to create collaborative spaces for shared work on new projects may itself come to be considered a key CPD Element Model. The use of these digital technologies can be very cost-effective, as they can make use of existing research, avoid unnecessary duplication and replication, facilitate feedback between researchers and professionals regarding specific projects, and – once the platforms and data-bases are in place – allow professionals themselves to keep up to date using it, and to create new knowledge as they do so.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Hugh Breakey, 'Building Ethics Regimes: Capabilities, Obstacles and Supports for Professional Ethical Decision-Making' (2017) 40 *University of New South Wales Law Journal* 322.

<sup>24</sup> On reflective practice, see the discussion in Boon and Fazaeli, above n 3, 34.

<sup>25</sup> See, e.g., Kennedy notes the 'action research' model, where academic research occurs as part of CPD activities and practitioners have a role in directing and performing the research. Kennedy, above n 8, 245-46. See also Bett, above n 16.

<sup>26</sup> See the discussion of Reid, in Fraser et al, above n 3, 160.

<sup>27</sup> Though see the 'outcomes-focused model' in Boon and Fazaeli, above n 3.

<sup>28</sup> Fraser et al, above n 3, 164-5.

<sup>29</sup> See Leaska and Younieb, above n 6, 275, 77, 83.

## CPD Scheme Models

As well as using models to refer to specific CPD activities, CPD Models can also describe larger schemes that encompass different elements, and combinations of elements.<sup>30</sup>

### *Input model/Outcome-Focused Model*

An overall CPD scheme fits the Input Model if it directs attention to the specific practices that can input into a professional's recorded CPD. Such a scheme will often focus on accredited training courses from authorized CPD providers – or any other easily verified inputs. In contrast, an outcome-focused model occurs where the CPD scheme is liberal about what inputs can go into CPD, and instead asks the professional to include any practices that, in their opinion, led to improved professional performance and knowledge.<sup>31</sup> This Scheme Model empowers professionals with ownership, authority and autonomy over their own CPD. However, its limited scope for accountability calls for exceptional trust in professionals to engage and report authentically about their CPD practices and outcomes.

### *Practitioner-Determined Model*

A practitioner-determined scheme of CPD is one where the specific CPD activities undertaken are actively sought and undertaken by individual professionals. These 'bottom up' or 'bottom-across' schemes are opposed by centrally controlled 'top down' CPD schemes, which may include training elements strictly mandated by professional bodies, employing institutions and government regulators or ministries. (See the Practitioner-Determined CPD title.) Many contemporary CPD systems in Australia operate somewhere between these two poles of practitioner-determined and centrally-controlled. For example, CPD requirements might mandate a professional in a given year to cover certain content areas (requiring a certain amount of ethics or professionalism CPD, for example), or cover certain types of CPD (for example, formal and informal, accredited and non-accredited). (See the CPD Requirements title.) This can also allow different professionals to select models that work best for them, acknowledging the diversity of learning approaches, aspirations and ambitions appropriate for each.

### *Standards and Competencies-based Model*

In this scheme, CPD is designed and implemented within a larger standards or competencies framework, that sets out the skills and expertise required for a given level within the profession. (See the Competency-Based Frameworks and Assessment title.) A professional might search out desirable CPD activities that expand, broaden or update knowledge and skills that will qualify them for further responsibilities. Alternatively, this scheme might be used (in a variant sometimes termed the 'Deficit Model')<sup>32</sup> to isolate deficiencies within a given professional's portfolio, with CPD a mechanism for redressing these gaps in the required competencies.

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<sup>30</sup> Again, the list is not exhaustive. The 'Reform Model' (usually employing Training and Cascade elements) could be added as a further Scheme Model, particularly in the context of education, which is often subject to new government initiatives. See, e.g., Fraser et al, above n 3; Bett, above n 16; Avidov-Ungar, above n 1.

<sup>31</sup> Boon and Fazaeli, above n 3.

<sup>32</sup> See Kennedy, above n 8, 239-40.

## Summary

There is considerable variety in the different CPD Element Models that provide CPD to professionals and in the larger CPD Scheme Models that frame how all the elements will fit together. The different ways CPD Models (both elements and schemes) are categorized can reflect the priorities of larger academic and theoretical approaches to education in general and CPD in particular.<sup>33</sup> But as a practical matter for individual professionals and professional bodies, it is worth being aware of the many different models on offer, as each can prioritize different outcomes, and highlight different methods to achieving those outcomes.<sup>34</sup>

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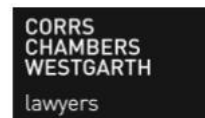


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<sup>33</sup> Note also that these larger theoretical frameworks can sometimes also be termed 'models'. These are models about aspects of CPD, rather than models of CPD. For examples, see: Avidov-Ungar, above n 1; Turner et al, above n 9.

<sup>34</sup> See Fraser et al, above n 3, 160, who argue that the best framework to use for analysing CPD might be an amalgam of multiple models (and theoretical systems of models).