



The Association of Compliance Officers in Ireland

**LCOI**

**Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Scheme  
Guidelines & Regulations**

**2018**

Welcome to the LCOI CPD Guidelines & Regulations for 2018. This is an important document which sets out the CPD scheme requirements and regulations. You are advised to read this document thoroughly and retain it for reference during the CPD year.

Should you have any queries on the LCOI CPD Guidelines & Regulations 2018 please contact The Institute of Banking at 01 611 6500 or at [cpd@acoi.ie](mailto:cpd@acoi.ie).

| <b>Contents</b>  | <b>Page</b> |
|--|-------------|
| 1. Introduction  | 2           |
| 2. Summary of CPD Requirements   | 2           |
| 3. Purpose of the LCOI CPD Scheme  | 2           |
| 4. Administration of the LCOI CPD Scheme                                 | 3           |
| 5. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) – General Definition        | 3           |
| 6. Benefits of CPD   | 3           |
| 7. Annual CPD Requirements   | 4           |
| 8. Monthly Average   | 4           |
| 9. Surplus Hours   | 4           |
| 10. CPD Year   | 4           |
| 11. Minimum & Maximum Duration – CPD Hours                               | 5           |
| 12. ACOI Criteria in Relation to Awarding CPD Credit                     | 5           |
| 13. Award of CPD Hours to Electronically Delivered Events and Activities | 6           |
| 14. Definition of CPD for the LCOI Scheme                                | 7           |
| 15. Accreditation of Events for CPD Hours                                | 7           |
| 16. Examples of CPD  | 8           |
| 17. Excluded Activities  | 8           |
| 18. CPD Programme  | 9           |
| 19. CPD Annual Update Manual   | 9           |
| 20. Pro Rata Adjustment of CPD Hours                                     | 9           |
| 21. Newly-Qualified Members – Applying for your Designation              | 10          |
| 22. Newly-Qualified Members - Commencement of CPD                        | 11          |
| 23. Other Designations   | 11          |
| 24. LCOIs not Working in the Financial Services Industry                 | 11          |
| 25. Keeping Records & Supporting Documentation                           | 11          |
| 26. Annual Returns   | 12          |
| 27. Audit  | 12          |
| 28. Failure to Comply  | 13          |
| 29. Reinstatement of the LCOI Designation                                | 13          |
| 30. Appeals  | 14          |
| 31. Correspondence with LCOIs  | 14          |
| 32. Costs  | 14          |
| 33. Provision of Information to Employers and the Central Bank           | 14          |
| 34. Change of Personal Details   | 15          |
| 35. Further Information  | 15          |
| 36. Contact Details  | 15          |
| 37. Appendices   | 15          |
| A. Pro Rata Adjustment Form  |             |
| B. CPD Personal Record Sheet   |             |
| C. PDC Syllabus Topics 2017/18   |             |
| D. Minimum Competencies for Retail Financial Products                    |             |

## 1. Introduction

Welcome to the CPD Guidelines & Regulations 2018 for those who hold the LCOI designation. These guidelines are valid for the CPD year 2018.

LCOI is the highest professional designation awarded by ACOI. It is available only to those who hold the Professional Diploma in Compliance (PDC) and agree to comply with the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) obligations associated with the designation.

The Central Bank's Minimum Competency Code applies to persons exercising a controlled function on a professional basis, the exercise of which includes:

- the exercise of a specified function (as set out in Appendix 2 of the Code).

Specified functions include '*adjudicating on any complaint communicated to a regulated firm by a consumer which relates to advice or information about a retail financial product provided to that consumer or the arranging or the offering to arrange of a retail financial product for that consumer...*'.

The Professional Diploma in Compliance (PDC) and attaching LCOI designation is one of the recognised qualifications for this specified function.

Those who satisfy the requirements of the LCOI CPD scheme will meet their CPD obligations under the Minimum Competency Code.

Every person who holds the LCOI designation is obliged to:

- fully participate in the LCOI CPD scheme and comply with all of its requirements and
- maintain membership of the ACOI.

Any breach of either one or both of these conditions will result in the loss of the LCOI designation. This process is essential in maintaining the credibility and standing of the designation, and of those who continue to hold it. A person who has their LCOI designation removed for non-compliance must be removed from their regulated firm's Register of Accredited Persons and can only be restored once he or she is again in compliance with the CPD Requirements.

For further information on the Minimum Competency Code visit [www.centralbank.ie](http://www.centralbank.ie).

## 2. Summary of CPD Requirements

This is a brief summary of the main CPD requirements. You are advised to read this document in full for the detailed scheme rules and requirements.

- Total annual CPD requirement is 15 hours.
- At least 1 hour must be relevant to Ethics.
- CPD must be directly related to the PDC syllabus or the competencies set out in the Central Bank's Minimum Competency Code.
- All CPD events must be accredited by The Institute of Banking (the Institute).
- CPD year runs from 01 January to 31 December. Hours must be completed by 31 December.
- All events must be recorded and an annual return made by 31 January.
- A random sample of members are audited each year.

## 3. Purpose of the LCOI CPD Scheme

The purpose of the LCOI CPD scheme is to keep the PDC qualification current and to ensure that those who qualified in the past are as knowledgeable as those qualifying today. The CPD scheme also meets the Central Bank's Minimum Competency Code for adjudicating on complaints in relation to advice on certain retail financial products.

The content of CPD hours must be directly relevant to the syllabus of the PDC or the minimum competencies set out in Appendix 3 of the Minimum Competency Code. [See section 12. 'ACOI Criteria in Relation to Awarding CPD Credit'](#) and Appendix D. 'Minimum Competencies for Retail Financial Products'.

For further information on the Minimum Competency Code visit [www.centralbank.ie](http://www.centralbank.ie).

#### **4. Administration of the LCOI CPD Scheme**

Administration of the LCOI CPD scheme is carried out by The Institute of Banking on behalf of the ACOI.

#### **5. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) – General Definition**

There have been many definitions of CPD by various individuals and bodies over the years. The Professional Associations Research Network in the UK carried out an extensive research project into CPD between and in the process devised the following comprehensive definition:

"CPD is any process or activity of a planned nature, that provides added value to the capability of the professional through the increase in knowledge skills and personal qualities necessary for the execution of professional and technical duties, often termed competence. It is a life-long tool that benefits the professional, client, employer, professional association and society as a whole and is particularly relevant during periods of rapid technological and occupational change."

The purpose of the LCOI CPD scheme is to keep the PDC qualification current and to ensure that those who qualified in the past are as knowledgeable as those qualifying today.

#### **6. Benefits of CPD**

##### **You**

There can be no doubt that the principal beneficiary of CPD participation is you. Your involvement should ultimately help you both in your career and personally. As well as ensuring that you are meeting the requirements set out in the Central Bank's Minimum Competency Code for adjudicating on complaints in relation to advice on certain retail financial products. CPD should help you to:

- update your skills and knowledge on existing and new areas of business
- build client trust and confidence
- expand and hone your skills
- build self-confidence and conviction
- remain competitive
- raise your personal profile through networking and make you more 'marketable' to your existing and/or future employers
- gain a broader view

##### **Your Clients**

Your participation in the CPD scheme also benefits your clients, who will be reassured that you are a qualified, a well-informed person maintaining your knowledge and skills by keeping in touch with ongoing developments in your business. Moreover, they will know that you are meeting the requirements set out in the Central Bank's Minimum Competency Code for adjudicating on complaints in relation to advice on certain retail financial products.

##### **Your Employer**

Your employer or company benefits from your participation, as you are likely to be more efficient and productive, which obviously gives them a competitive edge.

##### **The LCOI Designation**

The fact that all LCOIs participate in a common CPD scheme gives added value and credibility to the LCOI designation itself. This has a positive effect on client and employer confidence, which in turn has a positive effect on you.

### The Financial Services Industry

The LCOI designation which is backed up by a mandatory CPD scheme and which has received the approval of the Central Bank is a recognised stamp of quality for those who hold it.

### The Professional Body

The CPD scheme adds credibility to the professional body of which you are a member, namely ACOI.

## 7. Annual CPD Requirements

Every LCOI is obliged to complete the same amount of CPD hours, irrespective of the area of business or the industry in which they are employed.

The annual requirement is **15 hours** (unless additional shortfall ('catch up') hours are required or a pro rata adjustment has been applied).

LCOIs must complete **at least one hour** of CPD each year which relates to **ethics**.

The CPD scheme for LCOIs is essentially self-certifying and there will be no compulsory testing of knowledge/learning by either the ACOI or the Institute.

A sample of members will be selected for audit of their CPD hours each year ([see section 27. 'Audit'](#)).



## 8. Monthly Average

With 15 hours to be completed each year, members should aim to complete approximately 1 – 1.5 hours each month. This is a recommendation rather than a requirement. Please note that regulated firms are required, under the Central Bank's Minimum Competency Code, to monitor the compliance of qualified persons with the CPD requirements at least once in the first nine months and once within six weeks of the year end.

## 9. Surplus Hours

Any surplus accumulated in one year may NOT be carried into the following year(s).

## 10. CPD Year

The CPD year runs from 01 January – 31 December each year, i.e. hours must be completed in the calendar year. While the closing date for making an annual return each year is 31 January of the following year ([see section 26. 'Annual Returns'](#)), CPD hours must be completed by **31 December**. Hours completed in January count for that CPD year and cannot be counted for the previous CPD year, e.g. hours completed in January 2019 will count towards your requirement for the 2019 CPD year and not 2018.

## 11. Minimum & Maximum Duration – CPD Hours

All CPD hours must be accredited by the Institute, as appropriate on behalf of the ACOI ([see section 15. 'Accreditation of Events for CPD Hours'](#)).

The minimum unit of time recognised and accredited for CPD purposes is a half hour.

The maximum number of hours that will be accredited for any single event/activity/topic is 4 hours.

The maximum number of hours that will be accredited for any single tested online course/module is 2 hours.

The maximum number of hours that will be accredited for any single examination module (must be a minimum of 3 ECTS credits on a programme leading to a qualification at level 6 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications and CPD credit is awarded in the year the examination is passed) is 8 hours.

This is to ensure that LCOIs achieve their CPD hours and enhance their knowledge across a range of topics rather than just one or two.

Time spent actively involved in a CPD activity will count and can include question and answer time, case studies and tests/exams etc. Time spent travelling to an event, registration time, coffee/lunch breaks, social time etc. will not count.

## 12. ACOI Criteria in Relation to Awarding CPD Credit

The role of CPD is to:

- keep qualifications up to date and
- ensure (on an ongoing basis) that those who qualified in the past are at least as knowledgeable as those qualifying today.

The Central Bank's Minimum Competency Code reflects this role, by requiring the content of CPD to be directly relevant to the functions of the qualified person. In the case of the LCOI, the relevant function is:

- Adjudicating on any complaint related to advice or information about a retail financial product provided to a consumer.

It is clear that the knowledge requirements for this specified function span both the syllabus of the Professional Diploma in Compliance (PDC) and the competencies as set out in the Minimum Competency Code for advising on/selling retail financial products.

Therefore, ACOI has decided that CPD directly relevant to LCOIs includes both:

- technical knowledge related to the PDC syllabus, and
- technical knowledge related to the competencies as set out in the Central Banks' Minimum Competency Code.

The LCOI CPD scheme will therefore span ACOI's own CPD events and those provided or recognised for the QFA and CIP by the Institute, the LIA and the Insurance Institute of Ireland (III).

Each LCOI should endeavour to choose a mix of events broadly appropriate to his/her role.

LCOIs must complete **at least one hour** of CPD each year which relates to **ethics**.

The word "directly" is important in the context of the definition of CPD. The view of the ACOI is that the requirement relates to the specific technical knowledge underlying the PDC qualification or the competencies as set out in the Minimum Competency Code, and that it does not include wider skills (such as sales influencing skills and time management skills, for example).

CPD needs to be **widely spread** to ensure that the holders of recognised qualifications maintain and enhance their knowledge across a range of topics. Consequently, the maximum number of hours that will be awarded to events/activities is as follows:

- any single event/activity/topic - 4 hours
- any single tested online course/module - 2 hours
- any single examination module (must be a minimum of 3 ECTS credits on a programme leading to a qualification at level 6 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications and CPD credit is awarded in the year the examination is passed) – 8 hours

All courses/seminars/online training must meet the following criteria in order to count towards CPD:

- The material or content must be directly relevant to the syllabus of the PDC or the competencies set out in the Minimum Competency Code'. See Appendix C. 'PDC Syllabus Topics 2017/18' and Appendix D. 'Minimum Competencies for Retail Financial Products'.
- Course presenters must have qualifications and / or knowledge and experience appropriate to the subject(s) being presented.
- The presentation must be conducted in an appropriate location (i.e. proper conference / business / in-house facility).
- The presentation/course must be at least a half hour in duration.
- If electronically delivered, the event/activity must meet the criteria described in [section 13. 'Award of CPD Hours to Electronically Delivered Events and Activities'](#) below.

Only the Institute, the LIA and in certain cases, the Insurance Institute of Ireland (III) may accredit events and activities (including in-house training courses that require CPD accreditation) for CPD hours in respect of LCOI designation as per section 1.7.2 (of the Central Bank's Minimum Competency Code) and they will do so in accordance with the principles and criteria set out above.

### 13. Award of CPD Hours to Electronically Delivered Events and Activities

In considering whether or not to grant CPD hours to eLearning courses and other electronically delivered events and activities, the relevance of their content is evaluated in the same way as other activities and events. In order to assess the level of active involvement required of its participants, the Institute also examines carefully the learning approach and structure of electronically delivered events and activities. In this regard, to be awarded CPD hours:

#### Each eLearning course or module must:

- Be generally well-designed (e.g., divided into individual lessons or units of reasonable length, require little or no scrolling within pages, be easy to read and navigate).
- Be highly interactive, requiring regular interaction between the course and the learner (through frequent exercises, questions, links to websites or feedback etc.).
- Incorporate a reasonable diversity of delivery approaches and/or media (e.g., appropriate combinations of text/slides, animation, pop-up pages, audio or video, attachments etc.).
- Ensure that the module is designed so that individuals cannot bypass the learning material and go straight to the test.
- Ensure that individuals spend a comparable amount of time completing a module as the accreditation awarded for the module i.e. if a module is accredited for 2 hours, then the module should take an individual 2 hours to complete, inclusive of the test.
- Include computer-based testing to provide evidence that a learner has assimilated the knowledge and skills contained in the course (the question bank should contain a greater number of questions than the test in the event that a person fails the test and has to resit to ensure that a predominantly different set of questions is presented in a resit test). Please see the following matrix as a guide:

| Duration of Module  | 2 hr | 1.5 hr | 1 hr | ½ hr |
|---|------|--------|------|------|
| Number of Questions Required in Bank of Questions (Minimum) | 48   | 36     | 24   | 12   |
| Number of Questions Required in Test/Exam (Minimum)         | 24   | 18     | 12   | 6    |
| Pass Rate (Minimum)   | 16   | 12     | 8    | 4    |

A minimum pass rate of 65% or over is recommended.

- (vii) Be capable of providing appropriate confirmation that the learner has successfully completed the test.
- (viii) Include a minimum of a half hour of relevant learning (including tests).
- (ix) A maximum of two hours may be awarded to each eLearning module.

**Events delivered using Web Casting and Web/Tele-Conferencing and similar technologies must:**

- (i) Be transmitted 'live' (to allow for interaction between learner and presenter). Presentations which are not viewed/attended 'live' will only be accredited for CPD hours where they include a test that meets the criteria in (vi) above.
- (ii) Be generally well-designed and create a productive learning experience (e.g. participants at remote locations must be able to hear and/or see the presenters, while simultaneously viewing the presenters' materials (e.g. slides or simulations)).
- (iii) Provide opportunities for all participants to put questions (verbal or written) to and engage in discussions with presenters during the event (unless recorded).
- (iv) Provide a means for course organisers to verify those participating at each venue (to include verification that the participant attended for the full duration e.g. log-in and log-out confirmation).
- (v) Include provision of electronic or hard-copy confirmation of attendance for the full duration to participants.
- (vi) Include a minimum of a half hour of relevant learning.

#### 14. Definition of CPD for the LCOI Scheme

CPD can be defined as '**active**' participation in an activity, the subject matter of which meets the ACOI criteria ([See section 12. 'ACOI Criteria in Relation to Awarding CPD Credit'](#)) for awarding CPD credit and includes attendance at seminars/training events, workshops, tested eLearning courses/modules, courses and other events of equivalent standing.

CPD does not necessarily mean attendance at external seminars - relevant in-house training (including product training) and approved tested online training may also earn credit provided it meets the above criteria.

General reading and research will not count for CPD hours.

#### 15. Accreditation of Events for CPD Hours

All CPD hours must be accredited by the Institute. Event providers (companies/bodies)/members applying for CPD hours for events should complete the Online CPD Accreditation Application Form located at [www.iob.ie/cpdaccreditations](http://www.iob.ie/cpdaccreditations) .

In the case of companies organising relevant in-company events/training for their own staff, it is recommended that one contact person in each company submits to the Institute all requests for accreditation on behalf of their staff. Members should check with their training department/intranet site for further information on their company accreditation procedures prior to submitting any application.

Members are required to attend for the full duration of an event in order to claim the CPD hours approved for that event. Where a member has not attended for the full duration he/she is required to submit a new application for reduced hours. Evidence of attendance is required in the event of a CPD audit e.g. certificate of completion, attendance sheet etc. The Institutes reserves the right to contact the event provider to verify attendance for the full or part duration.

Companies/bodies organising events for CPD purposes and applying for hours must submit a new application for reduced hours where members do not attend for the full duration. Event providers applying for CPD hours must hold records of attendance e.g. attendance sheet in the event attendees are selected for audit and confirmation of full/part attendance is required.

It is the responsibility of event providers to clearly advise attendees (in advance of the event) the accreditation number allocated to the event by the Institute, as well as the number of CPD hours applicable. This should also be announced/indicated to attendees at the beginning/end of the event.



Events accredited for CPD hours run by the Institute and the eCPD online modules will automatically record in the CPD member's Online CPD Record.

All CPD events, courses and training etc. are accredited for one CPD year only and must be re-accredited in each CPD year by application to the Institute.

## 16. Examples of CPD

Some general examples of activities normally expected to come within the definition of CPD are given below. Members are required to seek accreditation ([see section 15. 'Accreditation of Events for CPD Hours'](#)) of all external CPD hours.

- Relevant in-house training programmes
- Relevant seminars run by ACOI, the Institute, the LIA or The Insurance Institute of Ireland (III)
- Relevant seminars of other professional bodies
- Relevant online training courses – must include a test to confirm learning (e.g. those approved for eCPD). A maximum of 2 hours is accredited for any single online course/module. [See section 13. 'Award of CPD Hours to Electronically Delivered Events and Activities'](#).
- Some of the Institute, the LIA and Insurance Institute of Ireland (III) examinations. Hours are awarded on successful completion of examinations in the year the examination is passed – no hours for study or examination preparation.
- Relevant examinations of other professional bodies or other academic examinations (must be a minimum of 3 ECTS credits on a programme leading to a qualification at level 6 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications). Hours are awarded on successful completion of examinations in the year the examination is passed – no hours for study or examination preparation.
- Relevant compliance seminars
- Life assurance seminars
- General insurance seminars
- Shares and bonds seminars
- Pension seminars
- Investment seminars
- Finance bill seminars
- Mortgage seminars
- Consumer credit (personal lending) seminars
- Product training (formal training session, as opposed to a more social 'product launch' situation)
- Tax updates
- Regulatory training e.g. Anti-Money Laundering, Consumer Protection Code, Data Protection Act
- Ethics training
- Relevant lecture/seminar presentation (only the first presentation of a lecture/seminar will earn credit, research and preparation for the lecture/seminar cannot be included)
- Reading and assimilation of CPD Annual Update Manual (see section 19. below).

See also relevant topics in Appendix C 'PDC Syllabus Topics 2017/18' and Appendix D 'Minimum Competencies for Retail Financial Products'.

CPD needs to be **widely spread** to ensure that the holders of recognised qualifications maintain and enhance their knowledge across a range of topics. Members should ensure that they do not include events in their annual return that cover the same material e.g. an online Data Protection course and a face-to-face Data Protection seminar that cover the same material – only one event should be counted.

## 17. Excluded Activities

The following are examples of activities not considered to be relevant, in that they do not meet the ACOI criteria, and are therefore excluded from counting towards CPD:

- Study or examination preparation. CPD hours are awarded on successful completion of relevant examinations in the year the examination is passed
- Normal working activities
- General software/application training (e.g. Microsoft Excel, Word etc)
- Internet training

- Sales techniques training
- General communications training
- 'Soft-skills'/general training (such as programmes or courses on telephone techniques, customer care, time management, negotiation skills, leadership/supervisory skills, writing/communication skills etc.)
- Product launches or other primarily social occasions (formal product training sessions may earn credit)
- 'Motivational' seminars
- Reading and research
- DVDs, TV programmes
- Online training that is not tested
- Writing/research for thesis, study manuals, books and other publications.

## 18. CPD Programme

The Institute offers LCOIs a comprehensive and cost effective CPD programme to help them meet the annual CPD requirements. The programme includes:

### (i) Online Courses – eCPD

The eCPD portal in the Institute's 'My Institute' available via [www.acoi.ie](http://www.acoi.ie) offers all LCOIs a programme of online courses covering a wide range of topics such as Regulation, Ethics, Personal Lending, Home Loans, and Pensions etc. There are currently more than 15 courses available online, counting from 0.5 hours up to 2 CPD hours. There is no extra cost involved (included in annual membership fee). As courses are updated on an annual basis, courses completed in previous CPD years can be re-taken to count for CPD hours in a new CPD year provided 3 months have passed since the course was last completed. LCOIs can access the 'My Institute' using their membership number and password.

### (ii) CPD Seminars and Webinars

Seminars are organised by the Institute and the ACOI. Live CPD webinars are also held throughout the year. Members will be provided with details during the CPD year. Information regarding the seminars and webinars will also be posted on the ACOI's website.

### (iii) Accreditation of In-company and Other Events for CPD Hours

As described earlier in [section 15. 'Accreditation of Events for CPD Hours'](#), the Institute accredits relevant in-company training and other relevant events for CPD hours. Members should complete the Online CPD Accreditation Application Form located at [www.iob.ie/cpdaccreditations](http://www.iob.ie/cpdaccreditations) prior to holding an event, course, online module to check if it meets the criteria for awarding CPD hours.

### (iv) Qualifications Programmes

Many of the Institute's qualification modules are accredited for CPD hours. Members will automatically be awarded the CPD hours on successful completion of relevant examinations. Information on the Institute of Banking's qualification modules can be found in 'My Institute' available via [www.acoi.ie](http://www.acoi.ie).

## 19. CPD Annual Update Manual

The Institute publishes a CPD Annual Update Manual of current material relevant to retail financial advice. Currently, full reading and assimilation of the contents of this manual counts for **four hours** CPD annually. The manual is made available on the Institute's 'My Institute' and the ACOI's website, usually in August each year.

## 20. Pro Rata Adjustment of CPD Hours

In certain circumstances (see (i) and (ii) below) a pro rata adjustment (reduction) in required CPD hours may be granted, provided the LCOI is not working for the relevant period of time. In order to be granted an adjustment, LCOIs must complete a Pro Rata Adjustment Form (see Appendix A) available from [www.acoi.ie](http://www.acoi.ie) and on the Institute's 'My Institute' in 'CPD Downloads' and return it to the Institute.

LCOIs who have been granted a pro rata adjustment in CPD will not be required to comply with the requirement to complete one hour of CPD which relates to ethics in the year the pro rata adjustment is granted.

LCOIs who have been granted a pro rata adjustment in hours for part of a year must still make an annual return of hours completed for the remainder of the year by 31st January (of the following year).

#### **(i) Statutory Maternity/Parental/Adoption/Carer's Leave**

There will be a pro rata adjustment in CPD requirements for those taking statutory maternity leave (current maximum 42 weeks i.e. up to 26 weeks paid and up to 16 weeks unpaid leave), statutory adoption leave (current maximum 40 weeks i.e. up to 24 weeks paid and up to 16 weeks unpaid leave), statutory block parental leave or statutory carer's leave. The adjustment will be given for paid and unpaid statutory leave only i.e. does not include holidays, additional unpaid leave or career break. LCOIs should contact The Institute of Banking in advance of taking such leave, to apply for a temporary exemption from CPD activity for the duration of the leave. An LCOI out of work on statutory leave for more than 12 months is required to read and assimilate the CPD Annual Update Manuals for absent year(s) on returning to CPD (these are available on the Institute's 'My Institute' in 'CPD Downloads').

#### **(ii) Illness**

Brief periods of absence due to illness etc. will not entitle an LCOI to any adjustment in CPD requirements. However, those out of work due to long-term illness (two months or more) may apply for a pro rata reduction in requirements subject to medical certification of the illness. An LCOI out of work on long-term illness for more than 12 months is required to read and assimilate the CPD Annual Update Manuals for absent year(s) on returning to CPD (these are available on the Institute's 'My Institute' in 'CPD Downloads').

#### **(iii) Circumstances where a Pro Rata Adjustment of Hours will NOT Apply**

A pro rata adjustment of hours will not apply in the following circumstances:

- **Part-time work/Job sharing**
- **Holidays** - including where taken immediately prior to or following maternity/adoption/parental/carers' leave.
- **Retirement/Redundancy/Unemployment** - where the member still wishes to retain the LCOI designation for use at any point in the future.
- **Career Break/Sabbatical leave**

The online modules in 'My Institute' which is available via [www.acoi.ie](http://www.acoi.ie), offers more than 15 modules, each counting for up to 2 hours except for the Ethics module which awards 1-hour CPD. The existing modules will be continuously updated and may be re-taken by LCOIs to earn CPD hours in a new CPD year (provided 3 months have passed since the previous completion). This, coupled with the CPD Annual Update Manual (reading and assimilation of which allows LCOIs to earn 4 hours CPD each year), make it possible for an LCOI to fully participate in the CPD scheme no matter where in the world they are.

## **21. Newly-Qualified Members – Applying for your Designation**

### **(i) Application on Qualification**

Newly qualified persons will be invited by the ACOI to apply for the LCOI designation when final ratified results are issued by the relevant Examination Board. All newly qualified persons are advised to apply for the LCOI designation by the required date outlined in this invitation (including those not currently working in retail financial services or in the financial services industry who wish to use the LCOI designation at any time in the future). The LCOI designation meets the Central Bank's Minimum Competency Code for adjudicating on complaints in relation to advice on certain retail financial products.

## **(ii) Late application**

Persons who do not apply for the designation within two years from 01 January following qualification and who wish to apply at a later date will be required to complete and pass the PDC 4 – CPD Application module and examination.

Members who apply within two years from the January following qualification will have an annual CPD requirement of 15 CPD hours ([see section 7. 'Annual CPD Requirements'](#)).

## **22. Newly-Qualified Members - Commencement of CPD**

A person who qualifies with the PDC during the course of the year will be required to commence CPD activity following receipt of final ratified results.

CPD requirements will be adjusted on a pro rata basis for such members as follows:

### **(i) Qualified following January – July Examination Boards:**

- 4 hours to be completed by 31 December of that year (i.e. year of qualification). LCOIs who have been granted a pro rata adjustment in CPD will not be required to complete one hour of CPD which relates to ethics in the year of qualification. The full CPD requirements (including the ethics requirement), as set out in [section 7. 'Annual CPD Requirements'](#), will apply the following year i.e. in the first full CPD year.
- Members will declare on the application form for LCOI Designation that they will read and assimilate the CPD Annual Update Manual (which counts for four CPD hours) in the first year of qualification and will not be required to record or return the four hours in that year).

### **(ii) Qualified following August – December Examination Boards:**

- Commence CPD on the 01 January of the following year with the full annual requirement of 15 hours (including ethics requirement), as set out in [section 7. 'Annual CPD Requirements'](#), to be completed by 31 December of that year.

## **23. Other Designations**

LCOIs who also hold other designations such as QFA, Registered Stockbroker, Chartered Banker, CIP etc. are required to make an annual return of CPD hours for each separate designation held. In many cases, the CPD hours completed for other designations may also count for the LCOI designation (please note that the reverse is not always true). Members should check with the Institute or other relevant professional body in the event of any queries on qualifying hours.

## **24. LCOIs not Working in the Financial Services Industry**

LCOIs who no longer work in retail financial services or the financial services industry are required to comply with the CPD requirements if they wish to retain their LCOI designation for current or future use. The LCOI designation meets the Central Bank's Minimum Competency Code for adjudicating on complaints in relation to advice on certain retail financial products. Members who do not comply with the CPD requirements will be subject to the procedure outlined in [section 28. 'Failure to Comply'](#).

## **25. Keeping Records & Supporting Documentation**

Each LCOI is responsible for keeping his/her own records in relation to CPD undertaken. The Institute has produced a record sheet to assist LCOIs in this task (see Appendix B).

The Institute also provides an Online CPD Record in 'My Institute' available via [www.acoi.ie](http://www.acoi.ie) for LCOIs to track and record their CPD hours. LCOIs are required to record each individual approved event making up their CPD hours in their personal Online CPD Record in order to make their annual return at the year end.

LCOIs are also required to keep supporting documentation as evidence of attendance at events or completion of a course e.g. attendance sheets, certificates of attendance, certificates of completion, computer printout/record of completion, written confirmation from employer etc.

It is essential to keep personal records and supporting documentation, as members will be required to present original versions of them should they be the subject of an audit at any stage ([see section 27. 'Audit'](#)). The Institute reserves the right to verify the information contained in the records, including the right to contact any of the organisations/people listed in a member's records.

Such records and documentation should be retained for at least six years.

The Central Bank also reserves the right to check any person's compliance with their CPD requirements (see section 2.7.1 'Monitoring compliance with CPD requirements' under the Minimum Competency Code).

## 26. Annual Returns

Every LCOI is obliged to make an Annual Return by **31 January** every year declaring:

- the approved events that make up their CPD Hours for the previous calendar year i.e. 1st January to the 31 December, and
- that the hours completed conform to the requirements ([see section 7. 'Annual CPD Requirements'](#)) and the criteria for CPD ([See section 12. 'ACOI Criteria in Relation to Awarding CPD Credit'](#)).

LCOIs are required to record all approved CPD events in their Online CPD Record in 'My Institute' available via [www.iob.ie](http://www.iob.ie). A member's Online CPD Record will then form the basis of their Annual Return. The online Annual Return process usually opens in early December each year until 31 January of the following year.

Thereafter, anyone who has not made an Annual Return will be considered not to have complied with the CPD requirements and will be subject to the procedure outlined below under [section 28. 'Failure to Comply'](#).

CPD hours must be completed by 31 December each year. Hours completed in January will count for that CPD year and cannot be counted for the previous CPD Year e.g. hours completed in January will count for the CPD year and not.

## 27. Audit

The Institute will audit a random sample of member returns each year in order to verify that the hours completed conform to the requirements ([see section 7. 'Annual CPD Requirements'](#) and [See section 12. 'ACOI Criteria in Relation to Awarding CPD Credit'](#)) and the information returned is true. Should a member be the subject of an audit they will be required to present supporting documentation confirming attendance/completion for each CPD event (external to the Institute) in their return e.g. attendance sheets, certificates of attendance, certificates of completion, computer printout/record of completion, written confirmation from employer etc.

Details of the records will then be verified, as seen fit by the Institute (including, if deemed necessary, contacting any of the organisations/people listed in the records). Audits are predominantly random and so a member may be the subject of an audit on any number of occasions (successive or intermittent) and must comply by furnishing the Institute with appropriate records/proof of CPD completed during the previous calendar year.

LCOI's found to have returned hours without supporting documentation confirming attendance or events covering predominantly the same material will have the events removed.

Any resulting shortfall will be carried to the following year, unless a five-year shortfall warning already applies [see \(section 28. 'Failure to Comply'\)](#)

Penalty hours may also be applied in addition to the shortfall hours.

## 28. Failure to Comply

Any LCOI who:

- (a) Fails to make an annual return and/or
- (b) Fails to co-operate when audited and/or
- (c) Fails to pay the membership fees of ACOI and/or
- (d) Makes a false or seriously incorrect annual return

will be deemed to be in breach of the CPD scheme requirements and thus in breach of one of the primary conditions of holding the LCOI designation ([see section 1 'Introduction'](#)). This will result in the removal of the LCOI designation from the person.

Any LCOI who fails to complete the CPD requirement in any given year as set out in section 7 (i.e. fails to complete the required hours or fails to complete one hour related to ethics) will, in the first instance, be given a grace period to 'catch up' and complete any shortfall in CPD requirements by 31 December of the following CPD year (in addition to the requirements for that CPD year). A five-year shortfall warning penalty will also be applied to the member's record i.e. if the member fails to complete the CPD requirement as set out in section 7 in any of the five years following the first failure to comply, their LCOI designation will be removed.

Persons who lose their LCOI designation may not be in a position to adjudicate on complaints in relation to advice on certain retail financial products under the Central Bank's Minimum Competency Code.

Persons who have their LCOI designation removed for non-compliance must be removed from their regulated firm's Register of Accredited Persons and can only be restored once he or she is again in compliance with the CPD requirements.

## 29. Reinstatement of the LCOI Designation

A person who has had their LCOI designation removed due to failure to comply with the CPD regulations (a) to (c) in section 28 above, is advised to apply to reinstate their designation as a matter of urgency. Such a person should state their case in writing to The Institute of Banking. Requests to reinstate the LCOI designation are considered on a case-by-case basis.

A reinstated person will be subject to one or more of the reinstatement rules as follows:

### (i) 4 years or less out of the scheme:

- Completion of any shortfall\* in CPD hours (in addition to the requirements for the year of reinstatement) and application of the shortfall warning, where relevant
- Payment of backdated designation and / or membership fees, where relevant
- €100 reinstatement fee

**OR**

Alternatively, a person may elect to complete and pass the PDC 4 – CPD Reinstatement module and examination (no reinstatement fee or backdated designation and / or membership fees apply in this case).

### (ii) 5 or more years out of the scheme:

- Complete and pass the PDC 4 – CPD Reinstatement module and examination. No reinstatement fee or backdated designation and / or membership fees apply in this case.

\*A person with a shortfall in CPD requirements may apply to be included in the CPD scheme as a 'suspended' member in order to complete the CPD shortfall but will not have the LCOI designation reinstated at this time. Suspended members who have not completed their shortfall in CPD hours and the accumulating hours for the years in suspended mode within two years from 01 January following the date of suspension, will be required to complete and pass the PDC 4 – CPD Reinstatement module and examination in order to reinstate.

Annual fees are payable while a suspended member of the scheme. A suspended member will only be included in his/her regulated firm's Register of Accredited Persons once he or she is in compliance with the CPD requirements (i.e. is reinstated as a full member of the CPD scheme and is awarded the LCOI designation). A person will be given credit for any verified CPD relevant to the LCOI designation completed in the period prior to suspension. A shortfall warning will be applied on reinstatement i.e. if the member fails to complete the CPD requirements as set out in section 7 in any of the five years following the most recent failure to comply, the LCOI designation will be removed.

A person will be reinstated to the CPD scheme as a full member and will have the LCOI designation reinstated once he or she is again in compliance with the CPD requirements i.e. has completed any shortfall in CPD requirements and paid the relevant fees or has passed the PDC 4 – CPD Reinstatement module and examination.

Suspended members should advise the Institute in writing (to [cpd@acoi.ie](mailto:cpd@acoi.ie)) when they have completed the outstanding hours in order to be considered for reinstatement to the LCOI designation.

Where a person has the LCOI designation removed having been found to have made a false or seriously incorrect return of hours (regulation (d) in section 28 above), he/she is deemed in serious breach of the rules of the CPD scheme and will not be eligible for reinstatement i.e. he/she will be permanently excluded from holding the LCOI designation, subject to approval by the ACOI Board.

### **30. Appeals**

If an LCOI has reasonable grounds, they may appeal against the application of the CPD regulations as set out in these Guidelines & Regulations. Appeals should be submitted in writing addressed to the Appeals Officer at [acoi@iob.ie](mailto:acoi@iob.ie).

### **31. Correspondence with LCOIs**

The Institute will correspond electronically with LCOIs during the year regarding CPD hours required, annual returns etc. via 'My Institute' on [www.acoi.ie](http://www.acoi.ie).

LCOIs can access all such correspondence by logging in to the 'My Institute' using their membership number and password and going to 'My Correspondence'. LCOIs will be alerted by email and SMS text (per the contact information held on the Institute's records) when correspondence has been posted to 'My Correspondence'. LCOIs are advised to check the 'My Correspondence' section regularly for important CPD communications. The Institute may also correspond via email and SMS text with members.

### **32. Costs**

There is currently no additional cost to LCOIs for participation in the CPD scheme. However, members should note that individual events, seminars, special publications etc. do from time-to-time involve a charge that the member pays to the association/body running the event or publishing the material.

### **33. Provision of Information to Employers and the Central Bank**

The information provided by you on your LCOI designation application form and generated during the course of your CPD membership may be used and disclosed by the ACOI/The Institute of Banking for all purposes which are reasonably incidental to the administration of your CPD registration and ongoing membership. Those purposes may include the disclosure of CPD hours to your employer and such other information as may be necessary to enable your employer to maintain a Register of Accredited Persons and for other regulatory or compliance purposes. Your information may also be disclosed to the Central Bank for Minimum Competency/Fitness and Probity requirements. You are entitled to ask for a copy of the personal data that your professional body holds about you and to have any inaccuracies in such personal data amended or erased. You may do so by writing to the Registrar at the Institute or the ACOI.

### **34. Change of Personal Details**

LCOIs are required to update their personal details in 'My Profile' in 'My Institute' on [www.job.ie](http://www.job.ie) in the event of any changes to mailing address, e-mail address, contact phone number, company details etc.

### **35. Further Information**

You can access the 'CPD Downloads / News' section in 'My Institute' for further information, including CPD FAQs.

### **36. Contact Details**

**CPD Helpline:** 01-611 6500  
**E-Mail:** [cpd@acoi.ie](mailto:cpd@acoi.ie)  
**Post:** The Institute of Banking in Ireland  
1 North Wall Quay, Dublin 1  
**Website:** [www.acoi.ie](http://www.acoi.ie)

### **37. Appendices**

- A. Pro Rata Adjustment Form
- B. CPD Personal Record Sheet
- C. PDC Syllabus Topics 2017/18
- D. Minimum Competencies for Retail Financial Products

See separate document 'LCOI Guidelines & Regulations 2018 Appendices' available in 'CPD Downloads' in 'My Institute' on [www.acoi.ie](http://www.acoi.ie).