



Report on
**Continuing
Professional
Development**
2025

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About this report

2025 was the first year in which all architects on the UK Register were required to comply with ARB's Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Scheme.

The introduction of mandatory CPD followed recommendations made after the Grenfell Tower tragedy and statutory provisions subsequently included within the Building Safety Act 2022. It represented a significant milestone for the profession and reflects ARB's statutory responsibility to monitor the ongoing competence of architects. It also supports wider efforts to improve public confidence, building safety, environmental sustainability and professional standards.

This report shares the evidence from the first statutory CPD cycle. It describes the very significant progress made by architects in undertaking and recording CPD, identifies the practical and cultural challenges exposed during the first year, and sets out how the scheme should develop as it matures.



Executive summary



The first statutory year of CPD was a significant change for the profession. The evidence shows strong engagement and a high level of eventual compliance. It also shows that the scheme is not yet mature: the quality of recorded reflection varied considerably, and the use of two recording systems created confusion and inconsistent oversight. For some architects, the recording of CPD remained a year-end compliance exercise rather than an embedded part of professional development.

The first year was successfully implemented.

The overwhelming majority of architects engaged positively with the new statutory process. All architects were required to make a statutory CPD declaration at the point of annual registration with very high levels of compliance.

Most architects complied with the new CPD scheme.

Of those architects required to submit CPD as part of the renewal process, we estimate that over 85% of architects complied with the new statutory requirement. 270 architects were removed from the register for non-compliance.

The profession is undertaking CPD, but the quality of recorded learning is inconsistent.

Records ranged from the minimum level of activity to very extensive programmes. The median number of activities recorded on MyARB was four, against a recommended number of eight. More importantly, there was very significant variation in the quality of reflection and in architects' ability to explain how learning affected practice.

Two recording platforms made the scheme harder to understand and oversee.

The ability to record through either MyARB or the RIBA platform was intended to avoid duplication. In practice, differing requirements, deadlines, data structures and access arrangements caused confusion and meant that ARB could not apply the same oversight and feedback processes consistently across the profession.

The next stage must move from compliance to value.

A mature scheme should help architects identify relevant learning needs, reflect meaningfully and apply learning in practice, while providing credible public assurance about ongoing

2025 at a glance

38,000+

architects made a CPD declaration

21,003

records reviewed on MyARB

90%

initial MyARB compliance

98%

MyARB compliance after case management

802

RIBA records reviewed as a 5% sample

4

median number of activities recorded on MyARB

2

mandatory topics

The ARB CPD Scheme



The ARB CPD scheme is designed around four overarching aims and principles:

1. Improve overall competence of the profession
2. Be tailored by architects to their own practice and needs
3. Be proportionate and deliverable
4. Avoid duplication where possible

An outcomes-focused scheme

Having reviewed alternative statutory and voluntary schemes in other professions and sectors, and considered feedback from the statutory consultation held in 2022/23, the Board concluded that the scheme should focus on the outcomes of CPD rather than solely on input measures such as hours or points.

Attendance at CPD events is not the same as learning. The scheme therefore requires architects not only to undertake relevant learning activities, but also to reflect on what they have learned and how that learning has influenced, or will influence, their professional practice.

Relevant to individual practice

Architects work in a wide range of roles and settings. Their learning needs will not be identical. The scheme is therefore designed to allow architects to select activities that are relevant to their own responsibilities, development needs and areas of practice, while completing CPD on any mandatory topics set by ARB.

Proportionate and practical

ARB does not require architects to attend prescribed courses or complete a fixed number of hours. Formal training can be valuable, but learning also takes place through research, peer discussion, teaching, practical experience and self-directed activity. The scheme recognises these different forms of development and seeks to avoid unnecessary burdens.

Public and professional value

The statutory purpose of the scheme is to support architects to maintain and develop their competence throughout their careers. By encouraging relevant learning, reflection and application, CPD can also strengthen professional judgement, improve practice and reinforce public and client confidence in the profession.

Key data and insights



How architects recorded CPD

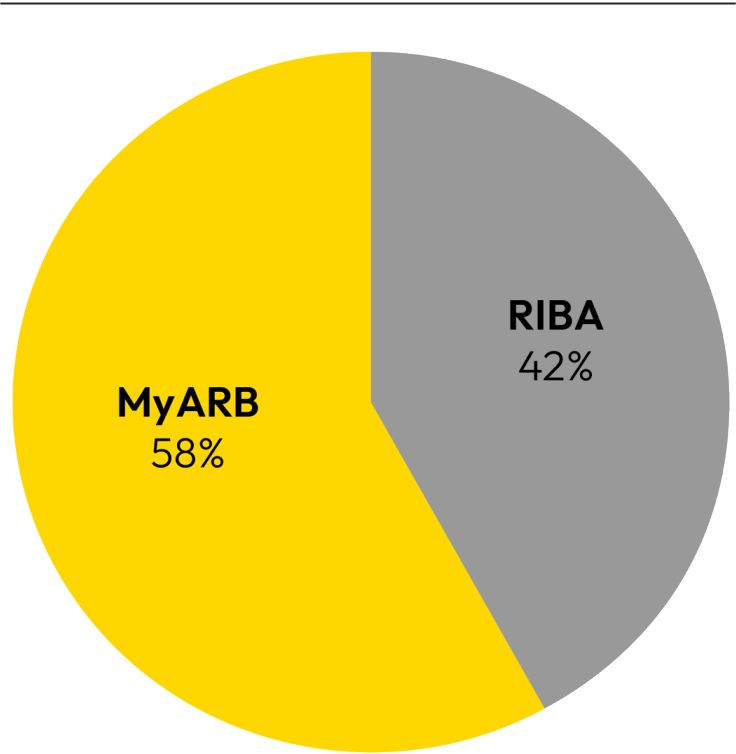
There is one statutory CPD scheme for architects, approved by ARB. As part of the annual renewal process, all architects were required to make a formal declaration to ARB that they had completed their statutory CPD. Architects could not renew their registration until they had made this declaration, unless they were eligible for a deferral.

At the point of declaration, architects could confirm that they had recorded, or would record within the applicable retention period, their CPD either on MyARB or on the RIBA platform. This arrangement was intended to avoid unnecessary duplication for RIBA members. Architects using the RIBA platform nevertheless remained subject to ARB’s statutory scheme and requirements.

Of the more than 38,000 architects who renewed their registered status for 2026 and submitted a CPD declaration as part of the renewal process, 21,003 declared that they recorded their CPD in MyARB, 15,279 declared that they recorded their CPD with RIBA, and 1,753 were accepted for deferrals and/or exclusions.

Once the annual retention period had closed in early January the review of CPD started. The process for assessing compliance varied for those who completed their CPD on the MyARB platform and RIBA.

CPD records by recording platform (%)



How compliance was assessed

The approach differed between the two recording routes because ARB had different levels of access to the underlying data.

Due to investment in ARB's systems and technology, ARB was able to review all records submitted through MyARB. Initial compliance checks used a new artificial intelligence tool developed for ARB. Every record identified as potentially non-compliant was reviewed by ARB staff. A record was non-compliant where, for example, it did not include CPD on the two mandatory topics — fire and life safety design and environmental sustainability — or did not include a reflective statement.

	MyARB	RIBA
Records reviewed	21,003 (100% of records)	802 (sample of approx. 5%)
Initial compliance	18,956 (90%)	566 (71%) within the 5% sample
Final compliance after case management	20,661 (98%)	765 (95%) within the 5% sample
Removed for non-compliance	233 architects (removed on 3 March 2026)	37 architects within the 5% sample

Case management and final compliance

Architects who had mis-declared (e.g. those who declared they had completed on the MyARB CPD platform, but had done so on RIBA's), were only partly compliant or were non-compliant were contacted and told what they needed to do, and by when, to become compliant. The timing and degree of automation differed between MyARB and RIBA records, but the purpose was the same: to support compliance before removal from the Register was considered.

Following a four-week case-management period and a statutory two-week Notice of Removal:

- 20,661 of the 21,003 architects recording through MyARB were compliant, equivalent to 98%;
- 765 architects in the RIBA sample of 802 were compliant;
- 233 architects from the MyARB cohort were removed for non-compliance; and
- 37 architects from the RIBA sample were removed for non-compliance.

There was some exercise of judgement in determining compliance, as permitted by the

Registration Rules.

Only 34 people — 13% of those removed — subsequently rejoined the Register. ARB cannot determine from this figure alone why others did not return. However, it indicates that removal did not simply result in most affected architects immediately completing the outstanding requirements and seeking readmission.

Sample-based approach for RIBA records

Although initial compliance in the RIBA sample was 71%, a further 11% had partially completed CPD and engaged in the process.

ARB could review only a sample of RIBA records because access to the data was limited, the data was unstructured and the AI tool could not be applied to a third party's records. The RIBA results should therefore be understood as findings from the sample rather than as a complete assessment of every architect who declared that they had recorded through RIBA.

For architects who completed their CPD through RIBA's CPD platform, ARB reviewed a randomly selected sample of 802 records from a total cohort of 15,279 architects. This represented approximately 5% of the RIBA cohort.

As the sample was selected at random, the results could be used to estimate compliance across the wider RIBA cohort. The sample size provides a margin of error of approximately ± 2.6 percentage points for the initial compliance rate and ± 1.4 percentage points for the final compliance rate, at a 95% confidence level.



Topics and activities

The analysis in this section relates only to the MyARB dataset.

Architects recording in MyARB categorised their CPD under nine topics*:

- environmental sustainability;
- fire and life safety;
- design;
- specification of products;
- business and practice;
- regulatory knowledge;
- ethics;
- conservation and heritage; and
- other.

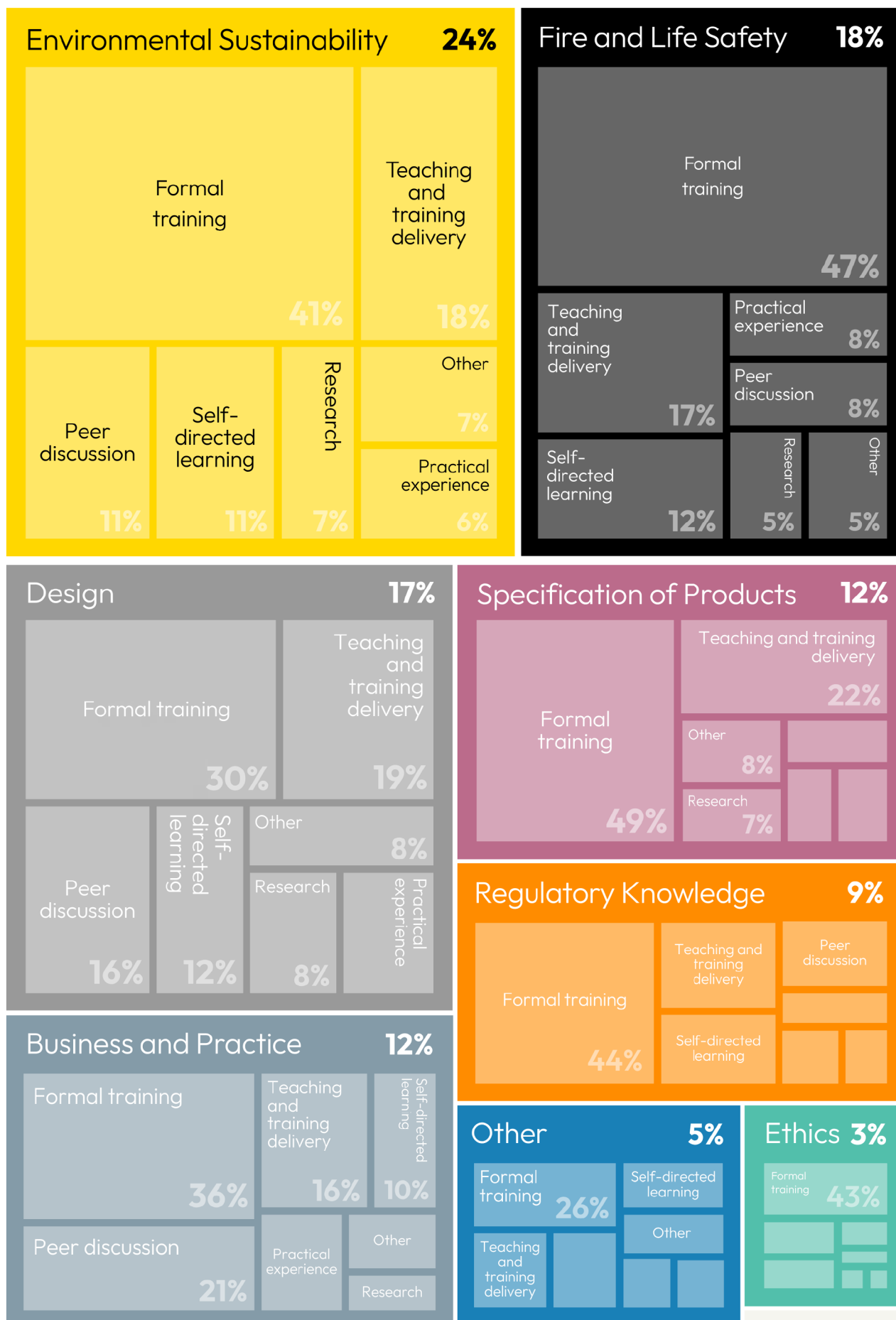
The largest shares of recorded activity were environmental sustainability at 24%, fire and life safety at 18%, and design at 17%. Specification of products and business and practice each accounted for 12%, regulatory knowledge 9%, other 5% and ethics 3%.

Formal training was the most common activity type across most topics. Architects also recorded teaching and training delivery, peer discussion, self-directed learning, research, practical experience and other forms of learning.

The median number of activities recorded by architects using MyARB was four. The recommended number was eight, although the scheme is outcomes-focused and the number of activities alone does not establish the value or quality of an architect's CPD.

*Conservation and Heritage was added as a topic in 2026. Thus only some architects, retroactively adding activities for the previous year, listed activities under this topic.





What the evidence tells us



The evidence points to a successful launch, but not yet to a fully mature CPD culture or system. Five findings stand out.

1. Architects engaged seriously with the new requirement

The overwhelming majority of architects made the required declaration and, where problems were identified, most responded to case management and became compliant. This is a substantial achievement in the first year of a new statutory process and reflects positively on the profession's willingness to engage with continuing competence.

The public and those who use architects' services should take reassurance from that level of engagement. At the same time, eventual compliance should not obscure the number of architects who needed additional contact or corrective action before meeting the requirements.

2. Undertaking CPD is more familiar to architects than reflecting on it

Most architects are accustomed to learning through their work and through formal or informal development activity. The newer requirement is to articulate what was learned and how it affected, or will affect, practice.

The quality of recorded reflection varied significantly. In many cases, records described the process — attending a course, reading guidance or taking part in a discussion — rather than the resulting insight, change in understanding or practical application. This does not necessarily mean that the underlying activity lacked value. It does mean that the record did not always demonstrate that value clearly.

3. Quantity varied, but quantity is not the same as quality

The median number of activities recorded on MyARB was four, compared with a recommended number of eight.

This variation is relevant, but its importance should not be overstated. An outcomes-focused scheme should not imply that a long list of activities is automatically stronger than a smaller number of relevant, demanding and well-applied learning experiences. The more important test is whether the architect identified genuine learning needs, undertook suitable activity, reflected meaningfully and used the learning in practice.

4. The scheme was harder to understand and oversee than was intended

Allowing two recording platforms was intended to avoid duplication. In practice, it created confusion about which requirements applied, what deadlines architects needed to meet and whether ARB or RIBA requirements took precedence.

Feedback included assumptions that architects were required to complete both a competence test and 35 hours of CPD, and that an extension granted under the RIBA system changed the statutory ARB deadline. These misunderstandings show that the distinction between the statutory scheme and other CPD requirements was not sufficiently well understood.

The dual arrangement also limited consistent oversight. For MyARB records, ARB could review every submission, tailor communications, automate reminders and analyse trends. For RIBA records, ARB had limited access, had to rely on a sample and could not use the same technology or data structure. In effect, one statutory scheme was being administered through two materially different platforms.

5. Compliance with statutory CPD varied between recording platforms

We saw statistically significant variation in compliance with CPD between those architects nominating to complete CPD on MyARB and those nominating RIBA. The reasons for this are likely to be multifactorial and we are working with RIBA to improve communications with architects about their professional and statutory obligations.



Why good CPD matters



Compliance with the CPD scheme is necessary to maintain public confidence in the profession, but it is not the ultimate purpose of CPD. The greatest value comes when learning changes what an architect notices, asks, checks or does in practice.

For architects

Purposeful CPD can help architects keep pace with changes in regulation, technology, materials and professional expectations. It can expose gaps in knowledge before those gaps affect a project, strengthen professional judgement and support progression into new roles or areas of responsibility.

For practices

Practices can use CPD to develop collective capability, improve consistency, strengthen supervision and mentoring, and connect learning to quality assurance. The value increases when learning is discussed within teams and used to update project reviews, technical standards, office procedures or decision-making processes.

For clients and the public

Clients are entitled to expect that architects keep their knowledge and skills current. A credible statutory scheme provides assurance that ongoing competence is taken seriously across the profession. Good CPD cannot remove every risk, but it can support better informed decisions and greater confidence in professional services.

An illustrative example

An architect attends training on fire and life safety. A weak record would state only that the session was completed and was useful. A stronger record would identify what the architect learned, explain how it changed their understanding of a current project, and record any action taken — for example, seeking specialist advice, revising a project-start checklist or discussing the issue with the project team.

The activity may be the same in both cases. The difference is that the stronger approach makes the learning visible and connects it to professional practice.

Priorities for improvement



The first year provides a strong foundation. The next phase of the CPD scheme should retain a proportionate approach while improving clarity, consistency, quality and value.

1. Make the statutory requirements easier to understand

ARB will provide clearer, simpler and more consistent communications about the requirements, deadlines and relationship between the statutory scheme and any other CPD arrangements. Communications will distinguish clearly between undertaking CPD, recording it, declaring compliance and responding to an ARB check.

2. Improve the quality of reflection

ARB will expand practical guidance on meaningful reflection, using anonymised examples that show the difference between describing an activity and explaining learning and application. Support will be designed to improve professional practice, not merely to help architects produce more polished text.

3. Provide more timely and tailored feedback

Technology will be developed to give architects earlier feedback on missing information, incomplete mandatory topics and weak or absent reflection. All records flagged by automated tools will continue to be subject to appropriate human review where regulatory decisions may follow.

4. Turn aggregate data into useful professional insight

Consistent data can help identify learning priorities, areas of uncertainty and emerging trends across the profession. ARB will use these insights to improve guidance, communications and policy, while ensuring that data is handled appropriately and that aggregate analysis is not treated as a substitute for evidence about actual competence.

5. Involve practices as well as individuals

Practices will be encouraged to incorporate CPD into appraisals, project reviews, technical meetings, mentoring and quality assurance. A mature culture will depend on CPD being supported through normal professional systems rather than treated as an individual year-end task.

6. Evaluate impact, not only compliance

ARB will develop a proportionate approach to assessing whether the scheme is helping architects improve practice. This may include research with architects, practices, clients and other stakeholders. Compliance data alone cannot demonstrate whether CPD is producing better professional outcomes.



A mature CPD scheme by 2030



A mature scheme will be judged not only by high compliance, but by whether CPD is purposeful, relevant and connected to practice. Architects should use CPD to identify and address learning needs, while practices should support learning through appraisals, project reviews, mentoring and quality assurance.

ARB should be able to draw appropriate insight from CPD data to identify common learning needs and emerging areas of risk, while maintaining proportionate oversight and appropriate safeguards. Clients and the public should be able to take confidence from a scheme that demonstrates that architects continue to develop their competence throughout their careers.

By 2030, a mature scheme should therefore be:

- simple to understand and use;
- consistently overseen;
- focused on learning and application rather than administrative completion;
- integrated into professional and practice development;
- supported by technology which provides timely and proportionate feedback; and
- capable of producing credible insight and public assurance.

Annexe: What good CPD looks like



Individual learning needs and practice contexts will vary. The following principles reflect common characteristics of purposeful CPD and stronger recorded reflection.

1. Start with a simple plan

At the beginning of the cycle, identify the areas in which you need to develop. These may include regulatory or technical knowledge gaps, changes in role, project-specific responsibilities or longer-term career goals. A Personal Development Plan can be brief. Its purpose is to give direction, not to create unnecessary administration.

2. Keep the plan flexible

Learning needs change. Review your plan during the year and respond to new projects, emerging risks, changes in regulation and unexpected opportunities. A useful plan is a guide, not a fixed programme.

3. Record activity regularly

Record learning as it happens rather than reconstructing the year at the deadline. Regular recording improves accuracy, supports better reflection and reduces the year-end burden.

4. Focus on what you learned

Do not stop at describing attendance or activity. Explain the insight gained, the gap addressed or the assumption that changed.

5. Explain the effect on practice

Record how the learning has influenced, or will influence, your work. This might include a change to professional judgement, a question to ask, advice to seek, a process to update or an issue to discuss with colleagues.

6. Use a range of learning methods

Formal courses are only one form of CPD. Relevant learning may also arise from research, peer discussion, practical experience, teaching, self-directed study and reviewing project outcomes.

7. Connect individual and practice learning

Share relevant learning with colleagues. Practices can reinforce CPD through appraisals, project reviews, technical meetings, mentoring and quality assurance systems.

Weak record: “Attended a seminar on fire safety. It was informative.”

Stronger record: “The seminar clarified the information I should obtain before advising on alterations to an existing higher-risk building. I have updated our project-start checklist and discussed the change with the project team.”

