

# Tips for Maximizing your CPD Points



**THE COLLEGE IS** a self-regulating body enabled through the *College of Applied Biology Act*. By registering with the College, we have agreed to meet a number of obligations laid out in the *College of Applied Biology Act, Rules, and Policies*, which are legally binding. Continued Professional Development (CPD) is an important component of the College obligations, as it is a measure of assurance to the public that we are remaining competent in our various practices.

When completing audits of members, we sometimes run into situations where the member is experiencing difficulties attaining sufficient CPD points to meet their obligations as a member of the College. When this is the case, it is most often due to a lack of familiarity with the *College Rules* and their obligations as a member — CPD requirements are outlined in section 16 of the *Rules*. Other times we are contacted by a member, who, through filling out their CPD forms, find that they may be deficient in points over the three year period. When this is the case, the member is familiar with the *College Rules* and their obligations, and they are proactively seeking advice.

Since the mandate of Audit and Practice Review Committee has more to do with education and corrective action than punitive measures, in both cases we work with the member to identify less obvious CPD activities that they might have completed, but were unaware they could claim points for.

**Here are some of the CPD activities that members commonly forget to claim:**

**Staying up-to-date with legislation:** time spent reviewing any changes in legislation that apply to your practice is a claimable activity. This includes non-biological legislation you need to follow in your practice or business (e.g. Occupational Health and Safety Regulations). For many members, staying on top of significant changes to the *Fisheries Act* and Regulations and the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* alone should provide a substantial portion of a member's CPD obligations. Members also often overlook claiming points for reading the *College of Applied Biology Act*, the *Rules*, and the *Code of Ethics*, despite claiming on their audit forms that they have reviewed them in the recent past.

**Business-oriented activities:** many College members have businesses. Courses related to business practices that assist in the management of their business are eligible for CPD points.

**Mentoring practicing or aspiring biologists:** time spent mentoring aspiring biologists and student biologists is a claimable activity, as is mentoring or training a registered College member, as long as such activities are not an expectation of one's position of employment (such as the relationship between a manager and junior staff person).

**Non-routine tasks on the job:** generally, a member can't collect extra CPD points for activities that are the main focus of their job responsibilities. I say "generally" because a member is able to claim points for things that are outside of routine day-to-day

responsibilities. For example, any courses you take that provide a skill required for your employment are eligible for points (e.g. first aid, WHMIS, swift water rescue, ATV training, species at risk training, GIS training, etc.), regardless of some being non-biological. Any training modules your employer provides are also eligible. Preparing presentations for internal meetings or clients is another method of collecting CPD points, as long as it is a non-routine component of your work.

**Reading journal and technical papers:** self-directed activities either related to applied biology or general professional competencies are important CPD activities. Reading online sources, textbooks, or instructions for new software are all eligible CPD activities. Developing a learning plan to expand on your area of expertise can significantly increase your potential for claiming CPD points for informal learning activities.

**Doing a self-audit:** if you are up to it, downloading the Audit Form (<https://www.cab-bc.org/audit-program>) and doing a self-audit is eligible for two CPD points. It is important to note however, that points cannot be claimed for something you plan on doing or attending.

When provided the information above, all audited members that initially appeared to be deficient in CPD points (or members who pro-actively enquired about the program) tended to complete their three consecutive years with sufficient points. When in doubt, give the CPD form instructions a read, or call our office. 

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