

Pronouncement 7

Continuous Professional Education

Version 2 March 2013

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1. Preamble

Accountants providing professional services must maintain and enhance their skills. The public interest requires that accountants providing professional services do so in a competent manner.

The range and depth of knowledge required by accountants has expanded significantly in recent years. The rate of future change is expected to grow; imposing even greater demands on accountants to provide up to date and timely information on an increasing range of topics.

In recognition of the continuing change within the accounting profession, the Institute of Public Accountants (IPA) has developed a policy of continuing professional education for members.

2. Definitions

Institute is the Institute of Public Accountants (IPA)

Biennium is a two calendar year period

Members means those persons registered by the Institute under the following classes:

- Associate (AIPA)
- Member (MIPA)
- Fellow (FIPA)

Approved means approved by the Board of Directors via this Pronouncement.

Approved CPE activities require active participation by members and must contribute directly to professional competence.

Retired member is a person who has been classified as retired on the IPA membership list.

Structured CPE is CPE which has a clear set of objectives and a logical framework. The objectives are the stated learning outcomes and the framework is the stated learning methodologies to achieve those objectives.

Subject areas although the choice of subject matter of learning activities is left to the discretion of the member the subject matter must be directly relevant to the member's occupation. Refer to Appendix for relevant subject areas.



3. CPE Policy and Objectives

Continuing Professional Education (CPE) comprises learning activities that directly contribute to the professional competence of a member.

The objective of CPE is to enhance member knowledge, to assist members to remain up to date with legislative and technological changes and professional accounting standards, and to recognise that there is a public interest in the profession which expects that members will commit to ongoing training to enhance their skills so they can provide the services clients reasonably expect of them to a high professional standard.

The Institute of Public Accountants requires all members, except those to which an exemption has been granted, to complete a minimum of 80 hours of CPE each biennium (or two years).

4. Applicability

Members are required to undertake the appropriate level of continuing professional education activities as prescribed by the Board of Directors in this Pronouncement.

From 1 January 2006, CPE requirements for all members are 80 hours each biennium. Excess hours may be carried forward for one year. Refer to Appendix for relevant subject areas.

5. Exemptions

Retired members are exempt from complying with CPE requirements.

In special circumstances the Institute may grant exemption or deferment from CPE requirements. Any member seeking an exemption or deferment shall apply in writing giving full details of the special circumstances that warrant the exemption/deferment.

Circumstances justifying partial exemption from the CPE requirement may include protracted health problems, physical disability, working in areas where no facilities exist for structured learning activities, or extended holidays overseas.

6. Types and Providers of CPE Activities

CPE in accountancy and related activities which extend the level of knowledge and contribute to the professional competence of members may include:

Structured CPE

- congresses and conventions;
- IPA endorsed discussion groups;
- service on technical committees responsible for preparation and review of professional/technical material (limited to 10 hours of the two year requirement);
- for non-academics: research, preparation and presentation of lectures;
- serving as a mentor in the IPA Mentored Experience Program (up to 40 hours per annum);
- relevant studies undertaken with an IPA recognised University/TAFE or other education institution for the purpose of advancement;
- participation in a IPA Professional Practice Quality Assurance review (up to 10 hours); and
- IPA provided CPE seminars and workshops.

Members are required to ensure that at least 50% of the minimum CPE hours of 80 hours each biennium are structured CPE hours.

Events may be conducted by other institutions (local and international) including relevant universities; and accounting and finance related professional bodies; including but not limited to CPA Australia, CA Australia, FTA, Finsia, NTAA, SPAA and NIBA.



Unstructured CPE

- other courses, seminars and workshops;
- self-study programmes including distance learning courses, computer assisted learning programmes, audiotape or videotape packages, and programmed learning courses; other than those undertaken as part of the IPA Program or with a IPA recognised University/TAFE or other education institution for the purpose of advancement;
- research for, and writing of technical articles or publications, papers or books (up to 20 hours of the biennium requirement);
- learning associated with acquisition of new computer software (up to 20 hours per annum);
- assisting with work experience placement of students (up to 10 hours per annum); and
- reading that forms research on accounting topics/subjects where that reading serves to keep the member abreast of regulatory and technical accounting issues (up to 20 hours of the two year requirement). Examples may include journal/newspaper/magazine articles directly relating to professional accounting issues and the review of legislation/regulations/accounting standards.

Events may be conducted by other institutions (local and international) including relevant universities, and accounting and finance related professional bodies; including but not limited to CPA Australia, CA Australia, FTA, Finsia, NTAA, SPAA and NIBA.

7. Record of CPE Activities

Members are required to record details of approved learning activities to satisfy themselves they have complied with CPE obligations. These records are to be retained for three years after the end of the membership year and are to be made available for random audit by the Institute on request.

The Institute will conduct random audits of the CPE activities of members.

8. Non-Compliance

A member who fails to comply with CPE requirements shall be downgraded one level of membership. Notice of the proposed downgrading shall be forwarded with the authority of the Board of Directors to the said member giving that person thirty (30) days in which to appeal to the Board of Directors. Notice of appeal must be in writing and addressed to the Board of Directors for the attention of "Executive Officer".

If no Notice of Appeal is received within the specified time, the effective date of the downgrade is deemed to be the first occurring 30th June following the end of the non-compliance period.

9. Admission, Advancement and Changes in Membership Status

New members joining within a biennium will have a pro-rata CPE requirement to bring them into line with the following biennium.

Members applying for advancement must be in a position to prove their CPE obligations are in good standing.



Appendix A

Subject areas

Although the choice of subject matter is at the discretion of the member, relevant subject areas for CPE are as follows.

In each instance, there would normally be due consideration of emerging issues.

- accounting;
- auditing;
- banking and finance;
- commercial and corporate law;
- business mathematics and quantitative techniques;
- economics;
- financial management;
- information technology;
- management/business advisory services;
- taxation and trust law;
- superannuation;
- financial and/or investment advice and planning;
- corporate advisory/reconstruction;
- bankruptcy;
- insurance;
- bookkeeping;
- company secretarial and Board;
- corporate acquisitions/sale/takeovers;
- ethics and professional values;
- critical thinking, problem solving and decision making;
- interpersonal skills and negotiation;
- self management; and
- leadership and delegations skills.

Members are invited to seek clarification of the acceptability or otherwise of proposed activities from the Institute.

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