

Guide to Approval for External CPD



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Introduction

If you have developed your Live Educational Event (LEE) to meet the needs of doctors seeking External CPD credit, it may be eligible for CPD approval.

What is a typical Live Educational Event (LEE)?

Live Educational Events normally take place in a venue where doctors can meet. They can also be delivered online in the form of a Live Webinar. Typical Live Educational Events that attract External CPD include:

- ◊ scientific meetings
- ◊ specialty relevant courses
- ◊ workshops
- ◊ seminars

While many approved events focus on medical/clinical topics, we also approve events focusing on non-clinical topics such as medico-legal, risk management, leadership, quality improvement, patient safety and personal development.

What is External CPD?

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is how doctors update their knowledge and skills throughout their working lives. This includes all elements of good medical practice - clinical and non-clinical.

External CPD is the category doctors use to record their maintenance of knowledge and skills and usually consists of educational activities that take place outside their normal working environment.

Is my event eligible?

To be eligible, your Live Educational Event must:

- ✓ take place in Ireland or be delivered online for Irish doctors using a tool such as Zoom or Panopto
- ✓ target doctors who are not engaged in postgraduate specialist training
- ✓ include learning objectives that have measurable outcomes and use action verbs such as 'evaluate', 'identify', 'review'
- ✓ meet our policy on Industry Sponsorship and Support in respect of sponsorship arrangements*
- ✓ have a designated Medical Organiser who holds Specialist Registration with the Irish Medical Council
- ✓ not take place in the past
- ✓ not contain the name of an Industry sponsor or product in its event and session/lecture titles
- ✓ not contain an Industry sponsor's corporate message, product name or logo on any of the educational material, which includes the event programme, poster presentations, slides, handouts and so on
- ✓ You must provide evidence of attendance to all those who participated in the activity
- ✓ You must keep a record of all those who participated in the activity for a period of 12 months after the date the activity took place. You may be asked to provide a copy of this record in the future
- ✓ You must provide a means for your attendees to give you post-event feedback

**You can download our policy on Industry Sponsorship and Support from [www.rcpi.ie / professional competence / Apply for CPD approval for your event](http://www.rcpi.ie/professional-competence/Apply-for-CPD-approval-for-your-event)*

Can a live webinar be approved?

Live webinars can be approved for External credits if the activity meets the following additional criteria:

- ✓ Speakers/Lecturers may be based in Ireland or abroad
- ✓ Sponsorship may only be acknowledged in text on the landing page
- ✓ Sponsor branding, trade message, company/product name or logo must not be visible on any of the educational material, including slides, downloadable handouts etc., or displayed in the background at any stage of the live webinar

Recorded Webinars

Any recording of a webinar for viewing after the event will attract 1 hour = 1 CPD credit in the Personal Learning CPD category. CPD approval or evidence of participation are not required for Personal Learning.

Recurring Events

If you hold recurring CPD events, e.g. the same activity is repeated on a number of occasions within the same Professional Competence year, we will be able to assess them all in one application if you provide a schedule of dates, venues and topics with your application. It will be necessary to submit a new application for each Professional Competence year.

Multi-disciplinary events

Where an event is of interest to multiple disciplines, all Irish Postgraduate Medical Training Bodies (PGMTB) have agreed to mutually recognise and accept the other PGMTB recognition. Therefore, where approval has been granted by one PGMTB, further approval from the other PGMTB is not required.

Reciprocity

A CPD certificate of attendance issued by one Irish postgraduate medical training body will be automatically accepted by other training bodies as evidence of a doctor's participation in that activity.

You need only apply for CPD approval to one training body.

RCPI Website Listing

You may wish to have your activity included in the [list of activities approved for CPD](#). To be eligible for inclusion in the RCPI Website listing the activity must meet the following criteria:

- Be open to all doctors who have interest in the topic
- Is not aimed specifically at employees of your organisation/institution
- Completed application form and all supporting documents submitted 4 weeks before you advertise the activity
- Name of the person to contact for registration enquiries and their email is entered in the relevant section of our application form.
 - *The contact for registration cannot be a sponsoring Institution*

Please note: Eligible activities will be published to the RCPI website. All dates and venues on the RCPI website are available to the public and queries regarding the activity will be directed to the email provided by the applicant. In this regard, it is essential that any changes in dates or venues be notified to professionalcompetence@rcpi.ie as soon as they arise.

Disclaimer: While every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the information provided on the RCPI website, RCPI cannot accept any responsibility or liability for information provided by outside organisations.

Educational activities that do not require approval for External CPD

- ✓ Internal meetings, such as Grand Rounds, case conferences and journal clubs, that take place within your hospital or institution, fall into the Internal CPD category and do not require CPD approval. In-house courses organised specifically for your employees would also fall into the Internal CPD category
- ✓ Courses and educational activities designed specifically for Interns, Higher Specialist Trainees or Basic Specialist Trainees do not require CPD approval. Doctors who attend this type of meeting may self-determine whether or not to claim External CPD for engaging in this type of activity

Activities which are not eligible for CPD approval by RCPI

- ✓ **General:** Registration time, breaks, lunch or dinner, award or prize-giving ceremonies, announcements, opening/closing speeches and so on
- ✓ **Product Promotion:** activities organised primarily to promote a product or service or which might be deemed as promotional
- ✓ **Unmoderated poster viewing:** Poster viewing sessions may only be approved for CPD if a medical moderator is present at all times
- ✓ **Business Committee meetings:** For example, an Annual General Meeting or business meeting
- ✓ **Other Specialities:** Events aimed specifically at Surgeons, General Practitioners, Ophthalmologists, Anaesthetists, Radiologists, etc. are not within our remit. You should contact the relevant Irish Postgraduate Medical Training Body for details of their CPD approval process.
- ✓ **Allied Professions:** Sections of an event aimed specifically at allied professions (e.g. nursing, physiotherapy etc.) are not in our remit. You will need to seek approval from the relevant governing body

Medical Organiser

At least one person on the organising faculty for your event must be a doctor who holds Specialist Registration with the Irish Medical Council. This person's details must be entered in the "Medical Organiser" section of your application form.

The Medical Organiser for your event assumes responsibility for ensuring the scientific validity and objectivity of the educational content and that the educational content will support a doctor's maintenance of Professional Competence. He or she must personally complete the **Medical Organiser Declaration**. The Medical Organiser cannot be an employee of an Industry Sponsor

Application process

When to apply

It is important to remember that a Live Educational Event cannot be approved retrospectively. From 1 May 2017, applications for approval of Live Educational Events that take place in the past are not accepted.

You must apply for CPD approval at least four weeks before you intend to advertise or invite people to your event.

If your event date is in the past or your application is submitted after you have circulated invitations or advertised the event, it may not be possible for us to advise you about any issues that may prevent approval in time for you to rectify them.

An option to have your activity listed on the RCPI website is now available. To be eligible to have your activity included in this listing, a complete application must be submitted at least 4 weeks before you advertise the event.

Required Information

- Completed application form
- Medical Organiser Declaration
- **Invitation:** Copy of the invitation in the form that it will be circulated to prospective attendees
- **Website:** Url of the relevant web page, and access details if required to view the page have been entered in the application form
- **Advertisement:** Copy of advertisement design as it will appear in electronic and/or print media
- **Programme:** Final programme as it will be presented to attendees including:
 - details of faculty members, including their post and relevant experience
 - titles of lectures, workshops and sessions
 - start and end time of individual lectures, workshops and sessions

If the required information is not included in the programme, enter it in the space provided on the application form

Note: A provisional or draft programme may not contain sufficient information to allow CPD approval

- **Learner feedback form:** Example of the learner feedback form that will be provided to attendees.
 - If an online form is used, a screenshot, the url and relevant login details must be provided with this application.
- **Assessment fee:** Assessment fee at the relevant rate

Decision Process

- Once we have received your application and all the required information, we will assign an application reference number and begin processing your application
- Administrative staff will validate your application and may revert to you for clarification if necessary
- Once your application has been validated, it will be sent to a Clinician Reviewer for assessment
- Lists of applications are normally submitted for review on a weekly basis
- The Clinician Reviewer may request further information or clarification from you
- If your application is approved, we will send you a confirmation of approval by email

Promotion of the Event

- The use of the RCPI crest or logo is not permitted under any circumstances.
- Wording such as “Applied for CPD approval” or “CPD approval” as appropriate may be used in material associated with the event
- Organisers should not specify the number of credits awarded or whether credits have been awarded on printed or other published material until such time as confirmation has been issued by RCPI
- Room hire for events at the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland building at No. 6 Kildare Street does not constitute a professional association between RCPI and the meeting organiser and published material for such events must never imply such an association.

After your event has been approved

If you have checked the “Yes” option on the application form where you are asked if you wish your activity to be included in the RCPI Website listing, and if your activity is eligible for listing, we will add it to the next update.

You must:

- make sure you keep a record of attendees
 - collect learner feedback forms from your attendees
 - keep the record of attendees and feedback forms together safely for a period of 12 months from the date the activity took place - we may contact you at a later date asking for copies of this information
 - send CPD attendance certificates to your attendees, preferably as email attachments, as soon as possible after the event
 - you must put the attendee name on the certificate before sending
 - the attendance certificate must display the full name and contact details of your organisation and the statement "*This CPD recognition is accepted by all Irish Postgraduate Training Bodies*".
 - ensure that no Industry Sponsor company name or logo appears on the CPD attendance certificate
- You can download an example attendance certificate from www.rcpi.ie / Professional Competence / Apply for CPD Approval for your event

Changes after approval has been issued

If any changes to the programme, the date of the event or the venue are made after approval has been issued, you must inform us of these changes. Be aware that changes after approval has been issued may invalidate the approval.

Audit of Approved Events

Some approved events may be randomly selected for audit. If your event has been selected, we will send you notification in good time, and a Clinician Reviewer and a member of our administrative staff may attend your event.

Assessment Fee

Application type	Fee
(a) Activity organised and/or hosted by a single industry sponsor <i>(e.g. a pharmaceutical or medical device company)</i>	€1,500
(b) Activity organised and/or hosted by a professional/commercial education provider	€1,500
(c) Activity with multiple industry sponsors <i>Applications for an activity supported by multiple industry sponsors may not be submitted by an industry sponsor or by an agent acting on their behalf</i>	€500
(d) Activity supported by an unrestricted educational grant <i>Applications for an activity supported by an unrestricted educational grant may not be submitted by an industry sponsor or an agent acting on their behalf</i>	€500
(e) Un-sponsored activity with registration fee <i>Activities supported by an academic institution, hospital, state body or charity can be included in this category.</i>	€250
(f) Un-sponsored activity no registration fee <i>Activities supported by an academic institution, hospital, state body or charity can be included in this category.</i>	No Charge
<p>The assessment fee is non-refundable so make sure your event is eligible for consideration before you submit your application</p>	

Payment Methods

Cheque/Credit Card:

If you wish to pay by cheque, or by Visa or Mastercard, download the remittance advice form from [www.rcpi.ie/Professional Competence / Apply for CPD approval for your event](http://www.rcpi.ie/Professional%20Competence%20-%20Apply%20for%20CPD%20approval%20for%20your%20event). Complete the remittance advice form and submit to us by post. We cannot accept credit card details by email, but we can take your details by phone.

Direct line: (01) 863 9739

Address:

Professional Competence Department
Royal College of Physicians of Ireland
19 South Frederick Street
Dublin 2

Invoice/Purchase Order/Electronic Fund Transfer

EFT: Please contact us first to get an application reference number and details of how to submit your payment.

Purchase Order/Invoice: Please contact us in advance to get an application reference number.

Sponsorship

Doctors cannot be unduly influenced by industry in the care they provide to patients so it's important we have strict guidelines to ensure there is no conflict of interest at educational events sponsored by industry pharmaceutical companies and medical device manufacturers).

Guidelines for event organisers:

- you cannot have an industry sponsor or product name in the event title, or in the titles of any part of your programme
- display tables or material related to an industry sponsor or their products cannot be placed in the education area
- your educational programme and materials, including slides, abstracts and handouts cannot contain any advertising, trade message, company or product name, or logo
- you can provide a separate handout alongside your programme acknowledging the contribution of your sponsors.

Be sure to read our [Policy on Industry Sponsorship and Support](#), which is available to download from www.rcpi.ie / Professional Competence / Apply for CPD approval for your event

Guidelines for applications submitted by or on behalf of a pharmaceutical company or medical device manufacturer

If your application for CPD approval is on behalf of a pharmaceutical company or a medical device manufacturer, we need additional information to help us confirm the academic independence of the event.

You will need to:

- Clarify the nature of the relationship between your company and the individual speakers and list any commercial interests that the organising committee, presenters, chairs or speakers have, using the Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form*.
- Make sure all paid speakers (and speakers with any other conflicts) have a conflict of interest slide in their presentation that shows the nature of their conflict.

Medical Organiser

The Medical Organiser cannot be an employee of your company. Remember to complete and return the Medical Organiser Declaration* with your application.

Industry sponsor employees

We cannot approve presentations from employees of the industry sponsor.

**The Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form and the Medical Organiser Declaration can be downloaded from www.rcpi.ie / Professional Competence / Apply for CPD approval for your event.*

We may request copies of contracts with organising faculty members or speakers, and details of honoraria paid to them.

Does an online course attract CPD credit?

An online course may attract CPD credit if it meets the following criteria:

- ✓ Course provides for some type of learner interaction or self-assessment
- ✓ Course objectives describe what the participants may learn or achieve by participating in the course
- ✓ Course provides access to appropriate bibliographic sources that allow for further study and that reinforce and clarify specific activity topics
- ✓ Site allows the doctor to download evidence of activity and/or completion e.g. a certificate of completion of a module
- ✓ Doctors should ensure a balance between CPD credits garnered from online learning and from attending meetings

What about websites/enduring material?

Our CPD approval process is conducted on a course by course basis for interactive educational activities that attract CPD in the **External** category.

Websites for the purpose of presenting enduring educational material such as reference documents, articles, publications, passive reading resources, or chat groups, are outside this process as those activities fall into the **Personal Learning** CPD Category, attracting 1 hour = 1 CPD credit in that category.

Internal learning sites used by employers, for their employees only, fall into the Internal CPD category and therefore are not required to seek CPD approval. Activities hosted on these sites attract 1 hour = 1 CPD credit in the **Internal** CPD category.

Information for Employers

If you are organising an event or course for doctors in your hospital or workplace, it may fall under the Internal (Practice Evaluation and Development) CPD Category, and if so, it is not necessary to apply for CPD approval.

Typical Internal events include:

- case conferences
- journal clubs
- Advanced Cardiac Life Saving (ACLS), PALS, or similar courses organised in-house or on behalf of your employees
- Online courses developed in-house that are aimed at your employees

Doctors are required to collect evidence of having attended these activities.

If you need advice about the Internal CPD category, we will be happy to help. Phone us at (01) 863 9739 or email professionalcompetence@rcpi.ie.

[Key Responsibilities for Registrants, Training Bodies and Employers](#) describes your responsibility as an employer to facilitate your doctors in maintaining their professional competence.

Events Outside Ireland

If your event is not in Ireland, you should contact the European Accreditation Council for CPD (EACCME) for information on European accreditation, or the relevant local association or college.

Resources

The following resources can be downloaded from www.rcpi.ie/Professional Competence / Apply for CPD approval for your event:

- Application Form
- Our policy on Industry Sponsorship and Support
- Conflict of Interest Disclosure
- Medical Organiser Declaration
- Recommended Evidence for External CPD
- Example Certificate Template for External CPD
- Remittance Advice

Appeals

If an application is refused the organiser may appeal the decision in writing. Such appeals should be directed to:

RCPI Education & Quality Committee
Royal College of Physicians of Ireland
Frederick House
19 South Frederick Street
Dublin 2

The appeal will be considered at the next meeting of the Education & Quality Committee.

Frequently asked questions

Q. What is an Internal Educational Activity?

A. Internal activities take place in a doctor's unit, department, hospital or practice on a regular basis. It is not necessary to apply to this College or any other for approval of such activities (e.g.; Grand Rounds; journal clubs etc.) .

Q. What is a Personal Learning Activity?

A. Where the physician undertakes an individual activity and determines the education benefits gained.

Q. What information should I provide when applying for CPD approval?

A. This information is listed on the application for approval. All sections in this form must be completed. We have provided a checklist with the application form so that you can be sure you have included all the necessary information and supporting material.

Q. I am organising an Annual General Meeting and Symposium for my specialty society, can I have approval for the full day?

A. No, approval for CPD can only be applied to educational activities. You may seek approval for the Symposium portion of your event.

Q. I am organising a multidisciplinary activity, can RCPI give overall approval?

A. Medical Scientists, Nurses, Occupational Therapists and other related disciplines have their own organisation and CPD structures and separate approval should be sought for these disciplines.

Q. I am organising an event abroad, can RCPI approve this?

A. RCPI approves events which take place here in Ireland. If you are organising a meeting in another country you are advised to contact the European Accreditation Council for CPD (EACCME) or the local jurisdiction.

Q. What about events in Northern Ireland?

A. RCPI will give approval if the event in Northern Ireland is organised by an All-Ireland society or group and is expected to attract a high proportion of doctors who are participating in Irish Professional Competence Schemes. However if the event is expected to attract a higher proportion of doctors who are participating in the British GMC equivalent programme, then the local jurisdiction should be approached for approval and we will recognise that approval

Q. We organise the same event every year, can CPD approval be carried forward?

A. No. Approval must be sought for each instance of an event

Q. My delegates attended an overseas event; can RCPI give approval for this?

A. RCPI cannot approve events which do not take place under its jurisdiction. However, RCPI will recognise certificates of attendance issued by any of the Royal Colleges or equivalent bodies and also by EACCME.

Q. What about attendance certificates for multi-day events (e.g. Annual Scientific Meetings)?

A. As doctors may be prevented from attending every day of a particular event it is vital that a separate sign-in method and attendance certificate is available for each day.

Q. Some of the delegates attended for only part of the meeting?

A. Doctors are expected to enter only the time they attended the event in their personal portfolios. It is their responsibility to maintain an accurate record. (The credits are awarded to the event, not the doctor).

Q. What about training courses?

A. In the case of short training courses where daily attendance is mandatory, it is in order to issue one attendance certificate to cover the course.

- Q. My company provides on-site training for operation of a medical device specific to a particular medical specialty; can I seek CPD approval for this activity?
- A. Such on-site training, when arranged by the practice, department or hospital, falls into the Internal CPD Category and therefore it is not necessary to seek approval for CPD. Attendance certificates should be provided to all attendees.
- Q. My speakers have done a lot of work preparing their presentations, aren't they entitled to some extra credit?
- A. Doctors can claim 5 credits in the Research or Teaching CPD Category for preparation of a presentation for an academic or scientific meeting. Organisers should provide their speakers with written confirmation.

RCPI Specialties

Doctors may choose to specialise in certain areas of medicine. RCPI is the Postgraduate Medical Training body in respect of the following Specialties:

Cardiology - Diseases of the heart and circulatory system

Chemical Pathology - The use of biochemical and molecular biological methods in the diagnosis (and sometimes treatment) of disease

Clinical Microbiology - Diagnosis of diseases caused by bacteria, viruses, fungi and parasites

Clinical Pharmacology & Therapeutics - Medical study and evaluation of the effects of drugs on people

Dermatology - Disorders of the skin

Endocrinology & Diabetes Mellitus - Disorders of the Endocrine system and its specific secretions called hormones, and diseases and treatment related to Diabetes Mellitus

Gastroenterology - Diseases of the gut, liver and associated organs

General (Internal) Medicine - Diagnosis and treatment of a broad range of common acute disorders

General Paediatrics - Medical care of infants, children and adolescents

Genito-Urinary Medicine - Diagnosis and treatment of sexually transmitted infections, and other genital and sexual problems

Geriatric Medicine - Medical care of the elderly

Haematology - Diseases of the blood

Histopathology - The microscopic examination of tissue in order to study the manifestations of disease

Immunology - The study of all aspects of the immune system in all organisms
Infectious Diseases - Study of diseases resulting from often contagious infections
Medical Oncology - Care of patients with cancer and tumours

Nephrology - Study of the functions and diseases of the kidneys

Neurology - Diseases of the nervous system including brain, spine and nerves

Neuropathology – Diagnosis of diseases of the brain and nervous system by microscopic examination of the tissue and other means

Obstetrics & Gynaecology - Surgical specialities dealing with the female reproductive organs

Occupational Medicine - Medical study that deals with the prevention and treatment of diseases and injuries occurring at work or in specific occupations

Palliative Medicine - Medical care of patients with terminal diseases

Pharmaceutical Medicine – The discovery, evaluation, registration, monitoring and clinical aspects of pharmaceutical development.

Public Health Medicine - Promotion of the health, and prevention of illness, in the population

Rehabilitation Medicine - The management of disorders and disabilities that affect the functions and performance of a person

Respiratory Medicine - Diseases of the lungs and respiratory tract

Rheumatology - Management of joint, muscle and soft tissue disorders

Glossary / Terms*

Continuing Professional Development (CPD):

Is the educative means of updating, developing and enhancing how physicians apply the knowledge, skills and attitudes required in their working lives. This includes CPD, professional (non-clinical) competencies, and all elements of good medical practice.

Activity:

An educational event for physicians, which is based upon identified needs, has a purpose or objectives, and is evaluated to ensure the needs are met.

Attendance Certificate/Evidence document:

A record of a participant's attendance at an event. Providers of CPD approved events are required to give these to participants on request.

Attendance Record/Register:

A list of attendees at an event, which must be kept by event providers for five years after an event, and sent to the Professional Competence Department on request.

Distance Learning:

Distance Learning is treated as a personal learning activity.

EACCME:

European Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education

Learner Evaluation Form:

A form given by event providers to event participants in order for the participant to communicate, and the provider to determine, the relevance, quality and effectiveness of an activity.

External CPD Activity:

Where the physician participates in an educational activity where peers or providers ensure a regional, national or international context for the activity.

Internal CPD Activity:

Where the physician participates in a routine, local educational activity with colleagues within a hospital, practice or other local organisation. It is not necessary to seek CPD approval for Internal CPD.

Personal Learning:

Where the physician undertakes an individual activity and determines the education benefits gained.

RCPI

The Royal College of Physicians of Ireland

*Adapted from: FEDERATION OF ROYAL COLLEGES OF PHYSICIANS CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Contact us

We are available to help Monday to Friday from 09:00 to 17:00 GMT.

Professional Competence Department

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Dublin 2

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www.rcpi.ie/professionalcompetence