



Allied Veterinary Professional
Regulatory Council of New Zealand

October 2023

About continuing professional development

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) refers to the ongoing process of learning and developing skills and knowledge throughout your professional career. For veterinary professionals, CPD is crucial to ensure fitness to practice as the field of animal healthcare is constantly evolving with new research findings, techniques, technologies, and best practices.

From December 2023 a new set of standards for the completion of CPD is in place for veterinary nurses, technicians, and allied veterinary professionals. These standards offer an enhanced approach to make the process more relevant and easier to achieve. This new scheme is called *Reflective CPD* or *RCPD*.

The new RCPD process

The new RCPD process offers enhanced flexibility, empowering you to prioritise your unique professional development needs. This approach accommodates a diverse array of activities that foster both personal and professional advancement through thoughtful reflection.

- **Required Hours:** You must complete 40 hours RCPD activities over every two-year period.
- **Allowed CPD Activities:** Any relevant CPD is acceptable, as long as you can show how the CPD was beneficial to maintaining your professional practice as a veterinary nurse or AVP.
- **Required Evidence:** You must keep an evidence portfolio of the activities you have completed including completion certificates, and a reflective journal as detailed below.
- **Producing your evidence when you are audited:** Audits occur for every registrant at least once every 5 years. When you are audited, you will be asked to produce an evidence portfolio showing that you have completed at least 40 hours of RCPD over the last two years. This is a requirement for maintaining fitness to practice as part of registration.
- **Deadline:** There is no longer an annual deadline to complete RCPD; instead, you must be able to produce your evidence of the last two years of RCPD when you are audited by AVPRC.
- **Recordkeeping:** Keep your evidence portfolio safe so that you can access it at any time. It is recommended that you upload them to a secure cloud-based file storage system (i.e., OneDrive, Google Drive, or Dropbox) or, if you are an NZVNA member, you can use their handy MyCPD portal that is designed to support RCPD portfolios.



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[This document outlines the RCPD Framework designed for Allied Veterinary Professionals in New Zealand.](#)

Details of the RCPD reflective process

The new RCPD scheme introduces *reflection* to help enrich the learning experience of completing CPD activities.

Reflection involves:

1. Planning your professional development goals,
2. Completing a range of activities to reach your goals,
3. Evaluating your learning through reflective writing, including self-assessing to determine whether you have reached your goals, and identifying how it benefits your current role and/or career progression.

There are numerous resources online about SMART goals, Stretch Goals, and reflective Writing. Below are a couple of resources to get you started:

[Goal Setting: A Scientific Guide to Setting and Achieving Goals by James Clear](#)

[Reflective Practice Toolkit by University of Cambridge](#)

Details of allowed RCPD Activities

Completing RCPD is now more flexible than it used to be. This acknowledges the diverse needs of each individual in developing as a professional. There are some limits though. The [AVPRC RCPD activity guidelines](#) will guide registrants in determining what activities are suitable to count towards their professional development.

Each registrant must use their professional judgement to decide if an activity aligns with their RCPD Plan and delivers worthwhile outcomes.

Details of the evidence portfolio

Each registrant is audited at least every 3-5 years and when they are audited, they must produce a portfolio showing they have completed *at least 40 hours of RCPD over the previous two calendar years*. From 1 January 2024, it is expected that every evidence portfolio includes a reflective planning and evaluation process.



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The following reflection templates are available for to download and use as part of recording professional development into an evidence portfolio. These templates are just a guide. Registrants may use whatever form suits them best as long as the essential criteria are included. The portfolio of evidence must overall be detailed, clear, and show a meaningful reflection about how the activities helped with learning and advancement of professional practice.

[AVPRC RCPD plan template \(word document\)](#)

[AVPRC RCPD record template \(excel spreadsheet\)](#)

[AVPRC recording PD activities template](#)

Details of RCPD recordkeeping requirements

Recordkeeping for evidence portfolios is up to the individual registrant, and may vary according to individual needs as long as all essential criteria are listed, including:

1. CPD Plan - Identified learning needs, goals, and proposed actions for reaching goals.
2. CPD type - Type of event listed (e.g., conference session, webinar, clinical rounds, other tertiary study).
3. Activity details - Listed details about each activity completed (e.g. date, location, speaker, certificate of achievement).
4. Learning hours - Listed number of hours completed for each activity.
5. Outcomes - Proof of outcomes achieved (e.g., tests, certificates of achievement, awards, degree, or other links and documents attached as proof of completion).
6. Review - Written reflection of what was learned for each activity, how it contributes to professional competency, what area of competence it contributes to, and what future learning is still needed).

Registrants may use the templates above to record and keep their own records. These must be backed up to a secure storage repository as a failure to produce records could result in limits or suspension of registration.

The [New Zealand Veterinary Nursing Association](#) provides a guided MyCPD platform where members can upload and store documents so that they are easy to produce when they are audited. This service is available to all AVPs not just veterinary nurses.