



European Common Framework for Continuing Professional Development in the Biomedical Sciences

Developed by LifeTrain



*Biomedical sciences" includes ALL science disciplines involved in the discovery, development, processing and usage of medicines research, including supporting technologies



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The European Common Framework for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) has been developed by the Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI) Education and Training (E&T) Projects under the heading of “LifeTrain” in conjunction with representatives from: the European professional/scientific bodies; the European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures in Biomedical Science (ESFRI BMS); The European Association for Bio-Industries (EuropaBio); the major industry employers (European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA), national regulatory agencies, the European Medicines Agency (EMA), small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and major contract research organisations (CROs); the European University Association (EUA) and many private course providers. A full list of signatories is available at the end of the document.

The IMI LifeTrain initiative brought together many excellent, but disparate, activities into a process towards establishing a focused and coherent approach, which has been further developed towards a common framework for CPD. This unique, pan-European collaborative approach provides the critical mass to make a major contribution to strengthen the skills and competencies of European biomedical scientists and professionals in a rapidly changing environment. It is a clear statement of Europe’s intent to retain its position in biomedical research and development and to drive global excellence to serve the aim of providing required innovative health care solutions more effectively.

The framework consists of four sets of agreed principles – one for the professional/scientific bodies, one for the course providers, one for the employers, and one for the individual professional, and a series of key messages. This provides a holistic, harmonised approach to CPD. It recognises the importance of diversity to meet individual stakeholders’ needs without being prescriptive in how to develop and maintain professional competence in the biomedical sciences and the disciplines involved in or supporting the whole lifecycle of a medicine from discovery through development, manufacturing, maintenance and/or usage.

The signatories to this European Common Framework for CPD in the biomedical sciences have agreed to the principles of the framework and to continue the collaboration in the implementation process.



Key messages:

- Every professional in the biomedical sciences needs to develop and maintain an optimal level of professional competence in order to contribute to speeding up the development of better medicines for patients.
- Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is essential and should be driven by each individual in agreement with their employer and in compliance with the requirements of the respective professional/scientific bodies.
- CPD should be part of a “Plan-Do-Review Cycle” and can include both formal and informal learning. Each individual should reflect on the learning and its application in practice.
- Objective assessments of competence should be made by the individual and by others, on a regular basis throughout the individual’s professional working life.
- An individual competency portfolio should capture all relevant information in a transparent, easy-to-understand way in order to facilitate mobility between: scientific disciplines; academia, health authorities and industry; jobs and countries; and to support career development.
- Needs should be identified and professional training courses developed and delivered in collaboration between industry, technical experts, and course providers (including universities). They should meet the needs of adult-learners and should be available on on-course®

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Agreed Principles for Professional/Scientific Bodies

1. Encourage maintenance of professional competency as a prerequisite for continuing membership, including continuing certification/re-registration*
2. Support members to develop and maintain a competency portfolio
3. Recognise the importance of trans-disciplinary and generic competences
4. Mutually recognise equivalent competences across partner professional/scientific bodies
5. Implement the shared IMI Education and Training standards for course quality and certify courses that fulfil the appropriate criteria
6. Monitor compliance

*only applies to professional bodies



Innovative Medicines Initiative

Agreed Principles for Employers

1. Provide input to the development of CPD learning requirements, to ensure employer needs are addressed
2. Recognise the roles and requirements of professional/ scientific bodies
3. Recognise the value of competency portfolios in career development, support staff to maintain competency profiles and reward accordingly
4. Include CPD in individual recruitment and development plans and as part of the performance appraisal processes
5. Recognise the value of modules which meet the IMI Education and Training quality criteria and preferentially recommend them for training
6. Advise future employees about the importance of maintaining professional competence and include CPD requirements in job adverts
7. Recognise the importance of temporary work placements for enhancing learning, networking and mobility



Agreed Principles for Course Providers

1. Develop and deliver professional training courses in collaboration with the industry
2. Recognise the IMI Education & Training quality standards and adapt courses to meet these standards
3. Address and meet the needs of adult-learners
4. Provide flexible, modular/short courses with greater provision of more varied learning methodologies
5. Support the “Plan-Do-Review Cycle” and the hierarchy of values (assessments, reflection and application in practice) including competency development
6. Enter and update courses on on-course®

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Agreed Principles for Individual Professionals

1. Develop and maintain an optimal level of professional competence in their respective and related function(s) in order to contribute to speeding up the development of better medicines for patients
2. Take responsibility for continuing professional development
3. Work closely with employers and professional/scientific bodies to maintain professional competence
4. Take advantage of the “Plan-Do-Review Cycle”
5. Reflect on practice to identify learning needs and reflect on practice improvements and outcomes related to each learning activity
6. Maintain a competency portfolio and provide relevant information to professional/scientific bodies and employers



The signatories to the European Common Framework for Continuing Professional Development in the Biomedical Sciences agree:

1. The principles of the framework
2. The content of the relevant agreed principles on behalf of their organisations
3. The LifeTrain messages
4. To engage in the implementation process