

# Voluntary Continuing Professional Development for Licensed Plumbers

## Scheme Manual

Water Supplies Department

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Over the years, there have been progressive advance in the materials and technology in plumbing industry and updating of relevant standard for pipes and fittings. The public expect that licensed plumbers (LPs), like other professions, should acquire new techniques, knowledge and skills. There is a need to establish a platform for the LPs to update their skill and knowledge in the plumbing industry.
- 1.2 The Advisory Board on Licensing of Plumbers (ABLP) develops a voluntary Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Scheme for Licensed Plumbers (“the Scheme”). The Scheme was launched in October 2016.
- 1.3 This manual provides an overview of the Scheme.

## **2. OBJECTIVES OF THE SCHEME**

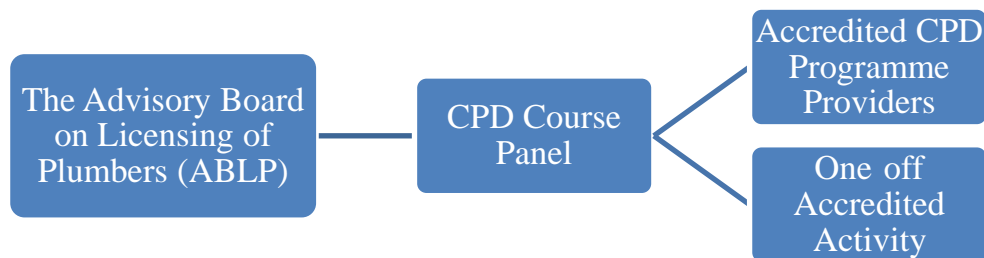
- 2.1 The objectives of the Scheme are to:-
  - (i) update LPs’ knowledge and uplift professionalism of LPs;
  - (ii) upkeep quality professional practice;
  - (iii) enhance professional image of LPs; and
  - (iv) meet the expectations and needs of the public.

## **3. CPD PROGRAMME**

- 3.1 The activities under CPD programme can be in the form of course, workshop, seminar, visit or via e-learning platform etc. These activities are categorised into core and non-core activities. Activities on understanding Waterworks Ordinance/Waterworks Regulations or other related legislation requirements, and/or enrichment of knowledge/skills for plumbers should be categorised as core activities. Other activities not directly related to enrichment of knowledge and skills for plumbers should be categorised as non-core CPD activities. Core CPD activities shall offer more CPD credits as compared with non-core ones.
- 3.2 Details of the CPD credit allocation criteria are shown in **Appendix 1**.
- 3.3 To ensure the quality of the CPD activities are up to appropriate standard, the activities should be conducted by Accredited CPD Programme Providers (“Accredited Providers”), or accredited by the CPD Course Panel as stipulated in Section 4.3 below.

## 4. CPD ADMINISTRATION

- 4.1 The structure of CPD administration can be summarised as in the organization chart below.



### 4.2 CPD Course Panel

- 4.2.1 The terms of reference of CPD Course Panel (“the Panel”) are to:-

- advise the government and ABLP on matters relating to the continuing professional education for the licensed plumbers;
- establish and review the policies, requirements and guidelines on CPD activities; and
- administer the related accreditation matters such as assessing application, approving or withdrawing accreditation, auditing and monitoring.

- 4.2.2 As for the development and policy setting of the CPD scheme, the Panel is chaired by Chairperson of the Advisory Board on Licensing of Plumbers (ABLP), with members comprising representatives from Hong Kong Institute of Architects, Hong Kong Institution of Engineers, Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors and the Water Supplies Department (WSD). Terms of appointment of all members on the Panel will be two years to tally with that of the ABLP.

- 4.2.3 In order to assure the quality of the Accredited Providers/Activities, the Panel may appoint his representatives to audit the Accredited Providers/Activities without advance notification as detailed in Section 4.4.

### 4.3 CPD Accreditation

- 4.3.1 Any independent organization interested in being the Accredited Providers should follow the “Manual for Accredited Provider of Voluntary Continuing Professional Development for Licensed Plumbers” published by the Panel. The Panel would, based on the submitted documents, decide whether the applicant

could become an Accredited Provider. Once the applicant is accredited, the organization is responsible for providing appropriate number of CPD hours or activities within each year for LPs to take part, and for assigning credits to their activities.

4.3.2 There is no need to seek approval for organising each CPD activity from the Panel in advance. However, the preliminary information of each CPD activity including activity name, brief description of the activity, commencement date, activity duration, total credits and code should be submitted to the secretary of the Panel for prior vetting at least one week before the commencement of activity to prevent incorrect information printed on attendance certificates. Upon completion of each CPD activity, the required information (**Appendix 2**) should be submitted to the secretary of the Panel within one month, or supplemented as requested by the secretary of the Panel.

4.3.3 For any party who is not an Accredited Provider but interested in holding an one-off CPD activity, it can apply for accreditation of the one-off CPD activity as Accredited Activity through the Panel on case-by-case basis. In the application, the applicant should demonstrate the proposed one-off activity can fulfil the CPD objectives. The presenter(s)/speaker(s) should be a licensed plumber or a corporate member of professional institution and shall demonstrate he acquires experience in the topic he is going to deliver. The application can be made at any time throughout the year. Usually two-month time shall be allowed for the Panel to process the above accreditation and the successful applicant will be notified within one month after the decision is made by the Panel. The applicant shall therefore submit the application form (Appendix 3), together with the necessary information, including teaching materials, the resume of the presenter(s)/speaker(s) and propose the CPD credits to be granted for Panel's approval at least 2 months before organizing such activity. Upon completion of the CPD activity, the provider of Accredited Activity shall also submit the record to the secretary of the Panel within one month as specified in **Appendix 2**.

#### **4.4 Auditing of CPD Activity**

4.4.1 The Accredited Providers should evaluate the training performance after each activity, so as to review the breadth and depth of the coverage, and improve the subsequent training arrangements.

4.4.2 The Accredited Providers must submit necessary information to the secretary of the Panel within one month after each activity. The Panel would evaluate the activity held and keep monitoring the performance of the Accredited Providers based on the submitted materials. The Panel will randomly select 5% of the

Accredited Providers and course provider for one-off CPD activity each year and delegate representatives to audit on site at any time. The Accredited Provider shall provide the complete set of documents or records as required by the auditors. Sample of audit check list is enclosed in **Appendix V** of the **Manual for Accredited Provider**.

- 4.4.3 The Panel may require the Accredited Provider to rectify any deficiencies identified during the audits or the Panel might not recognize the CPD credit for those CPD activities. The Panel may request them to submit remedial plan to the Panel for consideration. If there is repeated deficiency being identified on any items on the Audit Checklist during the audit, the Panel will issue a warning letter to the Accredited Provider.
- 4.4.4 The Panel has the right to withdraw the accreditation status of the Accredited Provider if the Panel discovers any fraudulent information reported by the Accredited Provider or the Accredited Provider received three warning letters.
- 4.4.5 The Accredited Provider(s) who have been audited can be exempted from audits within the next two years.

## **5. SELF ADMINISTRATION OF PERSONAL CPD RECORDS**

- 5.1 LPs shall self-administer their CPD records by filling in a personal CPD record form (**Appendix 4**) and keep the necessary related documents for verification when required by WSD.
- 5.2 In order to encourage the practice of well-balance CPD programmes per year, WSD will award LPs a Certification of Recognition (COR) who have achieved 10 CPD credits or above per year. Among these credits, at least one activity attended must be related to waterworks-related legislation/regulations, including revision / update of WSD requirements on plumbing works and submissions.

## **6. CERTIFICATION OF RECOGNITION**

- 6.1 There are three grades of Recognition, which is shown as follows:-

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Credits achieved within a calendar year</b>
Gold	30 or more
Silver	$\geq 20$ and $< 30$
Bronze	$\geq 10$ and $< 20$

- 6.2 If the LPs wish to obtain the COR, they have to submit the CPD record form (with CPD details from 1 January to 31 December of the same year) to WSD with necessary supporting documents when they renew their licenses. Application for certificate should normally be submitted from 1<sup>st</sup> October to 31<sup>st</sup> January of the next year.
- 6.3 WSD will publish a list of LPs awarded with COR on WSD's webpage as recognition and appreciation. It will be updated once a year. Besides, upon the agreement of the LPs who submitted the CPD Record, the total number of credits that the LPs awarded will be displayed on the LP directory.

## **7. REVIEW OF CPD SCHEME**

- 7.1 The Panel has conducted evaluation of the Scheme in early 2020 to review the operation of the Scheme. Further evaluation will be conducted when necessary.
- 7.2 Suggestions and comment on the Scheme can be sent to the Secretary of the CPD Course Panel – Senior Engineer/Technical Support(1) of WSD.