

Further reading:

Introduction to Continuous Professional development

A teacher is expected to upgrade his or her qualifications regularly. This is necessary for the teacher to be up to date with the latest curriculum and developments and trends in the subjects he or she teaches. A teacher is also expected to be up to date with developments in didactics and teaching methods and continuously apply improved strategies to achieve optimal learning outcomes, ensuring that pupils stay in school and pass their tests and exams with good results. Finally, a teacher should develop his or her competencies to nurture a career in the teaching service and comply with the increasing competency levels of the *professional standards for teachers* (TSC, 2019).

Continuous Professional Development (CPD) must:

- Ensure teachers continuously develops their competencies in teaching for the benefit of learners.
- Ensure compliance with the professional standards for teachers and school leaders at the different professional levels.
- Provide a basis for a career in teaching and for promotion to higher positions and grades in the teaching service.
- Update and expand a teacher's knowledge and skills in subjects, teaching methods and teaching technology.
- Inspire teacher interest in the subjects they teach.
- Motivate teachers to learn more and become life-long learners.

CPD includes:

- Short professional development courses offered by TSC, TTCs, MBSSE, SLTU, and various international agencies and NGOs. This includes Competency Classes provided by TSC
- On-the-job training, supervision by the school leader or a senior teacher, and mentoring
- Self-directed learning online and regularly reading relevant books, articles, newsletters, etc
- Learning in connection with membership of professional subject associations, professional networks and communities of practice.

It is essential that CPD is carried out systematically, that it is needs-based and that it builds up a teacher's or school leader's gradual career orientated acquisition of increasing competencies. Implementation of professional development may include the following key elements:

- Learning needs assessment to ensure CPD is needs based
- Identification of training and non-training solutions
- Planning of the CPD
- Design of courses and modules
- Development of learning materials and tools
- The facilitator's preparations
- Professional course management, organisation and administration
- Delivery of training courses
- Assessment and certification
- Evaluation of the results of the training course.

When the circle is completed the training provider should submit detailed information to the TSC. The TSC will register successful training course completion, certification and accreditation in the Teacher Database.

CPD may:

- Address a teacher's competency gap.
- Prepare the teacher for the next career step
- Keep the teacher updated on subjects, teaching methods, and IT/teaching technology
- Meet the school's requirements for subject specialisation
- Meet the school's requirement for counselling pupils, mentoring peers or junior teachers, teaching pupils with special requirements, administrative and managerial tasks, etc.

Who is responsible for CPD

The primary institutions in Sierra Leone responsible for CPD of teachers include:

Teaching Service commission

- Formulates rules, regulations and practices for CPD
- Sets standards and determines accreditation for in-service training of teachers
- Certifies providers of in-service training of teachers
- Serves as a common platform for CPD, coordinates CPD
- Registers completed training in the Teachers' Database
- Ensures training is needs based and develops teacher competencies systematically
- Manages and organises in-service training courses for teachers.

Teacher Training Colleges

- Provide in-service training online and face to face
- TTC lecturers frequently act as trainers and facilitators for other providers.

Sierra Leone Teachers' Union

- Provides in-service training for teachers in different subjects
- Provides in-service training with a focus on female teachers.

Other providers of CPD

International organisations, NGOs, and CSOs also offer training courses for teachers. These courses are expected to adhere to TSC's standards and criteria.

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