



AccountAbility

Setting the Standard for Sustainability

Guidance for Submitting CPD

This guidance document contains the following sections:

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2. [Guide for the Submission Process](#)
3. [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#)
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5. [Policy on CPD Submissions and Review Process](#)

CPD REQUIREMENTS PER LEVEL

Associate Certified Sustainability Assurance Practitioner (ACSAP): at least 8 CPD hours

Practicing Certified Sustainability Assurance Practitioner (PCSAP): at least 8 CPD hours

Lead Sustainability Assurance Practitioner (LCSAP): at least 16 CPD hours

<i>Category</i>	<i>Evidence Accepted</i>
<p>Unstructured; where 3 hours are accepted as one CPD hour</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distance and open learning study which is not assessed and does not lead to a qualification; • The reading of professional and technical journals, books and other publications, • Relevant aspects of on-the job training, where specific outcomes have been planned and identified, • Reading relevant material from AccountAbility and/or other sources.
<p>Semi-structured; where 2 hours are accepted as one CPD hour</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Included in this category would be non-interactive lectures, talks, etc., informal professional body meetings of a more social nature (networking opportunities) the research, preparation and first delivery of lectures/courses, publishing articles and forms of open and distance learning that involve assessment and that result in the acquisition of a qualification. • Participation in standards development (i.e. wiki contributions, online discussion forums), AccountAbility’s technical committees, and/or AccountAbility’s webinars, are/is also accepted.
<p>Structured; where each hour is accepted as one CPD hour</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples of this category would be interactive and highly participative training courses and seminars, professional body meetings with formal lectures, active participation in development of standards.

GUIDANCE FOR CPD HOUR SUBMISSION

Overview of the CPD Submission Process

1. Prior to your CSAP renewal date, you will receive notice from AccountAbility stating that you are required to submit evidence of CPD to renew your certification
2. AccountAbility's email (sent from erp@accountability.org) will direct you to submit your CPD evidence in your CSAP account
 - a. You can also login here: <https://erp.accountability.org/web/login>
3. Once the following is completed you will receive a new certificate:
 - a. Submission of the appropriate CPD hours for your qualification
 - b. Payment of invoice
 - i. Please note: the online payment link will only be available after submitting your CPD form

Payment for Certificate Renewal

To receive an updated certificate, you must complete two steps:

1. Submit your CPD form
2. Pay your invoice

The updated certificate will be available to download from your CSAP account.

Only once you have submitted your CPD will the 'Pay Now' button appear in the portal. Once your CPD has been submitted, all payment options will become visible, and you can take action to pay your invoice.

Please ensure that payment is sent in an appropriate timeframe to ensure that you receive your certificate before your renewal date and there is no lag in your certification renewal.

Please refer to the [Policy on CSAP Annual Renewal Fee Payment](#) to see grace period and expiration next steps.

Timeline to Receive a New Certificate

Once you have submitted your CPD evidence and paid your invoice, you will automatically receive a new certificate.

If you pay your renewal fee by bank transfer, please allow a week for your account to update and the certificate to be able to download from your CSAP account. If you pay by credit card, the update should be instant but please allow a few hours before escalating it to us.

If you don't receive the certificate within a week, please make sure your CPD form has been submitted and the invoice is marked as paid before contacting AccountAbility via standards@accountability.org.

When to Submit CPD Activities

CPD only needs to be submitted when you receive renewal notice from AccountAbility.

CPD activities submitted should be those conducted within the last 12 months of your certification date. Anything outside of this time period will not be accepted.

The CPD form is open throughout the year and you may add your CPD activities as they happen to keep track of your related activities.

For example, if your renewal date is 15th October 2026, you will:

- 1. Receive correspondence from AccountAbility shortly prior to this date and do not need to submit CPD until this email has been received.*
- 2. CPD activities deemed valid will be those carried out from 15th October 2025 to 15th October 2026.*

Who Needs to Submit CPD

All CSAPs must submit CPD.

You only need to submit the requirements for the level of CSAP held. Please see examples below.

For example, if you are an LCSAP, please only submit the required CPD and engagement hours for this level. You do not need to additionally log requirements for PCSAP or ACSAP.

Quality Assurance Process

AccountAbility has introduced a quality assurance process that involves reviewing randomly selected submissions. If further evidence is required, you will receive direct communication from AccountAbility and should ensure that you respond in a timely manner to ensure continued access. As this review process can occur years after the submission, AccountAbility recommend you keep two years of records to assist with this review process.

Please read the [AA1000 POLICY ON CPD SUBMISSIONS AND REVIEW PROCESS](#) for more information.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

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Why did AccountAbility introduce the CPD process?

The CPD process was introduced to ensure that best practices are upheld and there is increased credibility of the CSAP program. By introducing the required demonstration of CPD, there is the increased legitimacy of the CPD certification that benefits both licensed providers and reporting entities by increasing trust.

What should I include in my CPD form submission?

Each CPD submission must include the following information:

- Activity title and description
- CPD category
- Date(s) completed
- Number of hours claimed
- Learning outcomes / reflection (where required)
- Supporting evidence (certificate, screenshot, log, attendance record)

Can I edit my CPD submission after submitting?

Yes, you can edit and add CPD hours following submission.

You can also submit CPD hours throughout the year as you complete them to ensure consistent tracking.

How many CPD hours do I need to submit?

The minimum CPD hours you must submit depends on your qualification level.

- ▶ ASCAP = 8 hours
- ▶ PSCAP = 8 hours
- ▶ LCSAP = 16 hours

Does my CPD form need to be accepted to download my updated certificate?

Once you have submitted your CPD hours and paid your invoice your certificate will be automatically approved and available to download.

How will I know if AccountAbility accepted my CPD submission?

Once you have paid you have submitted your CPD hours and paid your invoice your certificate will be automatically approved and available to download. This will signal your CPD submission has been accepted.

Should you be selected for review or further information be required, you will be contacted directly by AccountAbility and should respond appropriately. Until you receive this correspondence, there is no further action required. Please read the [Policy](#) for more information on this process.

What do I do if my CPD submission is rejected?

Your CPD submission will not be rejected at the time of submission. It may however be assessed as part of the review process, that can take place within two years of its submission. If your CPD submission is assessed as part of this audit review, it may be rejected for the following reasons:

- ▶ There is insufficient evidence provided
- ▶ The activity does not meet CPD criteria
- ▶ The hours claimed are excessive or unsupported

If this is the case for your submission, please review the notes from AccountAbility and resubmit with additional information.

At the time of my renewal, can I upgrade my certification? (From ACSAP to PCSAP / LCSAP)

Yes, you can. To upgrade you must:

1. Complete an application via Odoo (where you renew your license and upload CPD hours).
2. Pay the invoice for the regrade fee (and have an active current license)

3. Await a decision from one of our Technical Evaluators. These evaluators may ask for reference checks or conduct an interview. The decision may take 3-4 weeks to be reviewed.

For the level you are choosing to upgrade to, you must be able to demonstrate those hours of CPD over the course of the year.

For invoicing, please note that if your application is successful, you will not need to pay the fee of the level you are trying to upgrade from, only the level you are upgrading to.

- ▶ *For example, if you are a current ACSAP who wants to become a PCSAP, you will not need to pay the ACSAP fee, only the PCSAP fee if your application is successful.*

How long should I keep evidence for?

AccountAbility conducts randomly selected periodic audits. There is nothing to worry about if you are being audited. We may request further information in this process. Please keep CPD records and supporting evidence for 2 years, or in line with organizational / regulatory requirements. See our [Policy](#) for more information.

What counts as acceptable evidence to submit?

The table under '[CPD Requirements per Level](#)' provides a summary of the evidence accepted for CPD.

Please do your best to log only relevant evidence of activities undertaken over the course of the 12^{-month} period.

Illustrative examples of relevant evidence:

- ▶ Timesheet / review notes of any reading of professional and technical journals, books and publications you have undertaken
- ▶ Confirmation receipts of attendance to webinars or lectures.

Through the audit process, AccountAbility will take judgment on the acceptability of the evidence submitted and contact you should further information be required. To ensure your certification remains valid, please ensure that you correspond in a timely manner to any communications with AccountAbility.

EXAMPLES

INDIVIDUAL EXAMPLES

Mike participated in a 3 hour training course on the topic of the evolving role of sustainability assurance with rising reporting standards which involved active participation in discussions and a Q&A session, after which he received a Certificate of Attendance from the training body.

- ▶ This is structured learning.
- ▶ This counts as 3 CPD hours.

Soo-min participated in a 2 hour webinar held by AccountAbility on the topic of assuring GHG emissions with the AA1000AS.

- ▶ This is semi-structured learning.
- ▶ This counts as 1 CPD hour.

Carl attended a 2 hour non-interactive lecture on carrying out assurance engagements and also attended a 2 hour non-interactive lecture on preparing an assurance statement.

- ▶ This is semi-structured learning.
- ▶ This counts as 2 CPD hours, because each activity counts as 1 CPD hour.

Maria spent 3 hours reading materials produced by AccountAbility. This included their recent bridging document comparing the AA1000AS to the ISAE 3000 and their thought leadership pieces.

- ▶ This is unstructured learning.
- ▶ This counts as **1 CPD hour**.

Zahir, a PCSAP, was involved in conducting 2 assurance engagements and producing the assurance reports over the past year, both based on the AA1000AS.

- ▶ **This fulfils the PCSAP relevant CPD work experience requirements.**

Ana, an LCSAP, did not lead any teams in preparing assurance statements and provided no explanation.

- ▶ **This does not fulfil the LCSAP relevant CPD work experience requirements.**

Carly, an LCSAP, throughout the year led teams in preparing assurance statements based on engagements carried out using the AA1000AS.

- ▶ **This fulfils the LCSAP relevant CPD work experience requirements.**

CASE STUDY: ACSAP

Over the course of the year, Luisa, an ACSAP, participated in the following:

6 hours of online open learning on following the best assurance practices where there was no final assessment or qualification opportunity.

4 hours spent writing and publishing thought leadership articles on the topic of sustainability assurance.

6 hours attending lectures and talks on assurance today and its increasing necessity within the field of sustainability where there was no opportunity for discussion or active participation.

4 hours attending an interactive seminar by a national government body on Sustainability Assurance and how to ensure consistency in assurance engagements.

She did not have any related work experience.

- ▶ 6 hours of open learning = **2 CPD hours.**
- ▶ 4 hours publishing thought leadership = **2 CPD hours.**
- ▶ 6 hours attending non-interactive lectures = **3 CPD hours.**
- ▶ 4 hour interactive seminar = **4 CPD hours.**
 - **Total = 11 CPD hours.**
- ▶ **Therefore, Luisa meets the minimum 8 CPD hours required for ACSAPs.**

CASE STUDY: PCSAP

Over the course of the year, Enzo, a PCSAP, participated in the following:

Attended 5, 2 hour in-person lectures as part of series titled 'Assurance of Sustainability Reporting' where he sat and listened to an experienced practitioner who did not allow discussion based activities or assessments.

Attended a 2 hour online lecture on the best practices of assurance which was followed by a quiz.

Throughout the year, Enzo was also involved in 3 sustainability assurance assignments using the AA1000AS.

- ▶ Total 10 hours of non-interactive lectures = **5 CPD hours.**
- ▶ 2 hour online lecture with a quiz = **1 CPD hour.**
- ▶ 6 hours working with AccountAbility = **6 CPD hours.**
 - **Total = 12 CPD hours.**
- ▶ 3 sustainability assurance assignments = **meets PCSAP work experience requirements.**
- ▶ **Overall, Enzo meets the minimum 8 CPD hours for PCSAPs and the work experience requirements.**

CASE STUDY: LCSAP

Over the course of the year, Taylor, an LCSAP, participated in the following:

9 hours of textbook learning where she read the latest publications and articles on sustainability assurance.

3 hours reading materials produced by AccountAbility, such as thought leadership pieces and bridging documents related to sustainability assurance in line with the AA1000AS.

20 hours researching, producing and delivering her first ever course titled ‘Sustainability Assurance 101: A Beginner’s Guide to the Assurance of Sustainability Reports’.

4 hours attending a discussion-based lecture and seminar conducted by the national assurance standards board to advance her capacity as an assurance practitioner.

Throughout the year she also led over 5 teams in preparing assurance statements from AA1000 assurance engagements.

- ▶ 9 hours of textbook learning = **3 CPD hours**.
- ▶ 3 hours reading AccountAbility materials = **1 CPD hour**.
- ▶ 20 hours researching, producing and delivering a course = **10 CPD hours**.
- ▶ 4 hour discussion based lecture and seminar = **4 CPD hours**.
 - **Total = 18 CPD hours.**
- ▶ Led over 5 teams on preparing assurance statements = **meets LCSAP work experience requirements**.
- ▶ **Overall, Taylor meets the minimum 16 CPD hours for LCSAPs and the work experience requirements.**

AA1000 POLICY ON CPD SUBMISSIONS AND REVIEW PROCESS

Internal Review Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all Continuing Professional Development (CPD) hour submissions are reviewed consistently, fairly, and in accordance with AccountAbility requirements. This policy establishes procedures for review, approval, rejection, recordkeeping, and audit of CPD activities.

This policy applies to:

- All CSAPs required to complete CPD hours
- All CPD activities submitted for internal tracking or external reporting
- All staff involved in reviewing, approving, or auditing CPD submissions

Policy Statement

All CPD hour submissions must be:

- Accurate, complete, and truthful
- Supported by appropriate evidence where required
- Reviewed against defined acceptance criteria
- Approved prior to being recorded as completed

Fraudulent, misleading, or unsupported claims may result in rejection and further action in accordance with organizational disciplinary procedures.

Roles and Responsibilities

Submitters

- Submit CPD hours within required timeframes
- Provide complete and accurate information
- Upload supporting documentation when required
- Retain original evidence for audit purposes

Reviewers

- Maintain CPD records in Training Management Platform in Odoo
- Conduct periodic audits
 - Assess submissions objectively and consistently
 - Verify alignment with CPD criteria
 - Request clarification or additional evidence when needed

- Report compliance status to management

Approvers

- Resolve escalated or disputed cases

CPD Acceptance Criteria

CPD activities must:

- Be relevant to the individual's role, profession, or development objectives
- Have a clear learning outcome
- Fall within accepted CPD categories (e.g., formal training, workshops, conferences, self-directed learning, mentoring, professional reading). Please see the guidance on the AccountAbility website [here](#).

Submission Requirements

Each CPD submission must include:

- Activity title and description
- CPD category
- Date(s) completed
- Number of hours claimed
- Learning outcomes or reflection (where required)
- Supporting evidence (e.g., certificate, agenda, attendance record, screenshot, log)

Review Process

Initial Check

- Confirm all required fields are completed.

Eligibility Review

- Assess relevance and category.
- Confirm hours claimed are reasonable and proportionate.

Evidence Verification

- Check documentation for authenticity and completeness.

Decision

- Approve, request more information, or reject.

Record Update

- Approved hours recorded in CPD tracking system.

Timeframes

- The AA team will review 5% of annual CPD submissions selected at random. These reviews will aim to be completed within six months of submission. CSAPs should maintain records to ensure compliance with this review.
- Requests for additional information should be concluded within one week of reaching out to the concerned CSAP.

Rejection and Resubmission

Submissions may be rejected if:

- Insufficient evidence is provided
- Activity does not meet CPD criteria
- Hours claimed are excessive or unsupported

Rejected submissions may be resubmitted with additional information.

Auditing and Quality Assurance

- Periodic sample audits will be conducted.
- Patterns of non-compliance may trigger broader review.
- Audit findings will be documented and reported.

Record Retention

CPD records and supporting evidence must be retained for **2 years** in accordance with organizational and regulatory requirements.

Non-Compliance

Deliberate falsification or repeated non-compliance may result in disciplinary action.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every **2 years** or sooner if regulatory requirements change.