



CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL LEARNING (CPL) POLICY & PROCEDURE

V1.0 NOVEMBER 2025

AT A GLANCE SUMMARY

Our Continuous Professional Learning policy and procedure:

- Makes the links between Continuous Professional Learning (CPL) and ELCAP's strategy.
- Describes the links between Fair Work and CPL.
- Provides a definition of CPL.
- Explains why (CPL) matters to ELCAP.
- Provides an overview of the role of the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC)'s role in CPL.
- Provides examples of what counts as CPL.
- Provides guidance on how to record CPL.
- Promotes the SSSC's Learning Zone and Open Badges.
- Sets out the responsibilities of ELCAP and ELCAP staff in relation to CPL.

INTRODUCTION

ELCAP is committed to:

- Being an excellent employer
- Supporting our staff to take the lead in their own learning and development
- Ensuring the support we provide to individuals is high quality and in line with the Health & Social Care Standards
- Ensuring we comply with the Scottish Social Services Council's Codes of Practice for employees and employers

These commitments underpin ELCAP's approach to Continuous Professional Learning.

DEVELOPING OUR WORKFORCE

Developing our workforce is one of ELCAP's strategic objectives. To enable us to meet this objective, we will:

- Ensure ELCAP is a great place to work by:
 - Providing jobs which are fulfilling and have a social purpose
 - Encouraging staff to be creative, innovative, resilient and resourceful
 - Developing the confidence, knowledge and skills of staff

- Enabling staff to work close to home, flexibly, and as part of stable, self-organising teams
- Offering competitive pay rates and terms and conditions of employment
- Recruit people who share ELCAP's values and have a passion for changing lives for the better.
- Develop a Workforce Strategy to meet our current and future workforce needs.
- Develop a quality framework to improve the experience of working for ELCAP.

Our commitment to continuous professional learning helps us:

- Encourage staff to be creative, innovative, resilient and resourceful.
- Develop the confidence knowledge and skills of staff.

FAIR WORK

ELCAP supports the vision of the Fair Work Convention:

“By 2025, people in Scotland will have a world leading working life where fair work drives success, wellbeing and prosperity for individuals, businesses, organisations and for society.”

The Convention has developed a Fair Work Framework, which has five dimensions:

- Effective voice
- Opportunity
- Security
- Fulfilment
- Respect

Opportunity and respect are particularly relevant to continuous professional learning:

- “Opportunity that provides fair and equal access to work and to career progression improves the life chances of workers and creates opportunities for social mobility.”
- “Fulfilling work can create a more rewarding work experience. It also creates a sense of purpose and self-worth that can support confidence and self-belief.”

WHAT IS CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL LEARNING (CPL)

Continuous professional learning (CPL) can be described in a range of ways. The following definition is used by our partners at the Scottish Social Services Council:

“Continuous professional learning (CPL) is the learning we do for work which helps us develop our knowledge, skills and professional behaviour so we can deliver our best practice.”

CPL is an investment which ELCAP colleagues make in themselves. It provides a way for staff to plan their development and links learning to practice. And it can help them keep their knowledge and skills up to date and prepare them for greater responsibilities.

CPL can boost staff confidence, strengthen professional credibility and help colleagues become more creative in overcoming barriers and tackling new challenges.

WHY CPL MATTERS TO ELCAP

ELCAP's mission is to become the recognised gold standard in social care by empowering the individuals we support, our staff and our community to grow and succeed.

The quality of ELCAP's care and support relies on a workforce which has the confidence, knowledge and skills to enable every individual we work with to live to their full potential. Many of the individuals we support have complex needs, which means they require staff who are creative, innovative, resilient and resourceful.

ELCAP seeks to ensure that all of our colleagues have the competency to perform well in their role. When competency is combined with commitment and the demonstration of our values, we can achieve high levels of performance. The benefits for the individuals we support, in terms of quality of service, and for our staff, in terms of job satisfaction, are clear.

Continuous professional learning is an important element of the package of benefits ELCAP provides for staff. It demonstrates our commitment staff development, helps to ensure jobs are fulfilling and supports staff retention.

CPL AND THE SCOTTISH SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL

The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) is the regulator for the social work, social care and early years workforce in Scotland. The SSSC:

- Publishes the national codes of practice for people working in social work, social care and early years services and their employers
- Registers people working in social work, social care and early years and make sure they adhere to our codes of practice
- Promotes and regulate their learning and development
- Provides the national lead for workforce development and planning for the social work, social care and early years workforce in Scotland.

Most staff in ELCAP, including all Support Practitioners, have to register with the SSSC and must meet its requirements for ongoing learning and development.

The SSSC Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers require all registered workers to undertake relevant learning to maintain and improve their knowledge and skills and contribute to the learning and development of others.

The SSSC website provides an excellent overview of CPL and what it means for registered social care staff:

- <https://www.sssc.uk.com/supporting-the-workforce/continuous-professional-learning/>

All registered workers must complete at least 60 hours of post-registration training within five years of being registered. This requirement applies equally to full-time and part-time staff.

WHAT COUNTS AS CPL?

CPL is not just about formal training courses – we learn on a daily basis. CPL includes everyday learning from a range of situations, including:

- Attending staff seminars
- Completing Open Badges
- Listening to relevant podcasts or radio programmes
- Participating in staff meetings
- Reading relevant articles in books and magazines and on websites
- Reflecting on workplace experiences
- Watching documentaries relevant to work

The SSSC website provides further examples of what counts as CPL.

RECORDING CPL

All staff must keep a record of their learning. The record should include:

- The amount of learning undertaken, in hours or days
- What you learned
- How your learning made a difference to your practice

You can record your learning in whatever way works best for you. You can use a learning log, notes or a mixture of ways including diagrams, mind maps, video or audio.

Please remember to record the dates of your learning and how much learning you have done. You can include any hours of CPL completed during your registration period.

ELCAP recommends that all registered staff use the MyLearning app to record their CPL. Developed by the SSSC, the app provides a simple way to record your learning as you go along.

- [Find out more about the MyLearning app and download it for free.](#)

SSSC LEARNING ZONE

Whatever their role and level of experience, the SSSC Learning Zone has a range of resources to help staff develop their knowledge and skills. These include:

- Apps, e-books, videos and websites covering a range of topics for social service workers
- Learning resources for coaches, managers, mentors and supervisors

The resources on the Learning Zone are free.

- [Find out more about the SSSC Learning Zone](#)

OPEN BADGES

As noted above, CPL happens in a range of situations and ways. Open Badges are a straightforward way to collect, manage and share evidence of learning in a digital world.

The SSSC and dozens of other social service organisations issue Open Badges to recognise continuous and informal learning that would otherwise go unrecorded.

You can collect Open Badges to evidence your learning and share them in places that matter to you, including offline as printable certificates. When you show your badge to someone, they will be able to see criteria against which the badge was awarded and any evidence that you provided to meet the criteria.

- [Find out more about Open Badges](#)

Open Badges cover a range of interests and issues. One example is the badge on SSSC Continuous Professional Learning.

Staff do not need to be registered with the SSSC to complete Open Badges.

STAFF RESPONSIBILITY FOR CPL

All staff within ELCAP have responsibility for their own CPL. We encourage colleagues to take ownership of their learning and seek out opportunities for learning and development. Where help is needed to identify or access appropriate opportunities, colleagues should ask their line manager for assistance.

Staff commitment to CPL is reinforced by their responsibility as social service workers. The SSSC Codes of Practice set out a range of standards relevant to ELCAP employees.

The following Code of Practice sets out what is required of ELCAP staff in relation to CPL:

“As a social service worker, I am accountable for the quality of my work and will take responsibility for maintaining and improving my knowledge and skills”

The Code of Practice requires ELCAP staff to:

- Ask for assistance from ELCAP or the appropriate authority if they do not feel able to, or well enough prepared to, carry out any part of their work or if they are not sure about how to proceed.
- Undertake relevant learning to maintain and improve their knowledge and skills and contribute to the learning and development of others.
- Listen to feedback from people who use services, carers and other relevant people and consider that feedback to improve my practice.

ELCAP'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR CPL

ELCAP's commitment to CPL is reinforced by our responsibility as a social service employer. The SSSC Codes of Practice set out a range of standards relevant to ELCAP as an employer.

The following Code of Practice sets out what is required of ELCAP in relation to CPL:

"As a social service employer, you must provide learning and development opportunities to enable social service workers to strengthen and develop their skills and knowledge."

The Code of Practice requires ELCAP to:

- Provide good quality induction, learning and development opportunities to help social service workers do their jobs effectively and prepare for new and changing roles and responsibilities.
- Contribute to providing social care and social work education and learning, including effective workplace assessments and practice learning.
- Support staff who need to be registered with the SSSC to meet the conditions for registration and the requirement for continuing professional development.
- Respond appropriately to social service workers who need support because they do not feel able to, or well enough prepared to, carry out their work.
- Provide effective, regular supervision to social service workers to support them to develop and improve through reflective practice.

CPL MEETINGS

All staff will be invited by their line manager to participate in a minimum of two CPL meetings per year. The meetings should allow you to assess the impact of learning on your performance. In addition, they should provide an opportunity to consider how you have kept your knowledge and skills up to date, reflect on your practice and identify future learning needs.

Preparation is key to the success of CPL meetings.

- An agenda should be agreed in advance.
- Staff should come prepared to share evidence of learning with their line manager and to discuss the impact of this learning on their work.
- Staff and line managers should give advance consideration to future learning needs and opportunities

A note of the meeting should be taken and held on file.

CPL RECORDS

Staff CPL records will be kept in their personnel file.

These records will usually be kept confidential, however colleagues should be aware that records may be examined by commissioners, managers and regulators in the course of monitoring ELCAP's commitment to staff learning and development.

Confidentiality of CPL records does not extend to situations where there is a potential breach of the SSSC's Codes of Practice or where a criminal or disciplinary investigation is required.

CPL AND STAFF WHO ARE NOT SSSC REGISTERED

In addition to colleagues who are registered with the SSSC, ELCAP wants all other staff to benefit from CPL.

Staff who are not SSSC registered are expected to:

- Explore a range of learning opportunities, including those identified in this policy
- Complete at least 60 hours of CPL over a five year period
- Record their CPL and share it with their line manager
- Prepare for and participate in a minimum of two CPL meetings per year