

## CAPDM Survey 2007

### Introduction

During 2007, CAPDM carried out an opinion survey among people with an interest in the fields of distance learning, blended learning and e-learning, within Professional Associations. The e-mailed questionnaire asked for opinions on various aspects of distance learning and the implications for professional training and development.

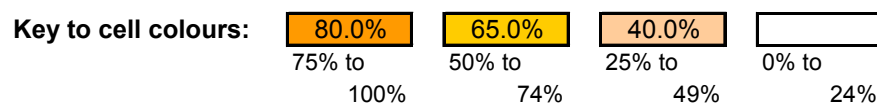
Responses were received from 48 associations – covering a wide range of professional requirements. Professional groupings represented in the final results are as follows:

- Accountancy (5)
- Construction Industry (3)
- Engineering (4)
- Extractive Industries (2)
- Facilities and Resource Management (4)
- Financial and Insurance Services (4)
- Legal Services (4)
- Management and Administration (4)
- Marketing and Associated Services (2)
- Medical & Dental Services (5)
- Press and Communications (3)
- Public Services (3)
- Science and Scientific Services (5)

### Survey Responses

The main part of the survey consisted of tick-boxes. The tables on the following pages summarise the responses to each of the questions.

The results are presented as a percentage of the total respondents to each question and the figures are highlighted in different colours to indicate different response levels - see key below:



**YOUR TRAINING ACTIVITIES AND CURRENT USE OF DISTANCE LEARNING**

To help us interpret the opinions you provide in this survey, it would help if you could provide the following

**Q1: Which of the following do you provide to members for their education and professional development?**

<b><i>[Please mark one of the first 2 boxes in each line and add any comments in the third box.]</i></b>	Provide for Members	Do not Provide	Restrictions or limitations (e.g. student members only)
Recognised professional qualification(s) and status	91.7%	8.3%	
Formal courses leading to professional qualification(s)	60.4%	39.6%	
Formal syllabus for courses leading to qualification(s)	70.8%	29.2%	
Materials to help other bodies deliver appropriate courses	58.3%	41.7%	
Accreditation for qualifying courses run by other bodies	62.5%	37.5%	
Content and materials for courses run by other bodies	35.4%	64.6%	
Formal exams and papers for professional qualification(s)	70.8%	29.2%	
Marking of formal qualification exams plus results	66.7%	33.3%	
Continuous Professional Development programmes	91.7%	8.3%	
Materials and information to support CPD programmes	89.6%	10.4%	
Formal training programmes related to CPD work	70.8%	29.2%	
Accreditation for other programmes related to CPD work	62.5%	37.5%	

**Q2: At which level(s) is training provided by your organisation (or others working on your behalf) aimed?**

<b><i>[Please mark one box per line]</i></b>	Major part of provision	Minor part of provision	Not provided	Not relevant
<u>School and Equivalent</u> (GCSE, A-level, NVQ levels 1 to 3)	12.8%	12.8%	36.2%	38.3%
<u>Certificate</u> (e.g. certificates of higher education, NVQ levels 4 and 5)	27.1%	16.7%	31.3%	25.0%
<u>Intermediate</u> (foundation/ordinary degrees, diplomas of higher educ'n)	26.7%	24.4%	26.7%	22.2%
<u>Honours</u> (Honours degrees, graduate certificates and diplomas)	43.5%	15.2%	23.9%	17.4%
<u>Master's</u> (Master's degrees, postgraduate certificates and diplomas)	35.6%	26.7%	22.2%	15.6%
<u>Doctoral</u> (Doctorates - typically based on 3 year's of research/study)	6.7%	13.3%	46.7%	33.3%

**Q3: How would you describe your organisation's current involvement with learning programmes**

<b><i>[Please mark one box per line]</i></b>	Yes	Partially	No
Develop our own <u>learning</u> programmes and have ownership of the resulting content	62.5%	20.8%	16.7%
Develop and produce our own <u>Distance Learning</u> programmes and have ownership	43.8%	18.8%	37.5%
Actively engaged in delivering paper based (mailed) DL programmes	33.3%	8.3%	58.3%
Actively engaged in delivering e-mailed/downloaded DL programmes	25.0%	12.5%	62.5%
Actively engaged in delivering interactive, on-line DL programmes	20.8%	27.1%	52.1%
Provide formal accreditation for <u>learning</u> programmes run by other organisations	54.2%	8.3%	37.5%
Provide formal accreditation for <u>DL</u> programmes run by other organisations	41.7%	10.4%	47.9%
Actively recruiting other organisations to run accredited <u>learning</u> programmes	33.3%	12.5%	54.2%
Actively recruiting organisations to run accredited <u>distance learning</u> programmes	18.8%	16.7%	64.6%
Actively working on new <u>distance learning</u> programmes of our own	31.3%	25.0%	43.8%
Considering development of our own <u>distance learning</u> programmes in the future	40.0%	28.9%	31.1%

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**REASONS WHY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS MIGHT WANT TO OFFER DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAMMES**

**Q4: What would you say are the main reasons why Professional Associations might want to offer DL programmes today (either on-line or by paper/CD/DVD distribution)?**

<i><u>(Please mark one box per line)</u></i>	<u>A Major Reason</u>	<u>A Reason in a Few Cases</u>	<u>A Minor Reason</u>	<u>Not a Reason</u>
Increasing member demand for high quality training and education in relevant fields	60.4%	22.9%	12.5%	4.2%
Membership increasingly distributed across remoter parts of the UK	51.1%	29.8%	10.6%	8.5%
Increasing overseas membership and/or association aiming to increase international membership	45.8%	29.2%	14.6%	10.4%
More people seeking to qualify as members, while in full-time employment	60.4%	16.7%	8.3%	14.6%
More members seeking high quality continuous professional development (CPD) programmes	60.4%	29.2%	8.3%	2.1%
Increasing competition for members from other associations covering the same or similar areas	12.5%	29.2%	31.3%	27.1%
Increasing number of specialisms for members - make face-to-face teaching less cost-effective	22.9%	33.3%	20.8%	22.9%
Members increasing reliance on (and familiarity with) computers and the internet for information and communication	33.3%	37.5%	22.9%	6.3%
A need to reduce the costs of providing a range of courses in a number of different centres/locations	14.6%	47.9%	8.3%	29.2%
Other? (Please specify below)				
	38.5%	0.0%	0.0%	
Other? (Please specify below)				
	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	

**IMPORTANCE OF DISTANCE LEARNING (DL) PROGRAMMES FOR PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS**

**Q5: To what extent would you agree/disagree with the following statements, related to the overall importance of Distance Learning programmes for Professional Associations?**

<i><u>(Please mark one box per line)</u></i>	<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>
All Professional Associations that provide training courses should offer them as DL programmes, if at all possible	20.8%	31.3%	33.3%	12.5%	2.1%
Relevant DL programmes are one of the best ways for a Professional Association to attract new members	6.4%	40.4%	38.3%	14.9%	0.0%
DL programmes are a good way for Professional Associations to generate additional funding	2.1%	50.0%	37.5%	10.4%	0.0%
Offering DL programmes boosts the reputation and appeal of a Professional Association	14.6%	54.2%	27.1%	4.2%	0.0%
The future of many Professional Associations will depend on the delivery of good DL programmes	2.1%	31.3%	37.5%	25.0%	4.2%
In future, most members of professional associations will prefer to use DL rather than face-to-face tutoring	0.0%	16.7%	43.8%	31.3%	8.3%
Professional Associations that wish to recruit overseas members will have to offer effective DL programmes	8.3%	45.8%	39.6%	4.2%	2.1%

**BENEFITS OF DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAMMES**

**Q6: To what extent would you agree with the following statements related to the benefits of Distance Learning Programmes?**

<i><u>(Please mark one box per line)</u></i>	<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>
Distance Learning Programmes make it easier for members to obtain the qualifications they require	10.4%	45.8%	33.3%	10.4%	0.0%
DL Programmes can be structured more flexibly - to suit individual member needs	14.6%	62.5%	20.8%	2.1%	0.0%
DL Programmes allow members to integrate their learning with other activities (e.g. work)	20.8%	77.1%	2.1%	0.0%	0.0%
DL Programmes are generally better structured than face-to-face programmes					

**REASONS WHY FEW PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS ARE OFFERING DL PROGRAMMES TODAY**

**Q7: What would you say are likely to be the main reasons why more Professional Associations are not offering Distance Learning programmes today?**

<i>[Please mark one box per line]</i>	<u>A Major Reason</u>	<u>A Reason in a Few Cases</u>	<u>A Minor Reason</u>	<u>Not a Reason</u>
Magnitude of the task seen as too large for the association to undertake	34.8%	43.5%	13.0%	8.7%
Training staff/departments generally not motivated to participate in the development of DL programmes	13.3%	40.0%	15.6%	31.1%
Lack of available funds to invest in the creation of such programmes	42.2%	42.2%	6.7%	8.9%
General lack of understanding of how to go about developing a DL programme	41.3%	37.0%	8.7%	13.0%
Lack of suitable people to 'champion' the creation and implementation of a DL programme	23.9%	58.7%	6.5%	10.9%
Relevant teaching materials are held by staff who don't want to release them	6.5%	13.0%	41.3%	39.1%
Fear of the unknown and the implications of potential failure	13.0%	28.3%	34.8%	23.9%
Have already tried it and failed	0.0%	17.8%	33.3%	48.9%
Other? (Please specify below)	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	
Other? (Please specify below)	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	

**POTENTIAL FUTURE FOR DL PROGRAMMES**

**Q8: To what extent would you agree with the following statements related to the potential future for Distance Learning Programmes provided by Professional Associations?**

<i>[Please mark one box per line]</i>	<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>
Distance Learning Programmes will soon become much more important than face-to-face learning	2.1%	10.4%	45.8%	39.6%	2.1%
New technology will reduce the value of face-to-face contact with tutors	2.1%	20.8%	29.2%	43.8%	4.2%
DL programmes are the only way the world will be able to meet future demand for learning	0.0%	12.5%	43.8%	39.6%	4.2%
UK Professional Associations have a major role to play in providing DL programmes for worldwide consumption	0.0%	64.6%	33.3%	2.1%	0.0%
Distance Learning programmes are only worth developing for more than 100 members per year	8.7%	21.7%	37.0%	30.4%	2.2%
Distance Learning programmes are only worth developing for more than 1000 members per year	0.0%	21.7%	37.0%	37.0%	4.3%
For most Professional Associations, DL will contribute more to income than face-to-face learning, over the next 10 years.	2.1%	22.9%	39.6%	33.3%	2.1%
Professional Associations should develop a repository of expert knowledge for their professions	39.6%	50.0%	6.3%	4.2%	0.0%
Developing DL programmes can help Professional Associations to build repositories of expert knowledge	14.6%	62.5%	20.8%	2.1%	0.0%
Professional Associations should try to develop as much of their own training materials and content as possible	14.6%	39.6%	33.3%	6.3%	6.3%
Professional Associations should use academic partners to develop their training materials and content	12.5%	58.3%	22.9%	6.3%	0.0%
Professional Associations should play a major role in developing & maintaining competency frameworks for their profession	50.0%	43.8%	6.3%	0.0%	0.0%

**OTHER OBSERVATIONS?**

**Q9: Do you have any other comments/thoughts on the role of Distance Learning in Professional Associations and/or the status of existing programmes? (Please enter comments in box below or in a separate e-mail.)**

The following (non-confidential) responses were received for this question:

- As we are only the governing body for the courses we provide, we do not provide any college style tuition for our courses. We provide all the necessary materials for students to study with such as text books, practice questions, suggested answers etc. which can be seen as a form of distance learning but don't actually provide the tuition itself. We do however have a number of colleges registered with us who provide this tuition on our courses by both distance learning and face to face classes. We are an international course so we do have a lot of overseas students
- Difficulty of finding people with education/training delivery skills in most professional bodies. Outsourcing to training organisations is expensive and ineffective for most professional areas of expertise. There are difficulties in setting up effective examining bodies and venues. O/L exams are not seen by most people (including government) as secure enough at the moment.
- DL is an area that we are just starting to look at with various universities and we are at the starting point of this journey. We have a lot of new information that we have to consider and communicate before we begin to develop the actual DL programme.
- DL is not the easiest way to learn and requires high quality tutorial support, which is not always forthcoming. It is better to talk of blended learning, whereby DL is used to help develop underpinning knowledge, supported by workshops to help learners reflect on and apply their learning.
- From our experience, face-to-face teaching is always preferred by students, but this can be provided as a supplement to a DL programme. However, the increased push towards globalisation of professional qualification has required us to look at offering online tutor support and whilst this does have advantages for us, it is not as popular with the students.
- Practical learning and experience cannot, and should not, be replaced by distance learning. Blended learning could however be very successfully utilised, with distance learning used to transfer knowledge (legislation), and application and discussion occurring in a face to face session.
- Start up costs can be huge - I can think of a few organisations that offer extensive face to face training run by accredited providers or under their own banner run by contractors, which offer clear income streams. They would have to buy content or develop it in-house which would be expensive - plus DL courses might reduce attendance at face to face courses. It's too much of a risk.
- Working in partnership with other professional associations is very effective when developing DL.
- As a relatively small Association that has experienced considerably growth in the training and development arena over the past 5 years, I would suggest that Distance Learning should be an area for development within the next five years. I believe that, as we try to grow our overseas development, DL could be key. However a lot of the training that the Association offers is in a workshop format and delegates benefit from the networking opportunities that contribute to an individual's learning and development.
- (We are) developing an on-line learning provision but it requires continuous investment and development resources to ensure materials are up to date and valuable.

## Conclusion

*[Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.]*

92% of professional associations who responded to this survey, provide professional qualifications and status as a key offering to their members - and back it up with CPD programmes and supporting information. 71% already provide formal syllabi for courses leading to qualifications, and 62% provide guidance and accrediting services to third party course providers.

60% of associations provide formal courses leading to professional qualifications and this training covers a wide range of levels - from NVQ level 1 through to post-graduate programmes.

94% believe that associations should play a major role in developing and maintaining competency frameworks for their profession, and 90% believe they should develop a repository of expert knowledge for their profession. 77% believe that developing distance-learning programmes can help associations build such repositories, and 71% believe they should use academic partners to develop it. 69% believe that offering distance-learning programmes boosts the reputation and appeal of the association, and 98% agree that such programmes help members to integrate their learning with other activities such as work.

65% of survey respondents feel that UK professional associations have a major role to play in providing distance learning programmes for worldwide consumption - but only 44% develop and produce their own distance learning programme materials and only 25% deliver such programmes online. Of the many reasons offered as to why most associations do not offer distance-learning programmes today, a lack of available funds for programme development was the main reason surveyed. This was closely followed by a general lack of understanding of how to go about developing a distance learning programme and then concern that the magnitude of the task is too great for the association to take on.

The results from this survey have highlighted a number of issues associated with the implementation of DL and/or blended learning programmes within Professional Associations. However, there is a general recognition that distance learning and e-learning in some form can offer attractive opportunities for Professional Associations.

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