

Frequently Asked Questions – PACFA membership renewal

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1. When does my membership expire?

The PACFA membership year is the same as the financial year, so every PACFA membership expires on **30 June each year** and all members are required to renew their registration annually between May and July. If you complete your renewal between 1 August to 30 September you are required to pay full fees and a late fee of \$60 will apply.

If you complete your renewal after 31 July, a late fee of \$60 will apply.

2. What are the continuing professional development (CPD) requirements?

All clinical, Certified Practising and Academic PACFA members must complete at least 20 hours of CPD each membership year.

Student and affiliate members do not need to complete CPD.

CPD activities must be directly relevant to practice in counselling and psychotherapy and/or the research evidence base for counselling and psychotherapy.

There are 2 categories of CPD:

Category A (mandatory): minimum 10 hours per membership year

Category B (optional): maximum 10 hours per membership year

All 20 CPD hours can come from Category A, but only a maximum 10 can come from Category B. You must do at least 10 hours of Category A CPD each membership year.

If you joined PACFA part-way during the membership year, you have a pro-rata exemption for some of the standard required CPD and supervision hours, based on the month you joined. The exemption will be automatically applied based on your join date and you are required to enter only the pro-rata hours.

Month joined	CPD exemption (hours)	Supervision exemption (hours)
August	2	1
September	3	2
October	5	3
November	7	3
December	8	4
January	10	5
February	12	6
March	13	7
April	15	8
May	17	8

3. What is the difference between Category A and B CPD?

Category A CPD requires you to be an active participant, whereas Category B is more passive learning.

Category A CPD will actively engage you with the facilitator or presenter. You will be expected to participate and share, either during the event or after. You might be required to do an assessment at the end of the course to demonstrate your knowledge.

Some examples of Category A CPD are:

- An in-person course, workshop, seminar, conference, or similar
- An online webinar, course, workshop, conference, seminar, or similar that you attend live, where you can ask questions and interact with the presenter or facilitator
- An online webinar, course, workshop, conference, or seminar that is recorded, but after watching the recording you interact with the presenter or facilitator via an online forum or email
- Online learning that is recorded or that you complete in your own time that has an assessment component that must be completed before you can finish the course

Category B CPD is a more passive style of learning, such as reading or listening, where you do not actively engage with a facilitator.

Some examples of Category B CPD are:

- Watching a recorded lecture, such as a TED Talk, about an area that relates to your practice as a counsellor and/or psychotherapist
- Reading a book or peer-reviewed journal article that relates to your practice in counselling and/or psychotherapy
- Conducting a presentation or teaching on an area you specialise in
- Any supervision hours you have done above and beyond your PACFA annual supervision requirements
- Participating in a peer learning group, such as meeting, discussing and exploring counselling and psychotherapy topics or resources with colleagues, but without a formal facilitator who is teaching

A reflective journal should be used to record any notes on journal articles, books, or recordings that you do, to reflect on the learning activity and how it relates to and enhances your professional practice.

All CPD must be relevant to practice in counselling and psychotherapy and/or the research evidence base for counselling and psychotherapy.

4. What are the supervision requirements?

All clinical and provisional members must complete a **minimum of 10 hours** of supervision per membership year. This supervision cannot be routine managerial supervision; it must apply to your current client cases.

Student, affiliate, and academic members do not need to complete supervision.

If you have had 400 or more client contact hours over the past membership year, you will be required to complete a minimum of 15 hours of supervision.

If you are an accredited supervisor or mental health practitioner, you are required to complete a minimum of 15 hours supervision, with at least 5 hours of supervision directly related to your practice as a supervisor and/or mental health practitioner.

Supervision can be conducted in one-on-one sessions, or in a group with no more than 6 participants.

Clinical members who have been PACFA members for 5 continuous years are able to accrue up to 50% of their supervision hours through peer supervision. Peer supervision is a formal process where therapists contract to provide supervision for each other's clinical client work. Peer supervision can be undertaken one-to-one or within a small group of no more than 6 members.

If you joined PACFA part-way during the membership year, you have a pro-rata exemption for some of the standard required CPD and supervision hours, based on the month you joined. The exemption will be automatically applied based on your join date and you are required to enter only the pro-rata

Month joined	CPD exemption (hours)	Supervision exemption (hours)
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5. How do I complete my CPD and supervision logs?

We've prepared [a handy video guide](#) to take you through updating your logs.

To complete your logs, go to www.pacfa.org.au, and follow these steps:

1. Go to 'For members' and select 'Member portal'
2. You will be prompted to log in if you have not already done so
3. Go to 'Logs', and 'CPD Hours Log', 'Client Hours Log', or 'Supervision Log', depending on which activity you are entering
4. Scroll down to your log, and click on the grey plus button to create a new log entry
5. Fill in the required details, and press 'Save & Close'

Once you have saved your log entry, refresh the page and your total hours count will update.

Please note that for your supervision total hours count to calculate correctly, you need to have at least one hour of client contact recorded in your client hours log.

During renewals, you can complete your CPD and supervision logs through the Renewal form. We've prepared a video guide on [how to Complete the renewal form 2023](#).

6. How do I prove I have completed my CPD and supervision?

Every year you need to update your logs to tally your CPD and supervision hours.

You **can** submit evidence for your CPD and Supervision while completing the logs. You are also required to keep proof of your CPD and supervision **for the past 3 membership years** for audit purposes.

You will need to keep copies of the following documents:

- Proof of attendance at CPD, such as certificates or payment receipts
- Proof of supervision and client contact hours - we strongly recommend filling out the [supervision and client contact verification form](#) with your supervisor at the end of each membership year
- Professional indemnity and public liability insurance certificates
- Information on ethical conduct records (if applicable)
- Copies of your Member Association membership certificates (if applicable)

Each year after all members have renewed, PACFA undertakes an audit of a random selection of members. A member can be audited no more than once every three years. Read our [Register Audit Guidelines](#) for further information.

7. I had a grace period applied to my logs last year. How do I renew this year?

Log into the Member Portal and access your logs page. Scroll down to view last year's log, and look for an entry that includes 'GRACE PERIOD'. Check how many hours grace you were granted, and add that number to the usual requirements.

For example, if you had a grace period of 6 hours applied to your CPD log, then your total CPD requirement for this year would be 26 hours.

8. What happens if I can't meet the renewal requirements?

Members who have faced challenges related to the Covid pandemic or natural disasters are encouraged to [review our Hardship Policy](#).

Members who were not working part of the Membership Year 2022/2023 and therefore don't have enough CPD and Supervision can apply for Retroactive leave using the [Leave of Absence form](#). Make sure that you have entered the correct period you were not working.

If you were practising for the whole membership year and did not complete CPD and supervision, unfortunately you cannot proceed with your renewal, and your membership will be suspended. Suspension of your membership happens automatically if you do not renew by 30 September, you do not need to contact PACFA to suspend your membership. Memberships can be unsuspended within two years. After two years, another membership application is required.

Please be aware that all private health funds, EAPs and injured worker authorities require counselling providers to be a current member of a professional association and to hold professional insurances.

9. I wasn't working for part of the membership year and therefore don't have enough CPD and supervision hours to renew. What can I do?

Members who were not working part of the Membership Year 202/2023 and therefore don't have enough CPD and Supervision can apply for Retroactive leave using the [Leave of Absence form](#). Make sure that you have entered the correct period you were not working.

10. How do I renew if I joined PACFA part-way through the membership year?

If you joined PACFA part-way during the membership year, you have a pro-rata exemption for some of the standard required CPD and supervision hours, based on the month you joined. The exemption will be automatically applied based on your join date and you are required to enter only the pro-rata hours.

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11. I'm not currently working as a counsellor or psychotherapist, but I want to keep my membership. What can I do?

Members can apply to go on leave for a period of up to two years if they are taking time away from practising or need to stop work for personal reasons. To apply for leave on our [website](#)

If you are on leave, you do not need to renew, and do not need to complete the annual CPD and supervision renewal requirements for the period you are on leave.

However, if your membership was active for some of the membership year *before* you went on leave and you have not completed the required CPD and supervision hours for the period your membership was active, you will need to complete those CPD and supervision hours when you return.

12. I was on leave for some of this year, but my membership is now active again. What do I need to do for my renewal?

You are not required to complete CPD and supervision while on leave, so you will have a pro-rata exemption for this period.

13. Does my supervisor have to be PACFA accredited?

No, however this is **strongly recommended**. PACFA-accredited supervisors are clinical members who have completed extensive training in supervision. As well as being knowledgeable practitioners, they have a deep understanding of PACFA's policies and can help you with your annual requirements.

Your supervisor can come from a related discipline such as psychology, social work, or psychiatry. Whoever your supervisor is, they must be more senior than you and have specialist knowledge of your practice modalities.

[For further information, read the PACFA Clinical Supervision Standard](#)

14. Is there a minimum number of client hours I need to have completed?

No, there is no minimum number of client hours. However, in order for the renewal portal to calculate your hours correctly and let you submit your renewal, you will need to have logged at least one hour of client contact. See "[How do I complete my logs?](#)" for instructions.

15. I didn't have many client hours this year, can I do less supervision?

No, the minimum requirement is 10 hours of supervision. This is because supervision is central to your growth and practice as a counsellor and/or psychotherapist, and is a way to receive guidance and stay in touch with current best practice in your profession.

If cost is a barrier to receiving supervision, please visit our [low-cost supervisor directory](#) for information on how to join group supervision at a capped price.

If you have not completed 10 hours of supervision because you have not been a member for a full membership year, see "[How do I renew if I joined PACFA part-way through the membership year?](#)".

16. How to Purchase insurance.om.au PACFA Member Insurance Policy?

Visit the [PACFA page](#) on the insurance.com.au website [here](#).

Once on the insurance.com.au PACFA page, select [Get a Quote](#) and follow the prompts.

Ensure when asked if you are part of an association, you select PACFA to receive your eligible discount.

For more information, or if you require assistance with insurance, contact insurance.com.au on 1300 468 730 or support@insurance.com.au.

17. If I'm eligible to upgrade my membership, should I do that before renewing?

No, in fact, it is better to upgrade after the renewal period. This is because renewals are a peak period at PACFA, and your upgrade application may be significantly delayed. There is no membership fee difference between provisional and clinical membership and you can upgrade at any time during the membership year, so there is no benefit to upgrading with your renewal. We recommend waiting until August to submit an upgrade application to ensure timely processing.

18. Why can't I see my CPD/Client/Supervision log within the Renewal Form?

The CPD, Client and Supervision logs will only appear within your renewal form if you have not met the CPD and supervision requirements. If you have met your CPD and Supervision requirements prior to completing the renewal form, you will move straight from the "Document Upload" tab to the "Declaration".