

## Science Museum Research Summary: Providing effective Continuing Professional Development teachers' courses in museums

*This document is based on key findings from a Science Museum Talk Science Research Report covering 18 months of work with teachers. Please contact us on [learning@sciencemuseum.org.uk](mailto:learning@sciencemuseum.org.uk) if you would like more details.*

### What do teachers think about CPD?

It's not very good news: many teachers doubt the quality or value of CPD. Research conducted by the Wellcome Trust shows that 45% of the 825 surveyed were sceptical of its objectives or relevance. A further 16% valued CPD but found their opportunities to attend were limited, while 38% felt their careers had benefited from CPD.

### How much time do teachers spend on CPD?

The most recent figure (2009) suggests six to seven days per year is the average for most teachers, even though 20 to 30% have fewer than five.

### Where do teachers attend CPD workshops?

Most are held in school, but a significant number are held out of school. Some 60% of teachers surveyed had attended CPD workshops outside school in the previous 12 months.

### What level of experience do participants on CPD workshops tend to have?

Newly qualified teachers attend the most CPD training, although the scope of CPD they can participate in is smaller than for other teachers. Conversely, teachers with 20 years of experience and/or those who are high up in their careers have more CPD opportunities available but take advantage of fewer. Trainee teachers may attend one-day courses.

### How does the level of CPD involvement differ between primary and secondary teachers?

The Training and Development Agency for Schools (2008) found that primary school teachers had participated in more CPD than their counterparts in secondary schools. Primary schools tend to spend more money on supply cover and hold in-school CPD sessions while secondary schools spend more on external courses. This trend means primaries are more likely than secondaries to seek bespoke courses to run in their schools.

## **What are the biggest barriers to the attendance of CPD?**

Aside from low expectations of quality, many teachers also have difficulty convincing their head of department of the need to attend, while external providers of CPD are often regarded as offering poor value for money.

## **How can these barriers be overcome?**

By including compelling statistics positive quotes from teachers in marketing material, taking advantage of bursary schemes and providing high-quality products to take away, museums can counter some of teachers' concerns.

## **Further resources:**

Find out what content teachers say they'd like to get from CPD courses in a further sheet summarising Science Museum Research:

- Science Museum Research Summary: Creating content for CPD teachers' courses in museums

See the Wellcome Trust's report on CPD, *Believers, Seekers and Sceptics*, at:

[www.wellcome.ac.uk/About-us/Publications/Reports/Education/Believers-Seekers-and-Sceptics/index.htm](http://www.wellcome.ac.uk/About-us/Publications/Reports/Education/Believers-Seekers-and-Sceptics/index.htm)

See what CPD expert Thomas Guskey says about measuring the effectiveness of CPD:

<http://www.hfrp.org/evaluation/the-evaluation-exchange/issue-archive/professional-development/a-conversation-with-thomas-r.-guskey>