

Chapter 2

The Origins and Early Development of CPE

Abstract As indicated in Chap. 1, seeking to discover the origins of CPE would not be found in government legislation or widespread media coverage. The focus chosen for this research was the professional practitioner and the method successfully used was individual interviews. Valuable information was gathered. The evidence was that CPE developed from the desire of the practitioners to ‘keep up to date’ in their profession by learning about themselves, their profession and its practice. This practitioners’ learning was gradually supported by what I have called ‘supplementary activities’ which were offered by a range of organisations, and the professional associations became major providers. Examples of these activities provided by a range of agencies from different professions are noted to illustrate the scope of these early developments. The first CPE activities for some professions are identified. A significant step in CPE’s recognition occurred in the 1980s when CPE was promoted as a preferable option to the constant lengthening of the professions’ entry level degree as a means of addressing the dramatic increase in knowledge. The examples of the early CPE programs provide a general picture of CPE as it began and became an important part of professional life. The chapter also illustrates that CPE was a different type of educational provision.

2.1 Searching for the Origins of CPE

The approach taken to researching CPE’s origins was influenced by two factors: that CPE was different from other types of educational provision and its origins had not been extensively researched. The target chosen for this researching was the professional practitioner. The lead was taken from Scanlan’s definition that noted that CPE was ‘any purposeful, systematic and sustained effort conducted by professionals ... to update or expand the proficiency, knowledge, skills or attitudes necessary to effectively discharge their occupational roles’ (1980, p. 55). So the initial focus was on the efforts made by individual practitioners who sought to ‘keep up to date’. The period in which it was assumed that these activities may have originated was set as from around World War II (1939–1945) up to the early 1960s.

The practitioners interviewed identified a pattern of learning behaviour that began with individuals’ personal actions and developed into a comprehensive program of activities provided in an educational format. From individual practitioner

activities, a new form of educational provision emerged called Continuing Professional Education. Having described this process, the first CPE events in individual professions are identified in the 1960s and three types of CPE programs that began in the late 1950s and early 1960s are presented. Next a key determinant in CPE's acceptance as a legitimate form of educational provision and part of professional education is explained in the 1980s, the acceptance of the limitations of the first degree for ensuring practitioners' ongoing performance. Finally, conclusions and tentative perceptions of this new form of educational provision are offered. CPE's early development has been arbitrarily set as concluding in the mid 1980s for two reasons. The issue of the first degree's 'value' was being resolved and policy on practitioners' CPE participation was becoming an issue for the professional associations – a focus of Chap. 4. The approach adopted may encourage research on practitioners' efforts during the twentieth century to 'keep up to date', to locate professions' first identified CPE events and explore the subsequent story of CPE programs and providers.

The search for origins commenced with CPE's purpose and the individual practitioner. A traditional assumption about professionals was that it was the responsibility of the individual practitioner to 'keep up to date' in their profession's practice. This assumption was not always enunciated in the lists of the professions' characteristics, eg. Schein (1972) noted in Chap. 1, but it was stressed by Scanlan (1980). However, in traditional professions such as the law and medicine, there was a generally accepted assumption that individual practitioners would update themselves with changes in the law and its interpretation for the law professional and in procedures, techniques and pharmacology for the medical practitioner. Part of the mythology of traditional professions was that individual practitioners would take time – before or after a consultation for example – to read the latest journals or bulletins related to their practice. My contacts in the 1980s and 90s with 'new professions', such as computing science and the allied health professions, suggest they were willing to accept this traditional feature of 'being a professional'.

In 1974, I arranged as an adult education programmer to meet a medical practitioner in a country town to discuss a proposed adult education activity for the community. The meeting was delayed because he had received an unplanned visit from the representative of a pharmaceutical company and the practitioner wanted to check on certain features of new medications and gain print information on them. The doctor assured me that the information gained from the 'rep' was very important to his practice.

This incident was an example of what I defined as a 'practitioner initiated learning activity' related to 'keeping up to date'. Many methods were used to achieve this goal. When faced with a new legal problem or an unusual or uncommon medical diagnosis, the practitioner may have contacted a peer or colleague face to face, by phone or mail for their advice or checked a relevant reference. Other resources used in these situations by doctors were senior practitioners from the university departments or hospitals in which they had trained.

However, in addition on an irregular basis, the professional associations, universities responsible for initial training in the profession and commercial (private

enterprise) organisations also offered activities to assist the practitioners' 'keeping up to date'. The private enterprise organisations included manufacturers or distributors of pharmaceuticals or equipment, or book, journal or magazine publishers. These companies made contact with the individual practitioner through a travelling representative, as in the medical example above, or by directories, advertisements in the professional association journal or other information through the mail. Whatever was the motivation of those who arranged these activities, they were educational, with a provider and the goal of teaching and challenging the practitioners. These goals may have also been part of wider objectives concerned with promoting products or for the professional associations raising the standards of the profession. Whatever their purposes, they became part of a general program to assist practitioners maintain, or improve, their efficiency in their practices.

From my observations, I assumed that not all practitioners engaged in these activities. There was evidence to support this assumption in the lack of full participation in organised CPE when it was offered. In addition, the level of engagement varied from profession to profession and from practitioner to practitioner within a single profession. The evidence for these conclusions at this stage of CPE's development is presented in Sect. 4.6, when the issue of the level of participation by practitioners in CPE became an issue. This type of provided education gradually became widespread and was supported. However, the appearance of this activity has not been extensively documented, eg. in the 1950s and 1960s.

I decided in the mid 1990s to explore this gap in my knowledge, ie of the ways in which practitioners in the period from before World War II to the 1970s sought to 'keep up to date'. To this end, I interviewed four retired professionals individually and discussed with them how they learned their practice as novices at the time from the 1940s to 1960s when there was little or no organised CPE (Brennan 1998, pp. 6–9). Two of the practitioners were originally interviewed individually for an audio tape for a Module on CPE for UNE – Northern Rivers (Brennan 1991). They were interviewed again individually as were two additional practitioners for this 1998 project. This exercise was less extensive than that of Faine (1992), noted in Sect. 1.3, but more focused. In this project, the four practitioners were asked four questions: about their career from initial training through their various positions and roles in different locations: how they learnt in and from their practice: how they came to use CPE/PD/CME as it was provided for their profession and finally what advice they would give to beginning practitioners about becoming and remaining competent practitioners. The purpose of the interviews was to confirm or change the assertions noted above. From this sample no statistically supported conclusions may be drawn. Overall, their views supported the views that I was developing on CPE's origins.

The first point that was stressed, as the practitioners reviewed their early practice, was the significance to them of their learning from their practice, actually practising optometry, medicine, physiotherapy and school teaching. They cited both making mistakes and successfully completing new procedures and solving problems.

These learning activities that were closely linked to their everyday practice cannot be called 'educational' activities. They were essentially *ad hoc*, seldom pre-planned and not formally evaluated. They were related directly with the individual's practice and rooted in that practice, how it was and how they wanted it to be. They copied their practice behaviour from that of others; they made mail and phone contacts with a range of persons to seek answers to problems; they used their 'supervisors' in a variety of ways; they chose 'models' to define what they desired to achieve and how, but also what they did not seek to replicate; they learnt from successes and failures. The practitioners acknowledged these activities as 'learning experiences', and important experiences. They readily reported examples from their practices of these 'practitioner initiated learning activities'. I was impressed that they recalled these events and experiences very clearly though in some cases they were several decades in their past. They also indicated that they valued these experiences.

In reporting these events, they did not use the word 'mentor' (Daloz 1987; Zachary 2000), a term that has become common in the second stage of contemporary professional education. In accounting and dietetics, mentors are used by CPA Australia as Associate Members seek to complete their 'practical experience' and proceed to the CPA status (CPA Australia 2010) and by the Dietitians Association of Australia (DAA 1998) to assist their overseas trained candidates seeking to practise in Australia. The interviewed practitioners did however use the term 'model'. I observed (Brennan 2003) how important it was to distinguish between the two terms 'mentor' and 'model'. Mentor is usually associated with a formal organisational system and a structured relationship as with DAA and CPA – where and when to meet and what is on and off the agenda. By contrast 'model' is a more informal arrangement. As the older practitioners recalled, they chose their own models and learned from them. Sometimes they learned from watching and relating to their models what they wanted to do or recognised behaviour that they did **not** want to copy from their model. There were positives as well as negatives. The positive features highlighted what they admired and wished to include in their own practice from observing these models. Learning as a result of negative messages derived from models is not easily or usually recognised in mentoring systems.

The discussion with the older practitioners about the model/mentor examples promoted the most intense discussion. From the behaviour of their self-selected models, the medical practitioner indicated that he chose what specialisation he would follow; the physiotherapist was so negatively influenced by her supervisors/models in the public sector that she decided to set up her own private enterprise establishment, and she did. She was actually interviewed in her private practice. The school teacher drew up for himself a list of 'things to avoid' as a result of his observation of teachers in 'demonstration lessons' and from his supervised practice teaching. In a similar way the optometrist noted that by the time he decided to set up his own practice, he had a long list of things 'to avoid' in that practice. The list was based on observations of select professional colleagues in the practices in which he had served. When asked why the list was about negatives, he confessed that at that stage he had decided to establish his own practice which he perceived was a high risk activity. He was determined not to make the sorts of mistakes

contained in his list of negatives. Useful outcomes were identified by the practitioners from positive and negative learning from their models.

The educational value of this relationship with models was not generally realised at the time, ie by those concerned with assisting new practitioners becoming competent in their profession. This informal use of models has not necessarily been valued in later times. However, the activities appear in the estimations of the practitioners on reflection to have enhanced their experience and practice, helped them survive and develop and make crucial decisions about their practice.

This small example provides evidence of a variety of practice-related learning processes undertaken by practitioners in four professions at a time before a CPE program was available. But these practitioners also indicated that this learning from practice and models continued in their careers in parallel to CPE after it became established and part of their practices.

This individually initiated learning came to be complemented by what I called *supplementary activities* (Brennan 1996, p. 28). They were given this title because the practitioners explained that these activities ‘supplemented’ their learning from practice and their self-initiated learning. Their supplementary activities included lectures and demonstrations, seminars and workshops, special sessions at annual business-only conferences, the distribution of written or audio materials and tours related to the profession’s practice. These activities became additional to the self-initiated learning from practice that had become part of the interviewed professionals’ own developmental process.

What was observed above as a series of rather irregular and disorganised activities from a variety of providers – professional associations, universities and private enterprise organisations – developed eventually into what became this distinct area of educational provision, CPE.

What the evidence of the four retired practitioners establishes is that CPE grew out of what were described as ‘supplementary activities’ and that these supplementary activities became important as a complement to the practitioner initiated learning that professionals had developed themselves as part of the traditional responsibility of ‘keeping up to date’. What the retired practitioners emphasised was the link between their learning in and from practice, their own initiated learning activities, the later supplementary activities and the later provided education. They stressed how these diverse types of learning were closely linked.

The ways in which the four retired practitioners described their experiences reflect the ‘effort’ noted in Scanlan’s definition of CPE and that the practitioners accepted their responsibility to ‘keep up to date’.

It is assumed that learning from practice, self-initiated learning and these supplementary activities became part of the ‘keeping up to date’ process of many other practitioners. The evidence of four practitioners was insufficient to be confident about the role of these activities in CPE’s origins. However, there is broader support for the four practitioners’ experiences. For example, the American scholar Houle asserted that more than half of continuing learning in the professions was self-directed (1980, p. 36). My reading of overseas studies and theses in Australian and New Zealand universities clearly indicated that there was a wide range of learning

activities being undertaken by professional practitioners in the 1990s in addition to their provided CPE. Research across professions in the United Kingdom by Gear et al. (1994) and Becher (1996) revealed both formal and informal learning by practitioners. In Australia and New Zealand research on beginning solicitors by Nelson (1993) and Crebert (1995) revealed a wide range of learning activity beyond CLE, Redpath (1995) discovered many learning strategies used by senior accountants and Yelder (1997) and Henderson (2000) noted that sonologists and sonographers participated in many learning strategies in their practices.

However, of more significance for the recognition of the learning activities of the retired practitioners has been Webster Wright's research (2010). In a larger and more detailed study, she has clearly established that what she has called 'authentic professional learning' exists and is a major feature of professional practice. Her term perhaps reflects more accurately the importance of this learning for professionals. Her research is mentioned again in Sect. 10.4.

A form of developmental progress in practitioners' learning was identified from practitioner-initiated learning, through supplementary activities to formally provided educational programs to enable the practitioners to 'keep up to date'. This process offers a basis for the origins and early development of CPE.

There was no legislation from the Federal or State Government establishing this new educational activity. Nevertheless there was activity, not frenetic but gradual and widespread. Many agencies discovered, some slowly and others quickly, the potential of these supplementary activities if organised in a more programmed manner. To cater for the needs, as they were perceived, of practitioners in individual professions, various organisations began to offer these supplementary activities – university departments in the professional faculties and special adult/continuing education departments or units, teachers' colleges and later colleges of advanced education (CAEs), professional associations, the providers of all sorts of equipment and services used by professionals in their practices and some agencies set up by various consortia whose role was to provide education designed specifically for the practitioner – in a single profession, a group of professions or professionals in general.

The process for the development of these supplementary activities into CPE was market-driven. There was no government supervising agency or set of regulations. The activity was essentially between the providers and the practitioners as participants operating in an open market. The market was open to all those who had programs to offer and the professionals were free to choose, though in most cases there were fees. With no government supervision, this provision was market-driven. It had a different type of origin and operated in a manner different from other educational sectors.

When the retired practitioners looked back on their early careers, they initially perceived them through the current situation in which CPE was the public face of professional development. On further reflection, particularly once the concept of model had been 'discovered', the practitioners noted the importance of their own learning activities in their professional development. Learning in and from practice had been crucial in their becoming better practitioners. In the longer perspective then, the individually initiated activities may have continued but the supplementary activities, as educational programs developed by a range of providers, assumed

greater importance. As one retired practitioner commented after the formal aspects of the interview were concluded: “We seem to have survived without CPE.”

2.2 Supplementary Activities Become CPE

Having chosen to explore the origins of CPE via the individual practitioner’s desire to ‘keep up to date’, this next stage illustrates how the supplementary activities noted above came to be organised into a new form of educational provision. The process leading to the provision of these supplementary activities has not been documented for professions as a whole. In the generalised tale, this development is illustrated by examples of providers of these educational activities from three professions, school teaching, the law and veterinary science. These educational activities have a provider, the programs have objectives and the participants gather from various locations. The examples illustrate the diversity in providers, methods of delivery and content but they also share a common objective, providing learning activities to help the practitioners ‘keep up to date’. The first example describes a type program, the second a specific activity and the third an organisation designed to offer these activities. Not all CPE providers have enjoyed histories as long as two of the providers, those in the law and veterinary science examples.

The first example is the Post-College Courses (PCCs) held during school holidays at various teachers’ colleges for practising school teachers with support from teachers’ associations. Infants, primary and secondary teachers from the state and independent systems chose their program for the three or 4 days from a menu of courses. Two major types of courses were offered: content and method, and general. The former were focused on particular syllabi, while the latter included the philosophy, sociology or history of education or topics such as television or teaching machines. Three reports of PCCs at the Sydney Teachers’ College from 1959 to 1967 (Miller 1959; Symonds 1965; Barnes 1967), illustrate this type of activity. Of relevance is the educational context in New South Wales at that time. There were major changes to secondary education through the implementation of reforms based on a committee report, whose chairman was Dr Harold Wyndham, the Director-General of Education in NSW (Wyndham 2010). The changes included extensive re-writing of the curriculum requiring in-service training for teachers.

In the 1959 PCC program there were 35 courses offered and 1400 participants. By 1967 the number of course offerings had grown to over 50 and the participants to 2343. In the report on the 1961–1965 PCCs the claim was made that the courses bring ‘a considerable measure of unity and purpose within education in NSW’ (Symonds 1965, p. 122) and also provide the opportunity for the social and professional exchange of ideas. The data on the PCCs indicate that the demand grew and the range of offerings expanded for primary and secondary teachers in that period of the 1950s and 1960s.

The writer was a secondary school teacher of English and History for the New South Wales (NSW) Department of Education from 1959 to 1972 and attended these PCCs at the Sydney and Armidale Teachers’ Colleges.

The second example is a residential weekend for solicitors which started in the 1960s and is still being conducted. The conference was arranged by the North and North-west Law Society (covering the northern tablelands and slopes of New South Wales) and the University of New England (UNE) and held in Armidale (Program Brochures, UNE Department of Continuing Education, 1960–1990). The Conference retained a format of lectures with discussion and a conference dinner. Noticeable changes are evident in the conference program. In terms of the topics covered, in 1960 there was an emphasis on duties of the stamp, death, estate and gift variety; the Matrimonial Causes Act featured in 1962; in 1970 legal aid and amendments to the Motor Traffic Act including breathalyser provisions, were introduced; in 1977 when the first female lecturer was used, the program included professional negligence and indemnity insurance; the 1990 program featured capital gains tax and anti-gazumping. The program reflected the changing issues for the legal profession and its continuing popularity was indicative of its perceived value and relevance. To signify the changing ethos of continuing legal education in NSW, and CPE in general, the 1990 brochure announced that the conference was worth nine CLE points, as part of the Mandatory CLE system (discussed in Chap. 4).

The third example is the Post Graduate Foundation in Veterinary Science. The setting up of the veterinary science organisation followed an initiative of the medical profession. The terms CPE, CME and CVE did not exist at that time so studies undertaken by practitioners in the field were naturally ‘post graduate’. The success of the veterinary initiative, once again in parallel with the medical, was primarily due to the work of far-sighted individuals: Victor Coppleson in the medical and Tom Hungerford in the veterinary area. However, the veterinary initiative was also successful because of the wide range of supporting agencies involved, eg the University of Sydney through the Faculty of Veterinary Science, the Australian Veterinary Association (AVA), the Veterinary Surgeons’ Board, the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), NSW Department of Agriculture and the Institute of Veterinary Inspectors as well as the private sector. The University of Sydney Senate gave approval to the Post Graduate Committee in November 1961, demonstrating its support to the on-going education of graduates from its professional faculties.

The Committee was a natural development of the growth of a number of supplementary activities conducted by a range of organisations – the AVA, the University of Sydney Extension Board, the Veterinary Science Faculty, the Australian Meat Board and the Rural Bank. From the outset the Committee sought to provide programs for country practitioners. The brief was noted in a comment on Hungerford by Bryden with contemporary relevance as well as in the 1960s.

He saw the difficulties which confront individual veterinarians in whatever sphere of work they pursue; the practical problems of coping with the busy rush of everyday activity; the compelling need to work in the marketplace and to compete with a host of other similar services, while at the same time trying to maintain a professional approach and to keep abreast of new developments and techniques which occur throughout the world at an ever increasing rate (1987, p. 5).

Veterinarians were aware of the need to ‘keep up to date’.

The Committee accepted its responsibility regarding finances. As a result, a Post Graduate Foundation was set up to support the Committee financially. The Foundation eventually absorbed the Committee and the 1995 report noted an expenditure of \$1.4 million. In 2008, the Foundation became the Centre for Veterinary Education (CVE) (2008). Program delivery had changed with a significant allocation to distance education and the program reflected the changing practice of veterinary science.

These three examples illustrate the way the supplementary activities provided a basis for organised CPE provision. The examples also indicate some of the qualities of what became acknowledged as *good CPE practice*: collaboration between agencies, consultation with practitioners, and relating topics to current problems in practice. The examples also demonstrate a variety of providers, different methods of provision and the recognition of social and interpersonal factors in program provision as well as the financial responsibility of providers.

The three examples also illustrate the varied role that professional associations played in the early development of CPE. For the weekend program for country solicitors the Law Society was an active participant though the initiative for the activity came from local solicitors who approached the university. In the veterinary example, the AVA played an important role but the drive to establish the program came not from the AVA but from practitioners with university support. The PCCs were established on the basis of the enthusiasm of the lecturers in the colleges and support from some of the specialised teachers' interest groups, eg. the English and the History Teachers' Associations. The veterinary and medical examples also indicate that there were individuals who were providing leadership for this development.

The examples of supplementary activities' provision in three professions offer an illustration of the diversities evident in CPE: who organised the activity, in conjunction with what others, where it was held, for how long, at what cost to participants, with what regularity. These activities, though acknowledged as supplementary activities leading to recognised CPE events, provide different answers to the questions noted in the previous sentence. They also offer evidence of the single-profession focus of CPE from its origins.

Whatever the profession, whoever the provider, these activities were welcomed by practitioners. Not all practitioners were enthusiastic participants, as noted in Chap. 4, but the four retired practitioners welcomed them. These supplementary activities satisfied a need among practitioners and an assortment of providers found that these activities were successful and profitable activities.

In the Review of the Law Schools (See Sect. 3.4), the limitations of the earlier form of individually initiated learning were noted in the observation that 'it has become more and more difficult for even the conscientious practitioner to keep up to date with current developments in substantive law and the practice of law' (Pearce 1987, p. 283). That was evidence of a need for these supplementary activities.

These new programs were not the outcome of an individual practitioner's interests or problems but the offerings of agencies such as university departments, private enterprise suppliers of goods and services for professionals, government

departments and professional associations. They were certainly educational programs in that they had goals and were organised with specialist resource people to lead them and budgets linked to their administration. Organised CPE had arrived.

Though the learning of individual practitioners was a very important factor in the origins of CPE, the Australian situation mirrored the UK experience in that formal CPE was ‘the creation of professional bodies’, as Friedman described their ‘associations’ (2012, p. 39).

However, one of the unfortunate outcomes of the acceptance of these supplementary activities by practitioners, professional associations and other agencies that offered them was that the new term ‘CPE’ came to be equated with these supplementary activities. As a consequence of the use of this equation, many activities that pre-existed the organisationally developed supplementary activities, such as practitioner-oriented individual learning activities, were devalued. In most professions they were not necessarily acceptable as CPE.

One reason why the individual learning was devalued was that only the perceived problems, and not the virtues, of this form of professional learning were recognised. As reported in the Review of Law Schools (Pearce 1987, pp. 283–4), only the limitations of what they called ‘self-directed learning’, as contrasted with education, were mentioned. Also, the providers of these supplementary activities sought to persuade practitioners that attending this course or enrolling in that seminar was the best way to achieve understanding of this concept or gaining proficiency in that skill. By implication then, this education was better than the personally initiated self-learning or the practitioner’s learning in practice. The two approaches to learning were contrasted, with the older forms viewed as inferior to the newer form. The CPE staff in the professional associations clearly promoted the ‘superiority’ of provided CPE over personal learning, as I detected in my visits to their offices.

What was not acknowledged at that time was the complementary nature of the two approaches and how both forms of learning were able to contribute to the ‘keeping up to date’ of individual practitioners. On reflection, the four retired practitioners agreed that their personally initiated learning and CPE were complementary and both contributed to their remaining competent practitioners.

In the development of CPE, the pendulum initially swung away from valuing the personally initiated learning of the practitioner towards provided CPE. However, towards the close of the 1990s, the pendulum swung back towards what had come to be termed ‘practice-based learning’. There are similarities between the practitioner-initiated learning of the pre-provided CPE period and the practice-based learning of the 1990s. The renewed value of practice-based learning is noted in Sect. 10.4.

But in the period under review ending in the 1980s, education-style CPE with its providers and programs became the dominant mode to deal with the older style feature of professional practice called ‘keeping up to date’.

It is important however that CPE should be recognised within the context of the practitioners’ overall learning activities. As CPE developed in the 1960s and into the 1970s, to what extent were professionals participants in other forms of learning,

eg general adult education? As is noted in Sect. 3.4, adult education was a popular activity for adults, especially middle class adults, in these decades.

The question was not posed to the four older practitioners whose experiences were reported above. However, from my knowledge of the four professionals, I am aware that the medical practitioner learnt singing, the optometrist became involved in courses to learn wine making and the school teacher attended workshops on restoring furniture. So three of these professionals certainly participated in adult education.

Data on adult education participation from this period were not extensive but the NSW Board of Adult Education conducted a survey in 1979 of five Evening Colleges in the Sydney area (NSW Board of Adult Education 1979). The colleges were in the following Sydney suburbs: Parramatta, Liverpool, Sutherland, Ashfield and Chatswood. 80 % of the students were female and 17 % were identified as 'professionals' as 1 of 12 occupational categories. The most popular courses were: pottery, dressmaking, typing, yoga, dance, cooking, French, German, Art, Italian, floral art, cake decorating, upholstery, leather work and jewellery. The courses taken by the professionals were not revealed in the study. The point needs to be recognised however that professionals do participate in education other than CPE and that CPE needs may be satisfied by adult education.

As the 1960s became the 1970s and into the 1980s, the professional associations realised that CPE had become an accepted area of provision for professionals and tended to replace their individually initiated learning activities. But there were also other areas of provision, like adult education, that were becoming available. Professionals may have chosen adult education to satisfy their personal as well as professional learning needs. That situation is likely to have continued. CPE may not be the only educational provision by which professionals seek to satisfy practice learning needs. That was the situation in the 1960s and continues to the present. This relationship however between CPE and adult education over this period has not however been analysed.

2.3 The First CPE Events

The provision of CPE across the professions has been acknowledged. The three examples discussed above suggest a starting time in the late 1950s or early 1960s. McGrath (1962, p. 286) in his discussion of the goals of the first stage of professional education indicated that CPE was an established form of education in North America in 1962. That appears to have been an important year in North America for CPE because Dryer published a paper on a proposal for the lifelong learning of physicians (1962). In Australia, finding a date that identifies CPE's acceptance across the professions is virtually impossible. So the 1960s may be a decade for Australia's first CPE events with the expectation that identifying the first event would occur at different times in each profession.

Identifying the first CPE event in individual professions may be an important but also a difficult problem. In terms of the distinction identified between the individually initiated learning activities and supplementary activities, the early supplementary activities were not identified as CPE. The search then becomes one of detecting when an activity that may have been assigned the title of a ‘supplementary activity’ for this current discussion may have been re-defined or re-badged as CPE for the first time. A potentially difficult but useful exercise. The exercise may become the starting point for a study of the development of CPE in that profession.

In accounting, these significant dates have been identified. The first ‘professional development’ (the Australian Society of Accountants/Institute of Chartered Accountants – ASA/ICA – version of CPE) labelled activity was offered by the ASA in 1968 (McKeon 1978) and by the ICA in 1967 (Graham 1978). The accounting examples occur within a decade of the PCCs and the veterinary example noted above. The Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) suggests a much earlier starting date for its first CPE-type activity, 1937 (ALIA 1995). The ALIA example illustrates the importance of profession-specific research and the issue of definitions but also highlights the problem of making cross-professional generalisations.

In seeking to isolate the first CPE events, it may be necessary either to note the first event among the many supplementary activities identified above that was badged as CPE or the first series of events that adopted that title.

In searching for a profession’s first formally recognised CPE event or series, important background information on the roles various agencies – professional associations, university departments, government bodies or the private sector – have taken in the early years of a profession’s CPE, may be revealed with possible implications for later development. Important information may include the content of the activity, how it was delivered, where, the cost, any details about those who participated. The changing program of the NSW Law Society weekend at Armidale, noted above, revealed the evolving nature of CLE for that region’s solicitors.

In the perspective of several decades, the question may be raised whether those who were responsible for organising the first PCC or the initial activity of the Post-Graduate Committee in Veterinary Science or that first ASA event realised what an important educational venture they were helping to establish.

2.4 The Limitations of the First Degree

CPE made progress in the 1960s and 1970s within individual professions without necessarily making significant impact on the wider community. Then an issue arose that provided support for the acceptance of CPE, though the issue was not initially concerned with CPE. However, CPE’s long term development was enhanced because it was perceived that CPE offered a solution to a current educational problem. The issue was important because CPE was acknowledged as a special type of

educational provision, a much broader concept than an activity related only to a number of individual professions.

The issue concerned the entry level degree to professions and questioned whether in a period of growth of scientific and technical knowledge, there was a need to lengthen this university degree from 3 to 4 years. In debating the issue, there was gradual acceptance of the limitations of this bachelor degree.

As background to this issue, in many professions their association had played a significant role in having a university qualification accepted as the sole means of entry to their profession. The negotiations associated with professional associations winning the acceptance of bachelor degrees for librarianship, social work, engineering and occupational therapy meant that their associations had gained contacts with, and experience of, many universities. The important point to establish in this paragraph is that the associations were focused on the degree being the sole, or primary, means of entry to their professions. The point of the larger discussion was the role and goals of the entry level degree. (The entry level degree is discussed again in Sect. 4.2).

In addition to the negotiations regarding the entry level degree, there were discussions in some professions of the option of lengthening these entry degree courses from say 2–3 or 4 years. In 1967, the Institution of Engineers Australia (IEAust) proposed extending the entry level qualification for the engineering profession from a three to a 4 year degree and the proposal was accepted by the universities concerned in 1980 (Lloyd 1991, p. 174). This outcome may have increased the status of the training and the profession but did that ensure effective coverage of the increasing knowledge base of the discipline? That outcome may have been achieved in earlier decades. There appears however to have been acceptance, perhaps with reluctance from the university faculties and practitioners, that in the first stage of professional education students were not able to learn in that training all that they needed to practise that profession for their entire working lives. Lengthening the initial degree courses was no longer a realistic solution. If that view had been accepted, there would be the ongoing requirement for constantly extending the length of the course. Constantly lengthening the degree was no longer perceived as a solution.

The answer was that in a rapidly changing world it was not possible for persons training for a profession to learn within their initial degree all that was required to be effective practitioners for their entire professional life. The practitioner required further education and training. This comparatively new provision, CPE, offered the solution, helping them to remain effective practitioners.

The four older practitioners acknowledged how important had been their learning from actually carrying out their practice in their early days as practitioners. But they acknowledged when I raised the question of the limitations of the first degree that as their careers progressed and the developments in their professions became more rapid and complex, it was impossible for them to continue to practise successfully by relying solely on learning in and from practice. CPE was necessary and increasing the length of the first degree was not an acceptable option.

Who was responsible for first proposing and then disseminating this challenging point of view of the limitations of the first degree? It is difficult to provide a definitive answer. However, I propose 1982 as a date and Barry Jones' *Sleepers, Wake! Technology and the future of work* as a reference point. The writer was a Member of the Commonwealth House of Representatives and his book was not primarily about education but technology and work. In a passing reference, Jones recorded the comments attributed to Lord Ashby that 'university degrees and diplomas should be, like passports, renewable after 5 years: they can no longer be regarded as a lifetime qualification' (1982, p. 181). In relation to the argument about the value of the first degree, the remedy proposed in Jones' comment involved renewal of the initial degree. That goal was to be achieved through additional ongoing training (the new CPE), not extending the first degree. Jones' book was widely read and the UNE group discussion program that operated all over eastern Australia used the book as a text to guide the groups' thinking and reflection.

This issue was not limited to Australia. Jarvis (1983, p. 18) noted the UK's recognition that what he called professional basic education 'is no longer sufficient for a lifetime of practice', just 1 year later than Jones' volume.

As with other factors identified in the description of CPE's development, Jones' book and this particular argument did not originate in professional faculties or associations but from a broader discussion of technology and its impact on the growth of knowledge on current practices, eg those of professionals. The acceptance of the limitation of the first degree was important in CPE's development, as it was identified as a new means of solving a pressing educational problem. But it was also salient to be aware of changes in the social, political and economic context of professional practice and their potential impact on CPE, and the other stages of professional education.

Whoever and whenever the claim was first enunciated, it was sufficiently widely accepted to be included as one of the three reasons for CLE in the Pearce Report (1987, p. 283). The report observed that the legal education received in university and practical legal training 'will always be incomplete and will not necessarily furnish (the practitioners) with the wherewithal to engage in specialised legal practice'. (The other reasons were changes in the law and changes in the 'direction' of an individual's practice.) (The Pearce Report is noted again in Sect. 3.4).

The acceptance of the limitations of the first degree was clearly evident in national survey and policy documents in later years of the 1980s. In the Johnson-Hinton Report on Adult and Continuing Education Summary (1986, p. v) the suggestion was made that increasing CPE-type programs was preferable to lengthening the periods of study for the first degree. Then in his *Higher Education: A policy statement* Minister Dawkins (1988, p. 70) gave his support to courses of upgrading and updating knowledge and skills as preferable to lengthening initial periods of study such as the first degree. That was CPE but he did not use the term. If the Commonwealth Minister for Education who was in the process of a major re-structuring of higher education in the country was unaware of the term given to the form of educational provision that he agreed should take the responsibility for the updating of professionals in practice (rather than increasing the length of the

first degree), then CPE would appear at that time to have some level of ‘unrecognised existence’ in the educational sectors. Or was CPE just part of his solution?.

The fact that CPE was proposed as an alternative to extending the length of the first degree was evidence of the realisation by some of the relationship between these two areas of educational provision, ie how CPE continued the training of professionals that had been initiated in the undergraduate degree. But there was no ongoing focus on this relationship as part of a wider acceptance of professional education, as the sector for professionals to become and remain practitioners. Though the acceptance of the limitations of the first degree not only provided support for the role of CPE for a practitioner remaining in their profession and also stressed the inter-relationship of the three stages of professional education as defined in this study, the formal recognition of CPE and its role was not enshrined in significant policy documents at that time.

2.5 Summary and Some Tentative Conclusions

In terms of the goal of professions researching their CPE, a potentially useful exercise for professions may be to trace the development of their CPE and note changes in what has been offered, who have provided the programs and who participated in them, who first identified the use-by date of initial degrees and what influences have caused changes in their CPE? The three examples noted above indicate approaches that may be taken by a profession in completing this ‘exercise’, ie by tracing a providing organisation, a series of activities or a single activity over a number of years. This historical perspective on CPE may be valuable in defining new policy and provision or identifying limitations in past delivery.

The lack of research on the early days on CPE in Australia places limitations on the quality of the picture that may be drawn. However, evidence from other countries may be relevant. Friedman’s research on the UK situation suggests that their CPE emerged later than in Australia, namely the late 1970s and early 1980s (2012, p. 68). Knox’s review of North American CPE noted that it developed ‘as an open system’ (1993, p. 277). There was freedom for providers to offer programs and practitioners had wide choices from which to select courses. Even when mandatory CPE became the norm in Australia in the 1990s, there remained a large degree of freedom of choice for the individual practitioner in selecting what activities in which to participate. In this sense then there was an open market for providers. Streatfield, while describing the engineering situation, commented that CPE was a ‘provider-driven system’ (1990, p. 93). Such a situation would be attractive to the range of agencies noted above as potential providers. So CPE offered opportunities for providers and choices for practitioners.

This Chapter has presented an across the professions sweep of the origins and early years of CPE. Comparisons between professions are possible as well as an appreciation of assumptions underpinning CPE provision. CPE appears from the material presented as a genre of educational provision quite different from school

and university education. It appears to have been accepted by its practitioner users before it was recognised in the broader community.

Eight characteristics are identified from this overview of CPE's origins and early development. They are that:

- provided CPE appeared initially as a supplement to practice-based practitioner-initiated learning but then replaced it,
- CPE emerged in an unplanned, *ad hoc*, *laissez-faire* way,
- CPE appears to be an example of *market-driven* provision with limited evidence of government intervention,
- diverse agencies and organisations became CPE providers,
- the professional associations established a major interest in CPE,
- these developments occurred on a profession by profession basis over different time frames,
- non-educational factors and influences outside the professions impacted on the profession's CPE and brought changes, eg. the limitations of the first degree, and
- the individually initiated activity, the learning in practice and the supplementary activities and then the more formal CPE when it was available were for practitioners very personal concerns, 'their business' not the responsibility of others and that it was 'continuing' not casual, sporadic or opportunistic, or that was the view of the American Houle (1980, p. 12).

Some of these characteristics of CPE began in its earliest days in some professions. Some remained, while others changed as CPE became more sophisticated under the guidance of the professional associations.

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