lcs | lean competency system

Continuing Professional Development

Guide: Creating an A3 Plan

Version: 2021.2

Contents

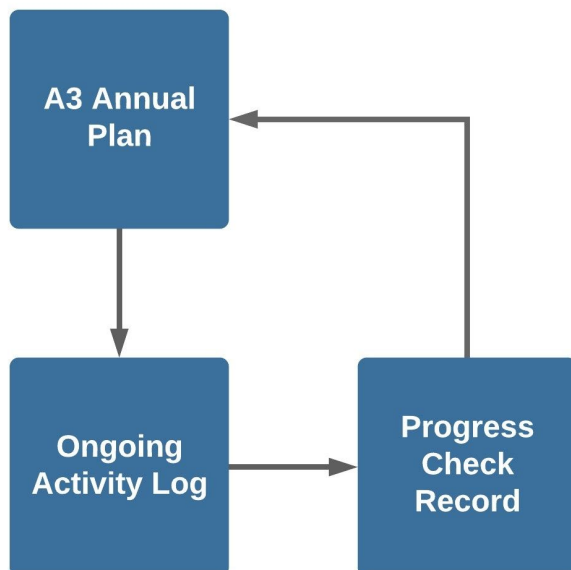**Click on a heading or subheading to go to its related content in the document**

1. Introduction: The CPD Elements

The A3 plan is one of the three CPD elements, which are used for creating your plan and managing your CPD activity:

1.   The A3 annual plan

2.   The ongoing activity log

3.   The progress check record

There is a cyclical flow among the three elements:

- CPD starts with the A3 plan, which feeds into the Activity Log.

- The Activity Log links to the Progress Check Record.

- The Progress Check Record, in turn, feeds into the next iteration of the A3 plan.

2. The A3 Plan

2.1 Purpose

The purpose of the A3 plan is to clearly indicate how you want to develop yourself professionally over your next development period (eg the next twelve months) and describes the practice, learning and communication activities you aim to undertake to achieve your development goals.

2.2 Structure & Format

The A3 plan is organised along PDCA principles in five sections and when finalised will resemble the example below. It can be printed as an A3 sized document and it can also be viewed on screen in a section by section format: image to be replaced

The five sections are **Background, Strengths, Challenges, Goals** and **Countermeasures** and creating the plan involves moving through these five sections. You save each section before moving to the next.

The plan is designed to be A3 size if printed and there are limits on the number of words that can be used in fields and sections to ensure it does not become too large. The use of bullet points helps keep sentences succinct and it encourages the plan author to write with brevity and clarity.

Ideally, your plan should be constantly visible, so you regularly consider and contemplate it, for example, at your personal workstation or in your home office.

You can print it so it is physically displayed or make it your desktop background on your PC[1] This will help keep it salient and top of mind, which is a key factor in making it useful and impactful.

To view the plan as an A3 or to print it, click th ePDF icon in the top right corner of your current or previous plan view box.

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[1]How to do this in Windows 10: i) Take a screenshot of your A3 plan. ii) Save it as an image; crop to remove unwanted edges. iii) On your desktop, right click and select Personalise. iv) In Background, select Picture, browse to find your saved screenshot, select it and click Choose Picture.
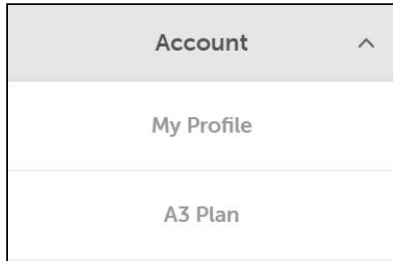
2.3. How to write an A3 plan

2.3.1 Process Summary
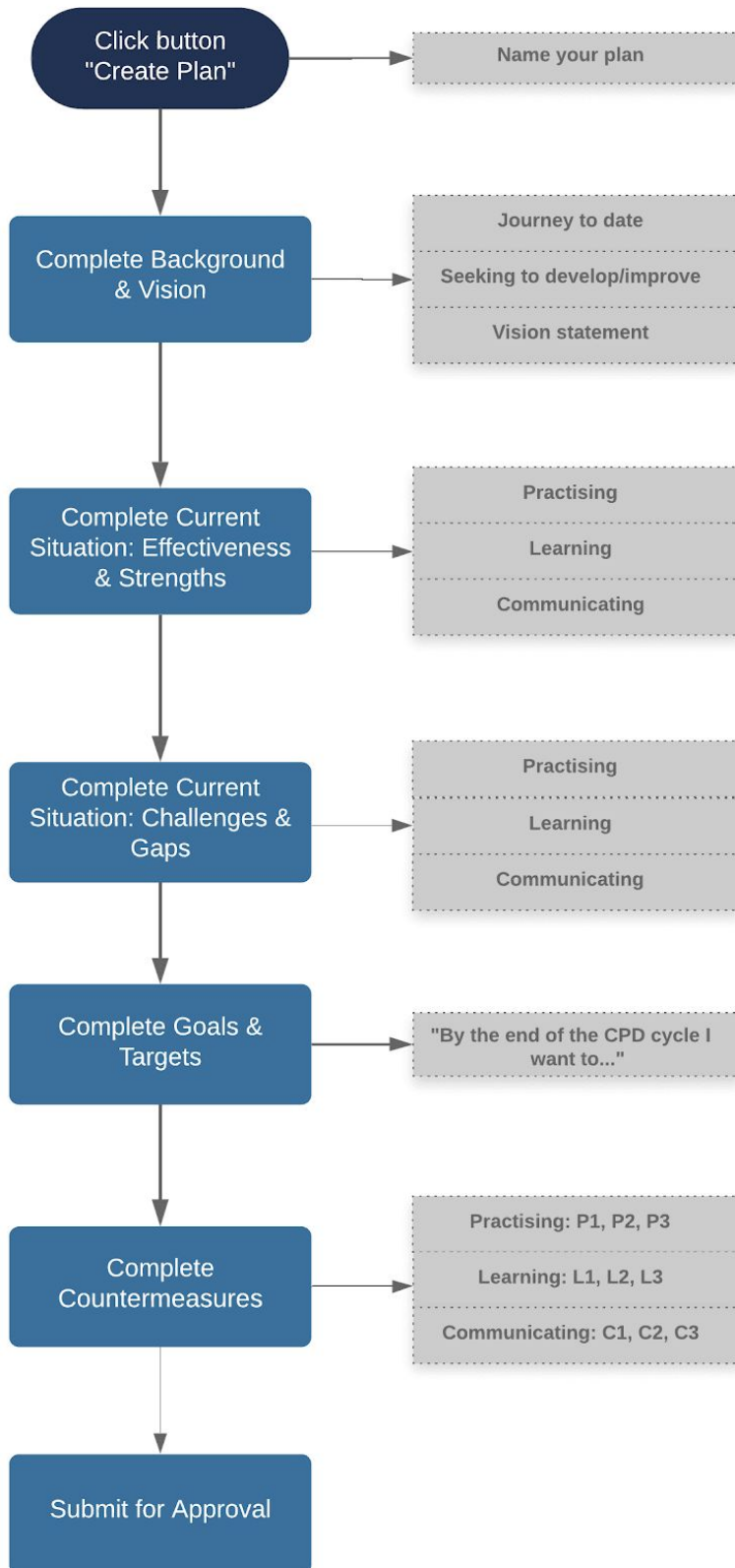
2.3.2 Create Your Plan

Once you have upgraded to PPM, an **A3 Plan** link is visible in your member account menu:

Click on A3 Plan and you are invited to create a new plan:

Start by creating a title for your plan, for example, **Jean Smith's 2021 Development Plan.**

Note that you cannot change the title once set, so make sure it is clear, succinct and directional.

Click on **Create Plan** to start adding details, with the first section being **Background & Vision**.

2.3.3 Background & Vision

Provide brief information on your CPD status and a short vision statement.

- Line 1: summarise your Lean/CI journey do date. If you have undertaken CPD previously, then focus on the last 12 months. You can begin this with terms such as I have been... / I have had…

- Line 2: summarise what you are seeking to develop or improve. You can begin this with terms such as I want to… / I plan to…

- Line 3: write a brief vision statement that describes your aspiration for your professional development. It may be expressed in terms such as *to become…to achieve…to develop.*

The following resources may be helpful as a guide, but feel free to develop your own statement:

- "Your personal vision statement guides your life and provides the direction necessary to chart the course of your days and the choices you make about your career. Think of your personal vision statement as the light shining in the darkness that illuminates your life path". The balance.com

- Sir Richard Branson: "To have fun in my journey through life and learn from my mistakes."

- Oprah Winfrey: "To be a teacher. And to be known for inspiring my students to be more than they thought they could be."

- See What to Include in a Personal Vision Statement (with examples)

- See How To Develop Your Personal Vision Statement (PDF - Lindynorris.Com)

Once you have completed this section, click on **Save and Next** to proceed to the **Current Situation** section.

2.3.4 Current Situation

Current Situation has two parts - 1) Effectiveness & Strengths and 2) Gaps & Opportunities inc. Causes

Effectiveness & Strengths

Describe your current strengths and what you are effective at for each of the three areas, writing a maximum of three lines for each:

- **Practicing:** how you apply knowledge learned, and how you engage in activities for the purpose of improving or mastering them while carrying out your Lean/CI activity/role.

- **Learning:** acquiring knowledge or skills through study, experience, or being taught in both core Lean and new areas.

- **Communicating:** exchanging knowledge – e.g. information, skills, or expertise - among colleagues, networks, communities or organisations. It can include:

  - **Teaching** i.e. educating, imparting knowledge as well as inspiring, motivating and forming relationships.

  - **Sharing** (not informal) i.e. giving others the benefit of what you have learned from your reflection, education and practice.

Once you have completed this section, click on **Save and Next** to move to the second part of Current Situation, **Areas for Improvement - Gaps & Opportunities inc. Causes**

Areas for Improvement - Gaps & Opportunities inc. Causes

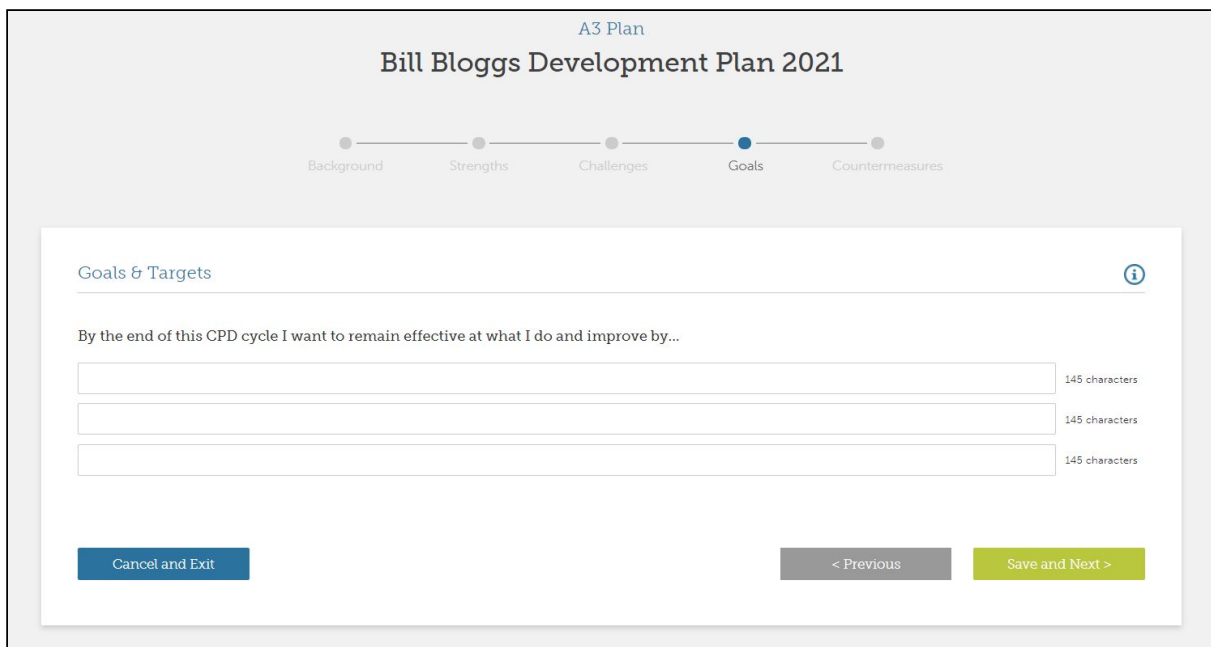Write up to three statements for some or all three areas that highlight your challenges and gaps - noting causes.

Gaps relate to personal capability, competency and deficiencies.

● Practicing: where there are gaps in your effectiveness at practicing Lean

● Learning: where there are gaps in your Lean knowledge

● Communicating: where there are gaps in your communication approach or capability

You can briefly describe the causes of your current gaps or the issues relating to them and note that you do not need to have identified gaps in each of the three areas and just like in any A3, the current situation shouldn't include countermeasures – just the facts or evidence.

Once you have completed this section, click on **Save and Next** to move to **Goals & Targets**.

2.3.4 Goals & Targets

In this section you list what you want to achieve, in up to three short statements (each a maximum of 145 characters).
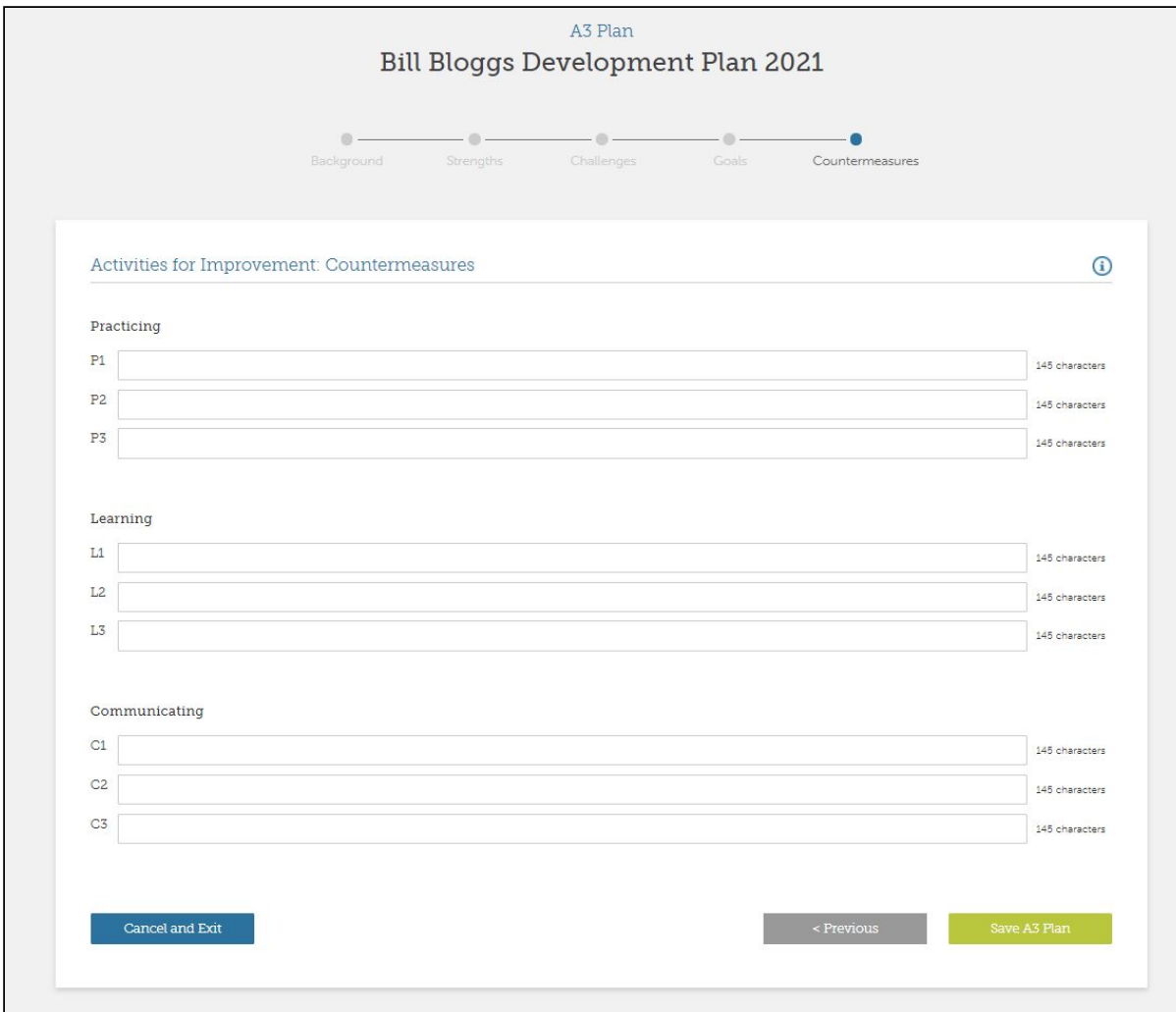
These should clearly relate to the 'gaps and opportunities' that you have previously identified.

You should complete the statement: "by the end of this CPD cycleI want to remain effective at what I do and improve by":

- Having practiced/carried out…xxxx... i.e. what you want to be able to practice
- Having learned…xxxx...i.e. what you want to have learned
- Having communicated…xxxx...i.e. what you want to have taught, shared, written etc.

Once you have completed this section, click on **Save and Next** to move to **Countermeasures**

2.3.5 Countermeasures

In this section of the plan you state the high level countermeasures (or 'experiments') that you will undertake to maintain your current levels of competence and those you propose to undertake to close your current gaps and achieve your targets.

Countermeasures are grouped into the three areas – practicing, learning and communicating.

Each activity for improvement is given a letter/number reference: the letter is either **P** (for practice), **L** (for learning) or **C** (for communicating). Note that you will link to these improvement activities in your Activity Log and in your Progress Check Record, where you assess your CPD progress.

You are allowed up to **three entries** for each area.

Make sure that the countermeasures are appropriate to meeting your stated goals and addressing the causes of the gaps you have described or the opportunities that you have noted.

You should add a date to each line indicating when you aim to complete it – e.g. "…by end Q3" or "…by end September 2021".

A useful sense check is to read your A3 backwards, and for each activity for improvement check if this statement holds true:

> **"I plan to do this countermeasure in order to help me meet this target by addressing these gaps which in turn will take me towards my vision".**

If this makes sense, then you can be confident that you have chosen the right countermeasures to address the gap/opportunity identified.

Once you have completed this section, click **Save A3 Plan**.

Your plan will be displayed in its entirety (A3) and you can now either edit it by clicking **Edit Plan** or request endorsement by clicking the **Request Approval** button.
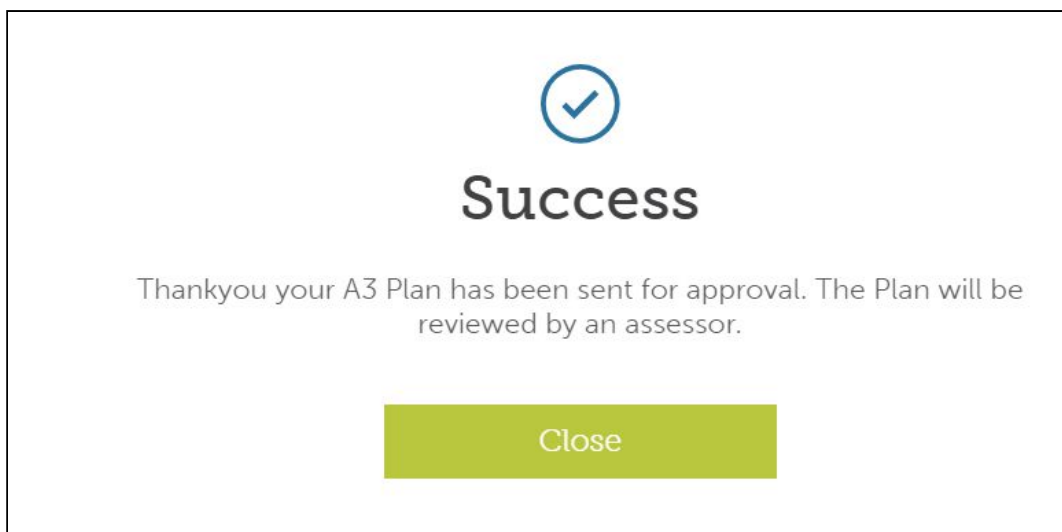

3.0 Submitting the Plan for Approval

You can edit a section before you submit the plan by clicking the **Edit Plan** button and then clicking on any of the five section titles on the top bar:
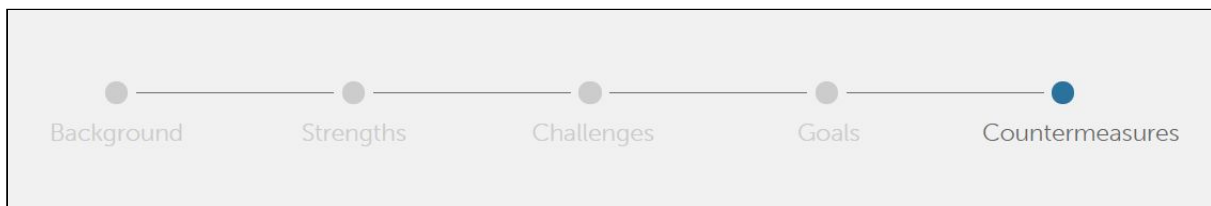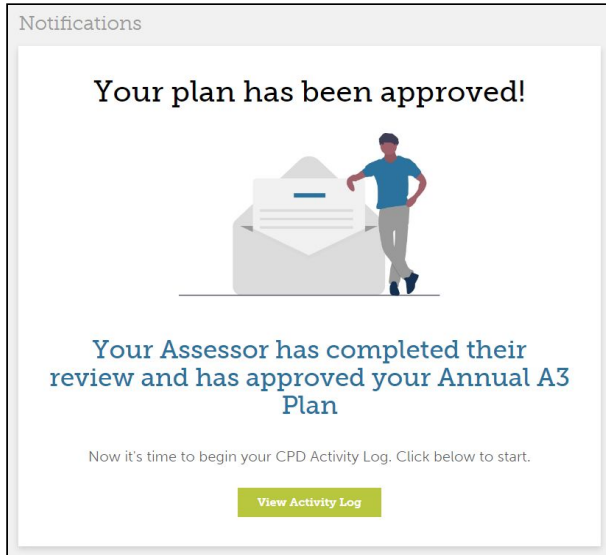

Once you have updated and saved each section, click the **Request Approval** button.

You receive confirmation that your request has been sent.
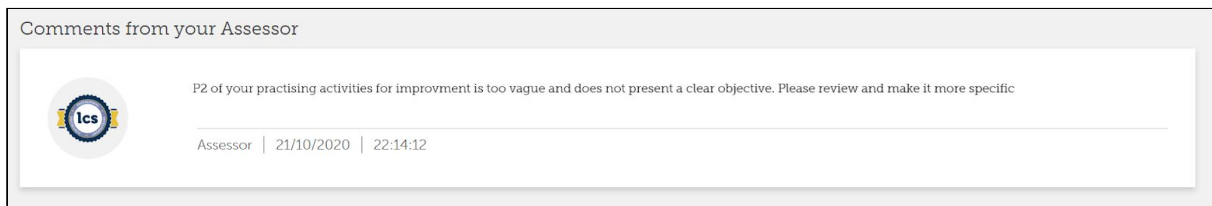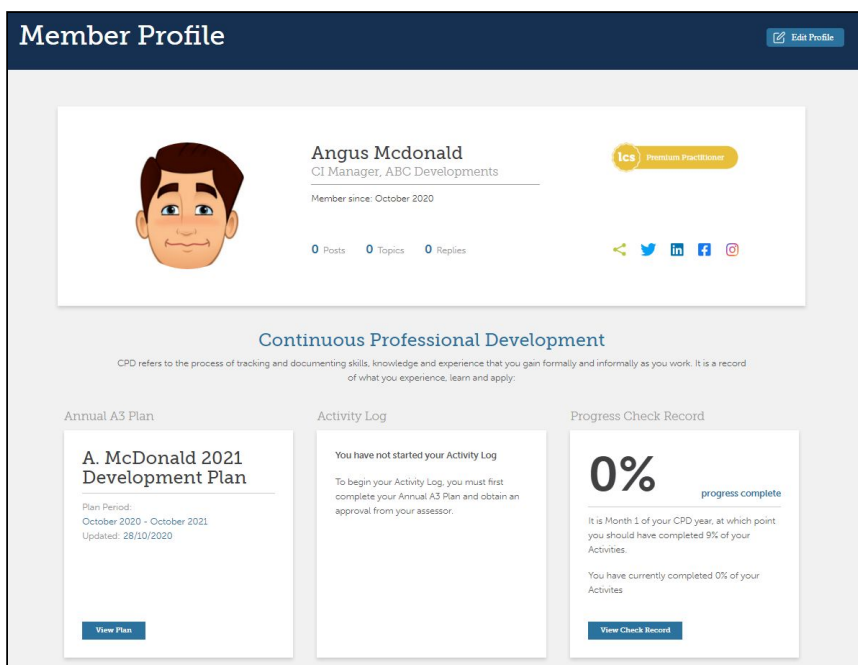
3.1 Approving the A3 Plan

An LCS assessor reviews your plan. If approved, under **Notifications** in your member profile you see the following:

If it is not approved, the assessor makes a comment outlining the reasons which appear beneath your plan, after which changes can be made.


Once your plan is approved, new CPD elements appear in your member profile dashboard:

As well as A3 plan information, there is information about your activity log and your progress check record. Your last logged activity shows in the middle box.

Additional items appear in your account drop down menu, enabling you to proceed to the next stage in the CPD process - logging activities.
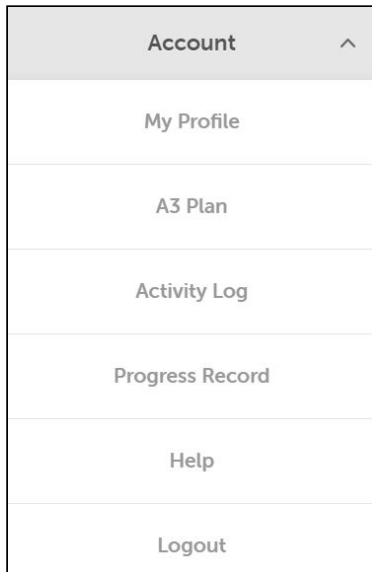
3.2 Editing Your A3 Plan

3.2.1 Editing plan sections

You can edit your current A3 plan should circumstances dictate by clicking the **Edit Plan** button, as illustrated below:
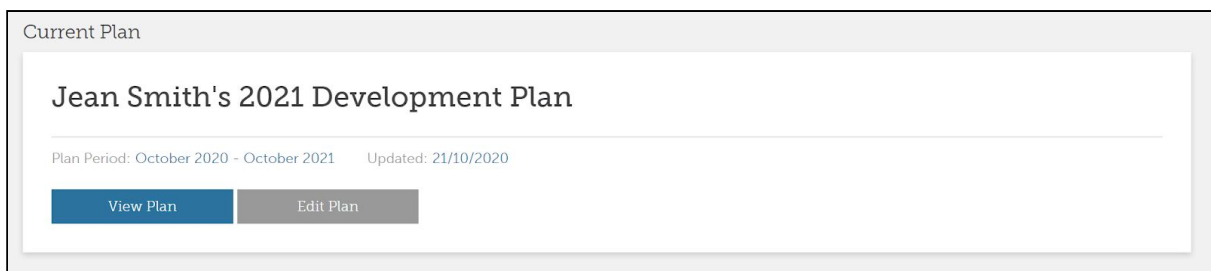
You can then change specific sections, for example, by clicking **Edit** in the Background & Vision section below:

3.2.2 Changing key activities/countermeasures

It is possible that your circumstances change during your CPD cycle which necessitate deleting one or more key activities/countermeasures and creating new ones. For example, you may change your role or decide on a new personal development direction. Ideally, these should not be changed during the CPD cycle.

If you delete any of the Learning, Practicing or Communication activities/goals (eg P1, P2, L1, C3, etc) in a current A3 plan that has been approved and you have already logged activities against any of these, **then these linked activities will also be deleted**.

A warning box appears after you click the delete button.

In the example above, the PPM is deleting the Learning 2 (L2) activity/goal and the message warns you that the activities linked to L2 will also be deleted if the PPM proceeds.

You can then either click **Cancel** in the box to cancel the change made to L2 and therefore retain the activities associated with L2, or can click **I understand,** in which case all activities tagged with L2 will be deleted along with its associated Progress record.

4. Request Endorsing & Archiving your A3 Plan

4.1 Endorsement timing

While the LCS CPD allows up to 12 months to complete a CPD cycle, it is possible that all the goals in a plan are achieved in a shorter time frame.
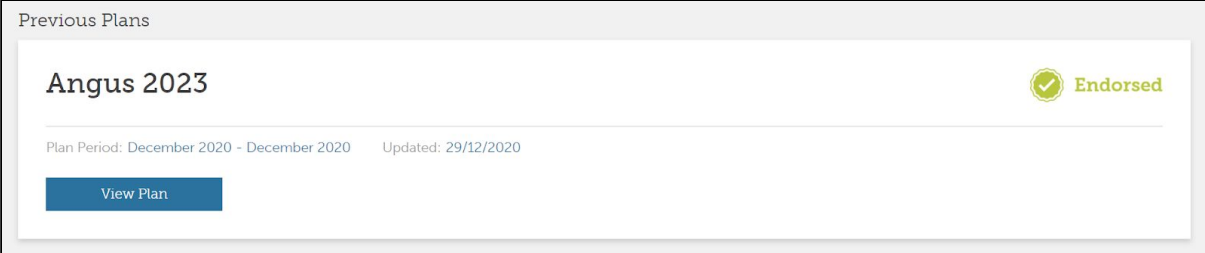
Therefore, at any point you can request that your A3 plan is **endorsed and archived.** This is achieved by clicking the **Request Endorsement** button at the foot of your current plan display.

Request Endorsement

4.2 Assessor Endorsement

If the assessor approves your request, the plan is closed and archived. It is marked as **Endorsed**, listed under **Previous Plans** in your dashboard. It can be viewed by clicking the **View Plan** button.

Note that the assessor will not sanction the endorsement of a plan unless there is clear evidence that the CPD cycle has been completed satisfactorily.

Previous Plans

Angus 2023   ✅ Endorsed

Plan Period: December 2020 - December 2020   Updated: 29/12/2020

View Plan

Once the plan is archived, a **Create new A3 Plan** box appears so you can immediately start another plan and CPD cycle.

When creating a new a new version you may want to consider these questions:

- What are you now aware of that you need to do in the next cycle?

- How might you better structure and manage your CPD plan for the next cycle?

5.0 Post Plan Completion – Check & Reflect and Act

5.1 Purpose

● To reflect on the CPD cycle you have just completed
● To prepare for the next CPD cycle

5.2 Process

● Reflect on the whole cycle and the extent to which you have achieved your goals
● Reflect on how you developed and executed your this CPD A3 Plan and what you are now aware that you need to do in the next cycle
● Determine how you might Act to better structure and manage your CPD plan for the next cycle:
  o Incorporating your learning into the process
  o Standardising the methods that have worked in this cycle

5.3 Reflecting & Acting

- In preparation for your next CPD cycle, you should:
  - o **Check and Reflect**: Briefly summarise your overall progress for Practice, Learning, Communicating, noting :
    - ▪ The extent to which you have reached your targets
    - ▪ The gaps remaining or new gaps identified
  - o **Act /Adjust**: Address the questions:
    - ▪ What are you now aware of that you need to in the next cycle?
    - ▪ How might you better structure and manage your CPD plan for the next cycle?

6.0 Displaying & Printing Your Plan in A3 Size

You can print your plan as an A3 document by clicking the PDF icon in the top right corner of your current plan display.