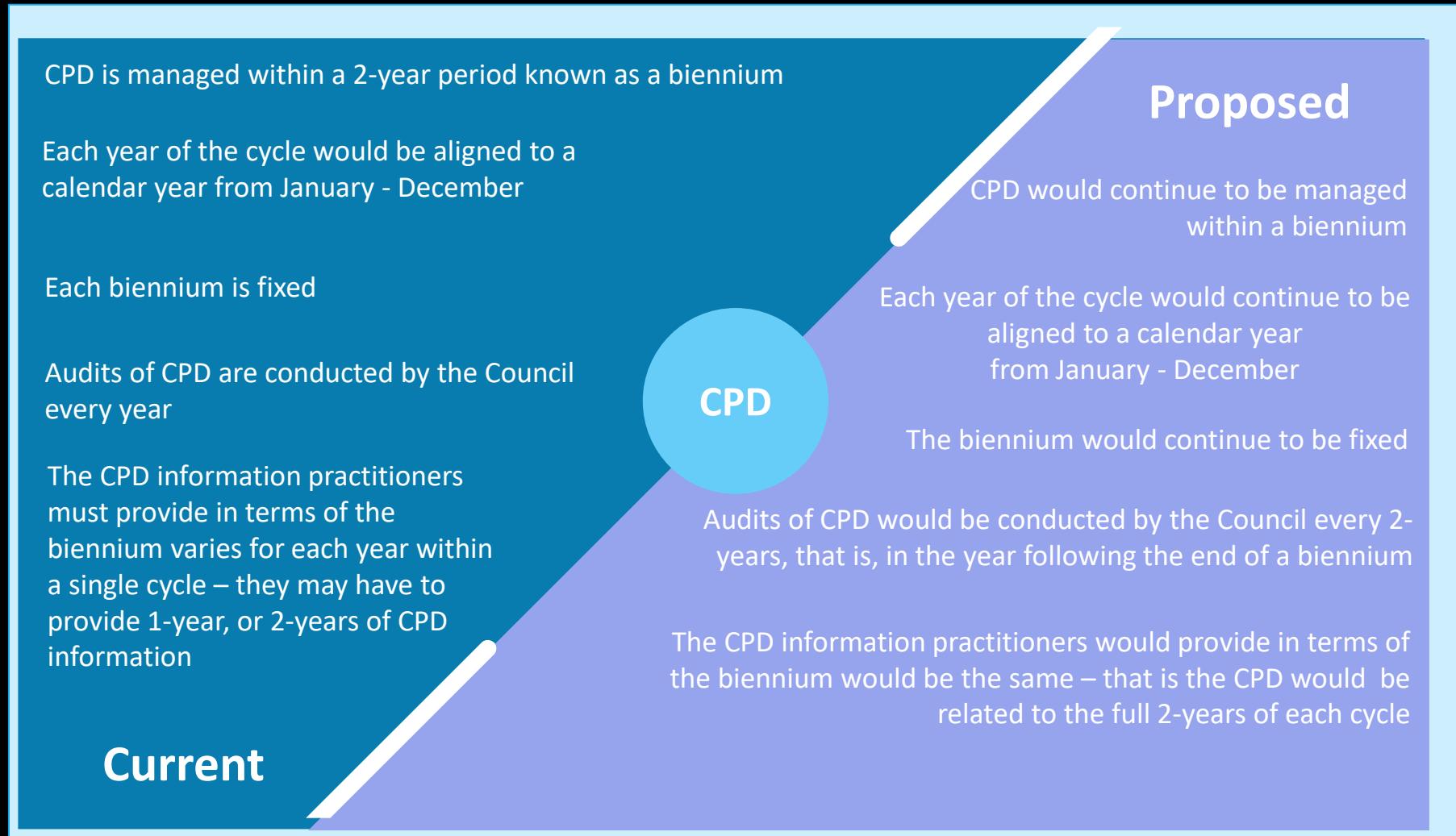# Consultation

September 2022

The Medical Sciences Council is proposing to make a change to the audit cycle for practitioners' CPD. CPD will continue to be aligned to a calendar year. However, audit would move from an annual schedule to being conducted once every two years.

This document sets out the reasons behind the proposal and how a two-year audit cycle would work.

Current CPD Cycle and Proposed CPD Cycle

Proposed

CPD

Current

CPD is managed within a 2-year period known as a biennium

Each year of the cycle would be aligned to a calendar year from January - December

Each biennium is fixed

Audits of CPD are conducted by the Council every year

The CPD information practitioners must provide in terms of the biennium varies for each year within a single cycle – they may have to provide 1-year, or 2-years of CPD information

CPD would continue to be managed within a biennium

Each year of the cycle would continue to be aligned to a calendar year from January - December

The biennium would continue to be fixed

Audits of CPD would be conducted by the Council every 2-years, that is, in the year following the end of a biennium

The CPD information practitioners would provide in terms of the biennium would be the same – that is the CPD would be related to the full 2-years of each cycle

How the Proposed CPD Cycle Would Work

Year Audit Carried Out by Council	Period of CPD to be Audited Per Calendar Year
2024	2022 - 2023
2026	2024 - 2025
2028	2026 - 2027
2030	2028 - 2029

- There would be no audit carried out in 2023. Practitioners must continue to engage in CPD during 2023. In readiness for the 2024 audit they must ensure their 2-years of CPD for 2022 and 2023 meet the minimum hours requirements:

Scope of Practice	Minimum CPD per Biennium	Minimum CPD per Each Year
Medical Laboratory Scientist	40 hours	15 hours
Medical Laboratory Technician or Medical Laboratory Pre-Analytical Technician	24 hours	9 hours
Anaesthetic Technician	40 hours	15 hours

- Moving to a 2-yearly audit programme would see the Council increasing the percentage of practitioners called for audit, from the current 20% threshold to a 40% sample of all practitioners holding a current APC and for each of the two professions – medical laboratory science and anaesthetic technology.

Why is the Council proposing to change the CPD cycle?

The current biennium framework has been in place now for a few years and over this time it has become evident that having a 2-year CPD cycle with a yearly audit programme is confusing and unnecessarily complex.

When it comes to audting practitioners in respect of their compliance with CPD standards, the amount of CPD they are required to submit differs according to the particular year of a biennium they are selected for audit. So, someone being audited in the first year of a biennium must provide one-year of CPD information, whereas someone selected for audit in the last year of a biennium must provide two-years of CPD information.

Having the audit programme being directly linked to each 2-year period of a fixed biennium provides a level-playing field for all practitioners in terms of the amount of CPD information they would need to provide.

Administration of the audit process for the current biennium framework is overly involved with increased potential for misinterpretations.

Every year Council staff field many calls from practitioners seeking more clarity around the CPD audit process and it is not uncommon to have several conversations with practitioners to assist them with meeting the CPD audit information requirements. In reviewing the current structure of the CPD framework and audit programme, the Council is aiming to simplify the process for both practitioners and staff alike. We believe that having a synchronised audit programme will achieve this. A central concern in our deliberations has been that whatever is put in place, the process must support the underpinning standard for practitioners to demonstrate an ongoing commitment to lifelong learning to support competent and safe practice thereby protecting the health and safety of the public.

Please tell us what you think

An online questionnaire has been set up for practitioners and stakeholder groups to tell the Council your thoughts about the proposed change to the CPD cycle for medical laboratory science practitioners and anaesthetic technicians.

You have until **30 September 2022** to complete the questionnaire. The Council will then consider all informed and constructive feedback received at its meeting scheduled for late October, with a target date of November/December 2022 for issuing a final decision on the CPD cycle to be adopted going forward.

We thank you in advance in anticipation of you taking the time to complete the questionnaire. Your feedback is important to help the Council come to an informed consensus on this matter.