

That Journal questionnaire - some important points

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The NZIMLS Journal questionnaire is a very popular way for our members to earn valuable CPD points. A successful submission is worth 5 CPD points, and with 3 editions of the journal each year (March, July, November) there is the opportunity to earn at least 15 CPD points. Sometimes, if the journal contains many papers, there are two questionnaires per edition, offering even more CPD points. There are between 1500-2000 submissions received per questionnaire, which indicates the popularity of this source of CPD points.

Below are some important points that may be helpful for members who like to earn their CPD points this way.

1. The intention of the CPD questionnaire is that the articles (irrespective of discipline) relating to the questions are read and the questions are designed to reflect an element of understanding and learning from reading the articles. This might be three short sentences maximum and could involve only a single sentence in some cases for the correct answer. Before going to publication, the questions and relevant answers are checked by two people independently to ensure correctness and brevity.
2. Questions are set by the Editor of the journal and are designed to indicate three things:
 - i. Members have actually read the article and not just scanned the first part of the article and picked out the words they think may be the correct answer (often the full correct answer is further on in the text).
 - ii. Members have understood the important points in the article.
 - iii. Members can interpret the results in the article and recognise the relevant scientific, clinical, cultural or ethical facts.
3. It is assigned 5 CPD points which is the equivalent of 2.5 hours of professional development, so don't expect to successfully complete the questionnaire in your lunch break.
4. It is an 'open book' activity; to gain full marks for a question you need to identify all the major points asked for in the question.
5. Most questions require an answer that is 3-4 lines long. Don't expect to have answers marked as correct when you have 'cut and pasted' large chunks of the article. This only indicates that you don't understand what you have read, and are just hoping the correct answer is embedded somewhere in your text.
6. All CPD activities must be professional development for YOU – if you collaborate with someone else, or as a group, this does not demonstrate personal learning for the individual. This is why you must tick a box to say the work is solely your own. If collaboration/collusion is identified members will not be entitled to the CPD points from the questionnaire. This is also identified as misconduct within the CPD programme, the following is an extract from the CPD booklet:
 7. **Misconduct within the CPD Programme:**
The NZIMLS can investigate suspected incidences of non-compliance within the CPD programme. Examples include collusion with journal questionnaire submissions, plagiarism, claiming points for events not attended, leaving meetings early and claiming full points for attendance, and multiple claims for one activity (that is multiply claims for the same presentation).
The NZIMLS Council reserves the right to investigate any case of non-compliance believed to have taken place. The participant concerned will be notified of the investigation.
Following investigation, the NZIMLS reserves the right to remove points for a given submission, remove the participant's right to a CPD section or for serious misconduct remove the participant from the CPD programme.

Serious misconduct will be referred to the MSCNZ as required by the HPCA Act.

I suggest you also read the Medical Sciences Council document: "Policy and Guidelines: Code of Ethical Conduct for Medical Laboratory Science and Anaesthetic Technology Practitioners in Aoteroa New Zealand" which is available on the Medical Sciences Council website.

8. Sometimes members have trouble with submitting their answers as the site could 'time out' before you have finished typing your answers. If you have problems you can send your answers directly to the CPD Coordinator for marking at cpd@nzimls.org.nz for this could possibly be found under numbers 9 and 10 (below) in this article.
9. The following is written in the questionnaire instructions in the journal:
It is recommended that you write your answers in a word document and then cut and paste your answers on the website.
10. The following is written on the website page for the questionnaire:
NB: Spending a long time on this form may result in a timeout and losing all of your answers. NZIMLS recommends preparing your answers in a separate document. Once you have prepared your answers then return to this form and paste them in the form and click send.
11. On-line questionnaire submissions go directly to the CPD Coordinator for marking. They are usually marked within 2-3 days. If you haven't received a reply from the CPD coordinator then two things may have occurred:
 - i. The reply has gone to your 'junk' box – this is a problem particularly with members who use Hotmail and xtra email addresses.
 - ii. Your original submission "went into the ether" and was never received for marking.
12. Do not leave it until 3 weeks after the questionnaire closes off to ask if your questionnaire was ever received. This is too late to resubmit for marking, if you haven't received a reply within a week of the close off then contact the CPD coordinator immediately.
13. The questionnaire closes off 2-3 weeks before the next edition of the NZIMLS journal is due out. The correct answers will be published in that new edition.
14. It is important to check your questionnaire answers against those in the following journal edition as very few members achieve 10/10 for their answers. This should be part of the learning process, or "professional development" for the members and will often form an excellent basis for a 'reflective learning' document.
15. If you are unsuccessful in answering a questionnaire correctly, then maybe the articles do not relate (or are beyond) your scope of practice. Perhaps look for other suitable or appropriate activities for your CPD points.
16. You cannot claim CPD points for reading articles in the journal if you have already claimed 5 points for successful submission of the questionnaire from that edition. This is 'double dipping'.
17. If you missed submitting the questionnaire, you CAN claim CPD points for reading the articles (2 points per article) but you must provide a 150 word synopsis and reflective document for each article, for audit purposes.
18. Each submission of the questionnaire is marked individually by the CPD Coordinator, they are not marked electronically. Members are given the chance to resubmit (before the close off) should they not obtain a 'pass', but there is no feedback provided as to the where the points were lost. This is because it is a 'learning process' and members need to learn to check all their answers.

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