



# PositionIT **Inbox...**

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## PLATO CPD Programme

### Our winning letter!

Dear Editor

I have been following the PLATO CPD discussion with great interest, and fully support the principle of this programme. I do have one concern with respect to the number of credits assigned to presenting a paper at a conference. My personal opinion (and experience) is that the amount of work that is generally required to prepare such presentations is considerable, and unless one is directly involved in an academic environment where such things are integral to that environment, it generally has to be done outside of one's normal work.

To only be able to gain a single credit from such presentations undervalues the effort and time required for such efforts, particularly when compared to the three credits one earns just by attending a conference. Most presentations require effort to research the field and so place a paper in the correct context, meaning that the author's knowledge base is by definition widened. This must certainly be an important consideration in terms of any CPD programme? In addition, to have a paper accepted at a conference generally means that one has a recognised level of expertise in one's field.

Could the PLATO Council perhaps reconsider the credit earned by presenting papers at conferences?

Dr. Mark Norris-Rogers  
(PhD)(PGP0139) ©

### Response from the PLATO President

Dear Editor

Dr. Norris-Rogers makes a valid point in his letter, one which has, incidentally, already been brought to my attention.

Certainly there are many glaring discrepancies and inconsistencies in the credit values of the various identified activities. There is no question that the amount of time and effort that is required in some instances, particularly in Category 3, is in many instances totally disproportional against some of the more menial, almost spectator-like, activities that earn an equal number of points in Category 1.

The "PLATO" CPD programme works on a relatively small number of credits, a minimum of three credits per year with a five year aggregate of only 20 credits. This restricts the scope of credit earning potential for each activity to integers of 1 or 2 credits each (some time based activities counting for as little as half a credit but not less than that.) In other words, credits can only be accumulated in minimum quantities of half a credit equating to half a day at a conference or meeting. If, however, purely time based credits were to be awarded in each context, again particularly for Category 3, then the whole listing would become ridiculous.

I think that we should go back to what the programme is intended to achieve. It is intended to ensure that registered persons remain relevant in their chosen disciplines. The CPD programme does this by encouraging members, at all levels, to become actively involved in "professional" and work based activities. This includes a whole range of activities from simply, silently, attending an institute AGM to postgraduate Masters or Doctorate Degrees. Once again I stress, CPD is not intended to be at all onerous; with very little extra effort the goal of an average of 4 credits per year should not be difficult to achieve.

I do, however, take the point that preparing a paper for presentation at a conference involves a lot more work than the actual presentation suggests. If 2

*Continued on page 12 ...*

# WIN

Send us your letters and be in line to win a prize!  
This month's winner receives a Canon color  
i-SENSYS MF8080Cw Wireless Multifunction Printer.

Designed for ease-of-use in your home or small office, the Canon color i-SENSYS MF8080Cw Wireless Multifunction Printer allows you to print, copy, fax and scan via one compact and affordable solution. The MF8080Cw delivers fast and accurate printing. Documents are ready in a short time, at print speeds up to 8 pages-per-minute (ppm) in color and 12 ppm in black and white. Built-in WiFi capabilities allow you to access the best of your device's resources from any location in your home or small office. One Touch Button support gives you instant access to key functions such as Easy Scanning and Paper Save Copying.



**Canon**

## “67 minutes” becomes two-week project

On 18 July 2012 – “Madiba Day” – EE Publishers’ personnel descended on Lesego Primary School in Muldersdrift to perform 67 minutes of community service by painting the school’s banisters. Armed with paint, brushes, and turpentine, the volunteers were greeted with 865 smiles upon their arrival at the school. Soon the pupils were being treated to apples and oranges sponsored by Pick ‘n Pay Northgate and the work began.

It quickly became apparent, however, that Lesego Primary School needed more than just a coat of paint: power was being supplied to the tuck shop via an extension cord suspended from window to window and many of the security lights had burned out. On sending out a call for help to the Electrical Contractors Association, the volunteers were referred to several companies that readily climbed aboard this “Madiba Day” initiative.

Muldersdrift-based **Blaizepoint Trading**, without hesitation, provided a team of five electricians and helpers who dedicated an entire day’s work to the cause. **CCG Cable Terminations** provided glands and shrouds, and Sandy and her sales team at **CCG Cable Terminations** sourced the following sponsors: **ARB Electrical Wholesalers** which sponsored cabling and **LMTK Industrial Supplies** which provided circuit breakers, distribution boards, isolators, sockets, extension boxes, plugs and switches.

**Osram** provided the school with fluorescent tubes and fittings. Security lighting, proper lighting in the tuckshop and various others were sponsored by **Eurolux**, with the work done by their technician, Tyrone. The ceilings in the old building are extremely high and difficult to reach, and **Light-Be Construction and Maintenance** was there to help with replacing the lamps in the classrooms.

And so, 67 minutes became a two-week project fuelled by ubuntu, gees and old-fashioned caring. ©



### Service delivered to the Lesego Primary School

Dear EE Publishers

There are no words to express our gratitude for the way that we are getting support from you for our school. The decision that you took to support the school has made us feel like we belong somewhere and we are honoured to be in your thoughts.

Learners will never forget how you helped them in so many areas of their lives. Since you started helping us attendance has improved and they now take pride in their school. We really appreciate your relationship with us.

Thank you and God bless you tremendously.

Yours in education

Mrs. YN Mulovhedzi

Principal - Lesego Primary School ©

...continued from page 11

credits were to be awarded for this activity it could probably still work. But then there would need to be a corresponding increase in the number of credits earned for a peer reviewed paper or publication and if that were to be increased to 3 credits then what should be done with the postgraduate qualification which would then only have a two credit advantage.

There are certainly going to be changes to the rules from

time to time and hopefully these changes will smooth out the anomalies and address issues such as this.

The other realistic consideration is that Dr. Norris-Rogers, or anybody else who is in the position of writing and presenting technical papers, should have no problem in finding more than sufficient CPD credits in any event.

Paul Marshall

PLATO: President ©