

## Policy

<b>Type:</b>	Quality Assurance Program		
<b>Name:</b>	Continuing Education: January 1, 2018 – December 31, 2020		
<b>Status:</b>	Approved (Council)	<b>Version:</b>	1
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### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the requirements of continuing education that must be met by College members in the three-year continuing education cycle: January 1, 2018 to December 31, 2020.

### Participation in Continuing Education

One component of the Quality Assurance Program is mandatory Continuing Education (CE) (O. Reg. 119/94).

### Current Cycle

The current cycle runs from January 1, 2018 to December 31, 2020.

The current CE Policy stipulates that each member is required to participate in a minimum of **seventy (70)** credit hours of continuing education related to the maintenance of his/her standards of practice or continuing competence from **an organized program of learning** during every three-year cycle.

The College considers an organized program of learning to be:

- a structured learning experience that is presented as a group lecture, a group or individual workshop, or as a text or an electronically provided course

The CE policy recognizes two categories of continuing education—categories A and B—the criteria of which are outlined below.

Members are required to participate in CE activities that would amount to a **minimum of 50 Category A credit hours\*** while credit for **the remaining 20 credit hours may be obtained by participating in either Category A or B** continuing education activities. (\*One credit hour is approximately equal to 50 minutes with each course being a minimum of one credit hour and additionally in half-hour increments.)

Of the 50 Category A hours required, a minimum of 20 hours must be lecture-based in topics reasonably related to ocular disease and management or related systemic disease. **COPE-**

**accredited online lectures would qualify as long as they include an examination component.** A maximum of 10 hours per CE cycle may be in topics related to practice management.

### **New Registrants**

New members will be required to complete a prorated number of hours based on the number of complete years remaining in the reporting cycle following the year they register. For instance, members registered in the first year of the three-year cycle, i.e., 2018, must obtain 47 credit hours and members registered in the second year, i.e., 2019, of the three-year cycle must obtain 24 credit hours. Members registered in the third year, i.e., 2020, of the three-year cycle have no requirements to obtain credit hours for the remainder of the cycle. The number of credit hours that must be obtained from Category A and B providers, respectively, is in the same ratio as specified in the policy for 70 credit hours. Members may only claim CE credit hours that have been completed following their initial registration with the College.

### **Category A Providers**

In order for a CE provider to be considered for inclusion in Category A, the provider must be:

- a Canadian or American national, provincial, or state optometric association or regulator; or
- a Canadian or American school or college of optometry, or an accredited university in another health discipline; or
- Vision Institute of Canada, the American Academy of Optometry, or any Canadian or American not-for-profit optometric organization preapproved by the Quality Assurance Committee, where the primary goal of the organization is to provide or promote optometric educational opportunities or provide clinical care; or
- an approved COPE administrator.

### **Category A Events**

In order for a CE event to be considered for inclusion in Category A, the event must not be entirely sponsored by a commercial entity unless it is COPE-accredited. Commercial entities may provide sponsorship of an event held by a Category A provider but must not directly pay for a speaker, the venue, etc. Evidence of sponsorship (i.e., advertising) can be present on a trade show floor or outside a lecture hall but not within the lecture/workshop itself.

### **Category A Continuing Education**

The College recognizes that a Category A provider can provide either Category A or Category B courses. A Category A educational opportunity must meet the following criteria:

- Must be directly provided by a Category A provider at a Category A Event.
- Must be free of any commercial bias.
- COPE-accredited CE must have both a valid COPE Course ID number and a valid COPE Activity/Event ID number.
- Presenters must disclose any potential conflicts of interest.
- Providers should make every effort to control access to the lecture/workshop to ensure that attendees are present for the entire program with reasonable exceptions.

- Groups that have restricted memberships must allow non-members the opportunity to also participate in courses offered. How appropriate fees are applied and what are considered appropriate fees for non-members will be determined by Category A providers.

### **Continuing Education Equivalencies**

The College recognizes the following as Category A credit hours. Of the 70 credit hours required (including both Category A and B), no more than 35 hours per CE cycle may be obtained through the following Category A equivalencies:

- Graduate studies in optometry or a related health discipline preapproved by the Quality Assurance Committee—one full year of full-time graduate studies is equivalent to the 35 hours of the cycle requirements; one year of part-time studies is equivalent to 24 hours of the cycle requirements.
- Residency at an ACOE-accredited school—one full year of residency training is equivalent to 35 hours of the cycle requirements.
- Faculty appointment at an ACOE-accredited school—an appointment as a full-time faculty member is equivalent to 24 credit hours per year. An appointment as a part-time faculty member is equivalent to a pro-rated 24 credit hours per year.
- Fellowship or Diplomate in the American Academy of Optometry or Fellowship in the College of Optometrists in Vision Development—is equivalent to 30 hours during the cycle the fellowship or diplomate is awarded.
- Publication of an article in a refereed optometric, ophthalmologic, or medical journal is equivalent to 10 hours.
- Publication of a case report in a refereed journal is equivalent to two hours.
- Lectures prepared and given to regulated health professionals for their primary continuing education or regulated health professionals in training education at a Canadian or American accredited school are equivalent to three credit hours/hr—each lecture may be counted one time only.
- Appointment as a full-time clinical supervisor at an ACOE-accredited school is equivalent to seven hours of continuing education credit per academic year. Appointment as a part-time clinical supervisor at an ACOE-accredited school is equivalent to a pro-rated seven hours of continuing education credit per academic year.
- Supervising optometrist in an extern rotation for students from ACOE-accredited schools or the IOBP—one rotation (of minimum seven weeks) in an academic term is equivalent to seven (7) hours to a maximum of 21 hours (prorated) in a CE cycle. Prorating, supervising optometrist in a short (i.e., four week) extern rotation is equivalent to three (3) hours in a CE cycle.
- Participation in the approved examination board of the standards assessment examination(s) or an approved evaluating examination as a:
  - Clinical Assessor: one credit hour per two hours spent assessing or training to assess candidates to a maximum of 24 hours per three-year period.
  - Question Author: one credit hour per question accepted to the database to a maximum of 24 hours per three-year period.
  - Question Item Selector: one credit hour per two hours spent selecting questions for the examinations to a maximum of 24 hours per three-year period.
- Certification in a Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Heart Saver AED (C) or CPR HCP (Health Care Provider) level with AED—five hours per three-year period.

## **Category B Continuing Education**

The remaining 20 credit hours may be obtained from **ANY** provider. Category B credit hours represent participation in an organized program of learning that is relevant to a member's maintenance of his/her standards of practice and/or continuing competence.

### **Participation Verification Certificate**

A participation verification certificate must be issued for both Category A and B CE and must indicate:

- the name of the participant
- certificate of registration number
- date of the course
- course title
- name of the provider
- number of CE hours awarded
- authorized signature or symbol of verification

### **CE Exclusions**

Although the College recognizes the value in the following activities, they do not qualify for CE:

- trade show participation
- unstructured self-directed learning (e.g., reading of textbooks, journals)

### **Reporting of Continuing Education Activities**

Members are required to report their continuing education activities on the Annual Report. It is the responsibility of the member to claim only credit hours that represent an organized program of learning that is relevant to the member's maintenance of practice and/or continuing competence. Members will be advised of how many hours of CE they have reported on the second and third Annual Report to be completed in each cycle. The College will verify members' reporting of their CE activities through their OE TRACKER profiles. It is incumbent upon members to ensure that their OE TRACKER profiles are up to date, particularly toward the end of each CE cycle.

### **CE Hour Deficiency Audits and Random CE Audits**

The College performs two CE audits at the conclusion of each three-year reporting cycle. The CE deficiency audit identifies those who fail to meet the CE credit hours requirement. The College also randomly selects members to determine the accuracy of reporting. Members found to be deficient in CE hours will be required to participate in a practice assessment at their own cost according to the College's Schedule of Fees and Penalties. Members who incorrectly underreport CE hours and are found to be deficient in CE hours will have to pay a fee according to the College's Schedule of Fees and Penalties to have their CE certificates audited by the Quality Assurance Committee.

**The Regulations under the *Optometry Act* require the Registrar to refer members who fail to acquire the required number of CE credit hours to the Quality Assurance Committee for a practice assessment.**