

Regulation Requirements

As provided for in section 10 (1) of the “*Consolidated Regulations, Including Amendments, Under the Opticianry Act, 1991*” as of February 19, 2000”:

”The [Quality Assurance] Committee shall determine the number of credits to be assigned to a continuing education activity, a professional activity or dispensing activities.”

Policy – Accreditation

This document will outline the process that the Quality Assurance (QA) Committee shall use in determining the number and type of credits that it awards to continuing education (CE) activity submissions. This document is also intended to act as a guide for the coordinators of CE activities.

Contained within this document are the current methods of accreditation evaluation that are employed by the COO, as well as a detailed breakdown of the requirements of CE providers who wish to obtain credits for the activities that they will be sponsoring.

In accrediting an activity for the purposes of the QA Program the COO does not imply any endorsement of any products, services or companies associated with any accredited activity.

Accreditation granted by the QA Committee to an activity applies for up to **three years** from the time the activity was originally accredited. Any activities given a credit value before September 2005 must be resubmitted for accreditation no later than February 1, 2008.

Accreditation will only be granted to activities that are available to all registrants of the COO.

Activities must meet the criteria set up by the QA Committee (see notes below for a complete explanation).

Any providers wishing to change the format of a CE activity (ie: live presentation to distance learning) must resubmit the course material, where the new submission must contain the appropriate changes that reflect the required components of the respective format (see below for requirements).

The QA Committee will not encourage any exercises which are merely an attempt to increase the revenue of a voluntary group; but rather will only support those activities that are truly intended for the purposes of furthering education.

The COO reserves the right to deny accreditation to any program that it feels may be insufficient, in terms of either its quality of content or in its duration, or where the QA Committee feels that more information is required before a complete assessment of the activity in question can be made.

Record keeping

The COO encourages providers to maintain and ensure the availability of records adequate to serve the needs of the participants, and any other individual requiring such information. Records of participation and credits awarded should be kept for a minimum period of five years. Full documentation of program-related materials and information, adequate to providing evidence of compliance with the criteria and guidelines as those established by the QA Committee, should be retained by the accredited sponsor.

Monitoring

The COO reserves the right to send a representative to attend any accredited courses for the purposes of reviewing the quality of the presentation and the accuracy of the CE activity submission. Should there be any inconsistencies between the submission and the presentation, the COO will ask the provider to reconcile such discrepancies for any future presentations. The COO reserves the right to suspend the accreditation granted until such inconsistencies have been resolved.

Fees

Standard Accreditation request;
submitted a minimum of 45 days prior to the scheduled event: **\$16.15 per activity**

Rush accreditation request;
Submitted less than 45 days prior to the scheduled event: **\$161.43 per activity**

Note: The College will accept payments by Visa, MasterCard or personal or certified cheques made payable to the College of Opticians of Ontario. Payments must be submitted at the time of the request for accreditation. The College will charge an administration fee for any NSF cheque or declined credit card. All fees listed include applicable taxes.

Payment guarantees a review of the activity by the QA Committee. The QA Committee is under no obligation to accredit, except under the conditions outlined within this document. Payment does not guarantee that the CE activity will receive credits.

The QA Committee will return to the provider any submissions that require revision, where a second submission fee will not be charged. The revised submission must be returned to the QA Committee within 15 days of the date of notification.

Types of Activities

The following are examples of the types of CE activities that are considered to be creditable:

1. Live and/or multi-media presentations (seminars/lectures/workshops)
2. Distance learning (print/internet/videos/television)
3. Scholastic (institution-based courses)
4. Self-organized study groups

General Requirements for Submissions

1. All material submitted to the COO must be an exact replica of that which is to be presented. Any detected inconsistencies between the submitted copy and the original will result in a suspension of accreditation granted.
2. All materials submitted must be accompanied by a fully completed Continuing Education Activity Accreditation Request Form. Failure to provide the form or to complete all required sections of the form will result in the rejection of the submission.
3. An activity must be an organized program that will contribute to the advancement of professional competency and scientific knowledge in the practice of opticianry, and be designed to reflect the educational needs of opticians.
4. The submission must be noticeably different from any previous submission by the same provider.
5. Providers of activities offered in Ontario are encouraged to make a reasonable attempt to notify all opticians in Ontario of their activities.
6. Providers must submit a completed COO *Application for Providers of CE programs* form.

7. The intended audience must be specified (e.g., new/entry-level opticians, refracting opticians, etc.)
8. Course content must be presented in an objective manner.
9. For any submission that is to be considered for an eyeglass or contact lens credit, the presenter must be an optician, medical doctor, or optometrist in their jurisdiction; instructor at a recognized academic institution; or have at least five years of work experience in their respective field of specialization.
10. Participants shall be provided with a credit slip which serves as proof of an individual's successful completion of the CE activity.
11. The promotion and advertising of CE seminars and conferences must adhere to the criteria as outlined below herein.

Additional Requirements for Submissions – Live and/or multi-media Presentations (seminars/lectures/workshops)

1. Minimum 45 minutes of actual presentation time (not including set-up or question and answer period).
2. A biography or curriculum vitae must be included for every eligible presenter and adjunct/assistant instructors.
3. A complete copy of all media that will be presented must be included (i.e. PowerPoint presentation, etc.).
4. In the case of a workshop, submissions must include a list of all of the equipment that is to be used, as well as the number of individuals that will attend each workstation.
5. Each submission will initially be considered for one (1) credit. Additional credits will be awarded where the submission is longer than the minimum time requirement, where each additional 45 minute interval will qualify for one credit of the same type as the initial credit awarded.

**Additional Requirements for Submissions – Distance learning
(print/internet/videos/television)**

1. Providers must submit a detailed description outlining the proposed course content, including all information pertaining to (and copies of) how completion of the CE activity by the participant is to be assessed.
2. Written and online course material must be a minimum of 2000 words in length.
3. Any test(s) administered by the sponsor to assess an optician's knowledge of a distance learning activity must contain questions that accurately reflect the content of activity.
4. Participants must achieve a minimum mark of 70% on any test to receive credit.

Additional Requirements for Submissions – Scholastic (Institution-Based Courses)

1. Providers must submit a detailed description outlining the proposed course content, including all information pertaining to (and copies of) how completion of the CE activity by the participant is to be assessed.
2. Any program/course will be eligible to receive a maximum of 10 CE credits.

Additional Requirements for Submissions –Self-Organized Study Groups

1. All requests for accreditation of self-study groups must be made in advance of the activities. Self-study group activities will not be accredited retroactively.
2. The coordinator must submit a detailed course outline, including learning objectives, topics to be covered, format of study group and a copy of all study material that will be used.
3. If the meeting is to consist of a discussion group, then the coordinator must also submit a short bio and the names of all guest speakers.
4. The coordinator must indicate the estimated duration of each meeting, as well as the number of meetings that are scheduled to occur.

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5. The coordinator must indicate the method that will be used to evaluate how completion of the course by the individual is to be assessed.
6. The coordinator must submit the name, registration number & signature of each study Participant.
7. The coordinator must disclose any sponsoring organization

CE Credit Slip Requirements

The intention of outlining these requirements is to ensure that the COO receives all relevant information pertaining to a completed CE activity, while allowing the activity providers to print their own credit slips should they wish to do so.

In the event that an activity is not accredited in time for a credit slip to be printed, no slip should be given out. The COO will not accept certificates reading “accreditation approval pending”.

It is the responsibility of the provider to ensure that any optician attending a course that has not been accredited prior to the date that the course is offered receives his or her credits once the course has been accredited.

The following information is required to appear on activity-specific credit slips:

1. The full name of the optician who participated in the activity
2. The registration number of the optician who participated in the activity
3. The signature of the optician who participated in the activity
4. The activity number assigned by the COO
5. The title of the activity (must be identical to the title given in the accreditation results letter)
6. The date of the activity
7. The name of the sponsor/coordinator
8. The name of the authorized sponsor representative

9. The phone number the authorized sponsor representative
10. The signature of the authorized sponsor representative

Three copies of each credit slip must be made, where:

- i. one copy is to be retained by the participant for their records
- ii. one copy is to be retained by the participant to submit in their QA claims package at the appropriate time
- iii. one copy is to be retained by the sponsor

Promotion and Advertising of Seminars and Conferences

Information pertaining to upcoming seminars and conferences should be provided to prospective participants well in advance of the scheduled CE activity dates. Promotional materials (e.g., brochures, advertisements, memoranda, letters of invitation, or other announcements) should clearly include at least the following items:

1. The educational objectives of the particular program
2. The target audience(s) that may most benefit from participation in the program
3. The name of the presenter and their credentials
4. The fees for the program and a clear statement of the items that are, and are not, covered by those fees, as well as any applicable deadlines for pre-program cancellations and fee refunds
5. The proposed schedule for the CE activity
6. The COO activity number(s) assigned to the program
7. A complete description of what is required for a participant's successful completion of the CE activity (e.g. achieving a certain mark on a test, completing a program evaluation form, etc.)

Credit Definitions

EG – Eyeglass

Credits in this category represent topics associated with eyeglass technology. Fabrication, fitting techniques, emerging technology and product specific topics related to eyeglasses are all examples of this credit.

CL–Contact Lens

Credits in this category represent topics associated with contact lens technology. Fabrication, fitting techniques, emerging technology and product specific topics related to contact lenses are all examples of this credit.

EG/CL – Eyeglass/Contact lens (Refracting) credit category;

Credits in this category represent topics & activities associated with the anatomy, physiology of the eye, the visual pathway, ocular structures & systems. Topics in this category would not be product specific.

Examples include, but are not limited to,

- *Ocular anatomy & physiology*
 1. *anatomical structure & systems*
 2. *Pharmacology and impact on dispensing to client*
- *Visual pathway*
 1. *Accommodation & vision acuity evaluation*
 2. *ophthalmic instruments and their use in visual acuity evaluation and dispensing*
 3. *ocular motility*
- *Visual anomalies and the impact on dispensing to client*
- *Low vision evaluation & dispensing*
- *Patient management*

GB - General Business

Credits in this category represent topics associated with general business practices. Examples include:

- Financial and commercial services
- Sales and marketing techniques
- Patient relations
- Financial and business planning
- Business management and employer-specific courses

PA - Professional Activities

Credits in this category represent activities associated with the profession of opticianry. Examples include:

- Lab tours
- Mission and/or volunteer work
- Annual general meetings
- Emergency medical courses (such as CPR and first aid)