IACET
International Accreditors for Continuing Education and Training

# CEU Issuance Guidance

## Information for Jointly Accredited Providers

**Abstract**

Providers can offer Continuing Education Units (CEUs) to recognize learner participation in Jointly Accredited interprofessional continuing education activities that meet established standards. CEUs provide a standardized unit of measure for learning events designed for professional training and development of interprofessional audiences, including those not served by profession-specific credit types.

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# The Continuing Education Unit (CEU)

The Continuing Education Unit (CEU) is an internationally recognized unit of measurement used to measure structured, non-credit adult learning and continuing education.

One (1.0) CEU is defined as **ten (10) contact hours of participation in an organized continuing education experience under responsible sponsorship, capable direction, and qualified instruction**.

# Offering CEUs for Jointly Accredited Learning Events

Continuing Education Units (CEUs) are **role-agnostic by design**. Within Joint Accreditation, CEUs provide a standardized way to recognize participation in learning events without tying credit to a specific professional license, discipline, or regulatory body.

This makes CEUs particularly well suited for interprofessional learning events that serve mixed or multidisciplinary audiences. In addition to healthcare professionals whose roles may not align with a single profession-specific credit system, CEUs allow Jointly Accredited providers to recognize learning across the broader care and support team.

Examples of roles that may benefit from interprofessional learning events offering CEUs include, but are not limited to:

- Administrative and operational staff
- Human resources, compliance, and quality professionals
- Information technology and informatics teams
- Care coordinators, patient navigators, and social support staff
- Chaplains, spiritual care providers, and pastoral counselors


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- Funeral service and bereavement professionals who interact with patients and families

CEUs may be offered for Jointly Accredited learning events that include participants from multiple professions, roles, or practice settings; particularly when discipline-specific credits do not fully represent the learner population. Where appropriate, CEUs may be offered alongside profession-specific credits and are not intended to replace credits required for licensure or regulatory compliance.

# Who Recognizes or Accepts CEUs

Acceptance of CEUs is determined by employers, credentialing bodies, or regulatory authorities, as applicable.

To see a list of known entities that recognize Continuing Education Units (CEUs) issued under an ANSI/IACET-aligned framework, visit the CEU Acceptance Directory: https://iacet.org/ce-t-accreditation/who-recognizes-iacet-accreditation/

This directory is provided for informational purposes only and is not exhaustive. Inclusion does not guarantee automatic acceptance of CEUs, as recognition may be subject to additional review or conditions established by a specific employer, credentialing body, regulatory board, or organization.

Acceptance requirements may change over time, and IACET does not regularly monitor updates to external acceptance policies. Providers are strongly encouraged to confirm acceptance directly with the applicable authority prior to participation.

# Calculation of CEUs

One continuing education unit (CEU) equals 10 contact hours of learner interaction with the learning activity content, which includes classroom, self-paced instruction, pre/post assignments, and/or homework in support of a learning outcome. Providers should have a process to determine what they will and will not include in CEU calculations.


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But how do you calculate the number of CEUs for a learning event? A contact hour is one clock hour of interaction between a learner and instructor, or between a learner and materials, which have been prepared to cause learning. Contact implies a connection between a learner and a learning source. For CEU purposes, that connection is two-way; that is, the instructor or learning source must monitor the learner's progress and/or provide some form of feedback to the learner. This definition applies for face-to-face interaction as well as asynchronous learning events. The CEU should not be awarded for learning activities in which individuals are engaged in unplanned, unsupervised or non- sponsored learning.

It is important that the person(s) in the organization responsible for calculating CEUs monitor each learning event for any changes. Recalculation of CEUs should also take place in the event of a major change in course content, method of delivery, equipment/software or demographic audience. Calculating CEUs must be consistent and accurate in all learning events to ensure learners are receiving the correct number of CEUs.

## Counting Hours Toward CEUs

Calculating the of CEUs for a course is a two-step process:

1. **Calculate the number of contact hours:**, Total the number of contact minutes and divided by 60 to arrive at the number of contact hours as shown in *Figure 1*.
2. **Calculate the number of CEUs:** Divide the number of contact hours by 10 to obtain the number of CEUs. CEUs may be expressed in tenths or hundredths of a CEU. That is, 17 contact hours equates to 1.7 or 1.70 CEUs.

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$$Contact\ time\ (hours) = \frac{(total\ minutes\ for\ all\ activities) - (total\ minutes\ spent\ in\ non - allowable\ activities)}{60}$$

$$Number\ of\ CEUs = \frac{Contact\ time\ (hours)}{10}$$

**Note:** 1 CEU = 10 hours and number of CEUs shall be rounded to the nearest tenth or hundredth, depending on your organization's process

*Figure 1: CEU Calculation Formula*

In cases where the entire learning activity or a segment of the learning activity is less than one hour but at least 30-minutes, that period may be rounded up to a full hour. For example, a 30-minute webinar can be rounded up to 60-minutes, which then equates to 0.1 CEU if your organization chooses to calculate to the tenths place. If your organization chooses, however, to calculate CEUs to the hundredths, then CEUs would be 0.05 CEUs for that webinar. The decision to calculate CEUs to the hundredth is generally advantageous for Providers delivering micro-learning, that is, learning activities that are less than 30-minutes. But some Providers may choose to calculate to the hundredth simply to be more precise in recognizing actual time spent. Note that calculating to the hundredth results in recognizing six-minute increments of learning (see *Table 1. Calculating CEUs to the Hundredth*).

| # of Minutes | CEU Calculation |
|---|---|
| **6** | .01 |
| **12** | .02 |
| **18** | .03 |
| **24** | .04 |
| **30** | .05 |
| **36** | .06 |
| **42** | .07 |
| **48** | .08 |
| **54** | .09 |

*TABLE 1: CALCULATING CEUS TO THE HUNDREDTH*

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If time spent results in minutes that fall between increments of six, round up to the next increment of six if at least at the midpoint between increments. Otherwise, round down. (Examples: 10 minutes rounds up to 12; 20 minutes rounds down to 18; 33 minutes rounds up to 36)

## Activities Not Included When Calculation CEUs

Breaks, non-working lunches, group pictures/awards ceremonies and other non-instructional contact time are ***not allowable*** when calculating CEUs.

## Activities to Include When Calculation CEUs

The following learning activities are examples of activity types to include when calculating contact hours for CEUs:

- **Class/Meetings**—Classroom or meeting session time led by instructor and/or discussion leader.
- **Self-Paced Learning Events**—Activities in which a learner is engaged in a planned program of learning whereby the learner's progress is monitored, and the learner receives feedback. Examples include independent study, computer-assisted instruction, interactive video, and planned projects.
- **Assessment/Quizzes/Written Assignments**—Learner assessment during the event and/or at the end of the event.
- **Outside Assignments**—Field trips, projects, and assignments, which are an integral part of a course or program, may count toward contact hours. However, a standard number of hours should be assigned using the averaging method, following the conduct of a comprehensive pilot as discussed in self-paced programs discussed later in this document. If contact hours are assigned for the purpose of calculating CEUs, the provider has the responsibility to validate each learner's assignment completion.
- **Laboratory Assignments**—Laboratory assignments tend to be an integral part of a planned program and are generally more structured than field experiences. Because the conditions for learning are rather consistent and the amount of time for assignments even for all learners,


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the provider may choose to count each hour of lab time as a contact hour. If a considerable variation exists in lab conditions and time required for completing assignments by different learners, the provider should consider establishing a standard number of contact hours based on the average time utilized by several learners.

- **Field Experiences**—Field experiences are extracurricular assignments and provide learners opportunities to gain practical and realistic experiences, which cannot be acquired in a classroom setting. Such activities may or may not be highly structured, may vary in duration from one learner and location to another and may not be readily calculated into contact hours. Providers often view field experiences in terms of tasks to be accomplished rather than the amount of time involved. Because of the unstructured nature of many field experiences, providers may choose to use some checklist form to record the accomplishment of certain specified tasks. If the provider desires to count the field experience hours, the provider should first determine whether the field experience meets the ANSI/IACET Standard. If so, a standard number of contact hours could be determined by calculating the average time spent by several learners in different field experiences as discussed in the later section titled Asynchronous Learning Events.
- **Meetings, Conventions, & Exhibitions Attendance**—Attending meetings, conventions, and exhibitions, which attract large numbers of participants, involve different activities, and are conducted primarily for information sharing purposes. Planned learning activities within such events that meet the ANSI/IACET Standard are eligible for CEUs.
- **Travel**—Traveling or participating in a travel study program unless the educational component of the travel study program meets the ANSI/IACET Standard.
- **Unsupervised Study**—Participating in individual, self-directed study or other form of independent learning experience not planned, directed, and supervised by a provider.
- **Work Experience**—Performing on-the-job training and other work experiences unless the work experience is structured as part of a


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planned and supervised continuing education experience that meets the ANSI/IACET Standard.

- **Youth Programs**—Participating in events designed primarily for ages below adulthood.

## Self-Paced or Asynchronous Learning Events

In learning events where participants learn and progress at their own pace, the provider should establish a standard number of contact hours based on a pilot offering of the event. For example, a provider introducing a new asynchronous learning event might select a representative sample of the intended audience (the larger the audience the better) to complete the event. Note the illustration provided below.

> Event A is an asynchronous home study course with a post-test. To arrive at an average time for course completion, five individuals are selected to complete a pilot. Each pilot participant represents the typical learner who will attend the learning event.
>
> Each participant records the actual amount of time spent completing the course.
>
> - Learner #1: 16 hours
> - Learner #2: 10 hours
> - Learner #3: 8.5 hours
> - Learner #4: 12 hours
> - Learner #5: 14.5 hours
>
> 61 hours divided by 5 learners = 12.2 average hours spent completing the course
>
> The decimal .2 is rounded down, resulting in 12.0 hours, which becomes the total time spent for the CEU calculation. Those 12 hours equate to 1.2 CEUs. (12 hours/10)

It is important that the person(s) responsible in the organization for calculating learning event CEUs monitor the learning events for any changes. Recalculation should also take place in the event of a major change to course content, method of delivery, change in equipment/software or demographic

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audience. Calculating CEUs should be consistent and accurate at all times to ensure learners are receiving the appropriate number of CEUs.

**Partial or adjusted CEUs shall not be awarded to learners who do not successfully meet the criteria for achieving CEUs.**

# Documentation and Records

Jointly Accredited providers offering CEUs issue formal recognition of successful completion of continuing education and training events. They must maintain learner records in accordance with established recordkeeping and verification requirements to support transcript requests and third-party verification when needed.

# Important Considerations

CEUs are not profession-specific licensure credits. Providers and learners should ensure that the type of credit offered aligns with the learner's professional needs and any applicable acceptance requirements.

Providers should clearly communicate learning outcomes, completion requirements, and the number of CEUs available to learners in advance of participation.

Clear communication about the type of credit awarded and its intended use is essential for learner transparency.

# Additional Information

More information about CEUs issued under an ANSI/IACET-aligned framework and the ANSI/IACET Standard for Continuing Education and Training is available at **www.iacet.org**.


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# Document History

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