

Guidelines for Obtaining & Reporting CE Credits

It is understood that continuing education (CE) is the cornerstone of maintenance of professional excellence. All COC members must therefore be able to demonstrate their involvement in educational activities to maintain certification. This is assessed once every three years when members are required to submit details of their educational activities.

Whilst all educational activities are valuable, it is recognized that certain topics have greater relevance to orthoptics; these are termed *core* topics and greater emphasis is placed on these when assessing an individual's CE activities.

The following guidelines explain the COC's CE minimum requirements.

- All members must obtain at least **thirty credits** in each 3-year CE cycle.
- A **minimum of twenty** of these credits must be earned **in core subjects** (see below).
- No more than **10 core** credits may be earned from **non-verifiable sources** (i.e., journals that do not require a quiz).
- A **maximum of 15 credits** can be earned through **self-study activities**. Please note that "non-verifiable" and "self-study" are not interchangeable terms.
- Orthoptists will continue to receive annual recertification forms in September or October of each year. As in the past, these are to be submitted to Council's Administrative Co-ordinator by the specified date with the required fee for recertification for the following year.
- In addition to the recertification form, orthoptists will be required to submit CE forms on a 3-year cycle. The CE form must be submitted to the CE Committee by the stated deadline.
- Note that educational meetings should apply for COC CE credits at least 8 weeks prior to the date of the meeting. This allows the CE Committee time to award core and non-core credits for the meeting and allows orthoptists to know in advance that the meeting will count towards their CE requirements.
 - If you are organizing a meeting you should ensure that you apply for CE credits at least **8 weeks in advance** by completing the application form (which is available on the COC website) and mailing it to the Administrative Co-ordinator.
 - If you are attending a meeting you should ensure that the course or meeting has been granted COC credits.
 - Meetings that have not been awarded COC CE credits will not be eligible for core credits (see 5.1 below)
- Orthoptists who decide to pursue medical school, masters degrees or optometry school will not be awarded continuing education credits for those courses.
- Orthoptists must keep proof of all CE activities that they claim in their 3-year cycle CE credit forms.

- While no proof of activities will be required with submission of the CE form, the Chairperson of the CE Committee can, at any time, request proof of CE activities from any orthoptist who submits CE credit forms.
- **10% of submitting orthoptists will be randomly selected every year for an audit of CE activities.** They will have to submit proof of all their CE credit activities to the CE Chairperson within 2 months of receiving the request.
- All CE forms that are submitted late will **automatically** be included in the CE credit audit without exception.
- Orthoptists who wish to maintain certification by the American Orthoptic Council (AOC) will have to satisfy their own requirements.
 - They must complete 45 credits in each 3-year cycle to include a minimum of 30 credits in core subjects. At least 10 core credits must come from the attendance of a meeting.
 - The AOC **will not** recognize the COC's 30 credit requirement as sufficient for AOC certification.
- Core and non-core topics are detailed in the pages that follow, along with guidelines for the awarding of CE credit hours.

Core & Non-Core Subjects

The following topics are considered *core* subjects for the purpose of CE credits.

- Ocular anatomy and neuroanatomy
- Principles of visual fields, including testing and analysis
- Sensory and motor physiology, including assessment of binocular vision
- Optics, including refractometry, diagnostic and therapeutic use of prisms and contact lenses
- Assessment of visual acuity, accommodation, and fixation
- Detection and treatment of amblyopia
- Clinical assessment of strabismus, including:
 - Diagnostic evaluation and measurement
 - Congenital and acquired comitant forms
 - Incomitant forms (including mechanical and innervational disorders)
 - Syndromes (e.g. Duane, Brown, Moebius, congenital fibrosis)
 - Strabismus associated with systemic disorders (e.g. thyroid)
 - Neuro-ophthalmologic syndromes (e.g. myasthenia, Parinaud)
 - Orthoptic management and treatments
 - Principles of strabismus surgery
- Nystagmus
- Eye movement evaluation and measurements including saccadic velocity recording and electromyography.
- Child development and learning disabilities, including dyslexia
- Low vision assessment and low vision aids
- Electrophysiology principles and techniques including VEP, ERG and EOG
- Principles of genetics and heritable ocular diseases
- Clinical research methods, including computers in medicine and medical writing

Other topics in the scope of ophthalmology are recognized as beneficial to the practice of orthoptics; as such, CE credits for topics that are not listed as “core” will be credited as “*non-core*” CE credit.

Continuing Education Credits

Accepted CE credit activities are listed below. The number of credits is based upon the number of hours spent on each activity and their educational merit.

Note:

- The COC CE requirement is tallied over each member's 3-year cycle. **At least 30 credits are required** for each 3-year cycle.
- **At least 20 of these must be from *core-credit* activities** to satisfy the recertification process (i.e., a *maximum of 10 non-core* credits can be counted).
- **A maximum of 15 credits are allowed for self-study activities.** Please note that "non-verifiable" and "self-study" are not interchangeable terms.
- **No more than 10 core credits may come from non-verifiable activities** (e.g. reading a text that does not have an associated quiz).
- Note that attendance at any of these events does not automatically qualify for core credits. (e.g. If you attend a COS workshop on retinopathy of prematurity that lasts for 3 hours you will be awarded 3 hours of *non-core* credits for this activity).

1. Meetings and courses

- 1.1. The Canadian Orthoptic Society (TCOS) scientific session & strabismus workshop
- 1.2. The Canadian Ophthalmological Society (COS) annual meeting
- 1.3. The American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO) pediatric ophthalmology & strabismus sessions
- 1.4. American Association of Certified Orthoptists (AACO) national or regional meetings and instructional courses
- 1.5. American Association for Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus (AAPOS) annual meeting and workshops
- 1.6. Strabismus symposia co-sponsored by AACO or AOC or TCOS
- 1.7. International Orthoptic Association (IOA) quadrennial meeting
- 1.8. International Strabismological Association (ISA) quadrennial meeting
- 1.9. Local strabismus and pediatric ophthalmology symposia held in Canada with COC CE approval
- 1.10. National orthoptic meetings held in countries outside North America, if approved or sponsored by the local orthoptic or ophthalmological organizations
- 1.11. JCAHPO and JCAHPO-approved meetings and courses
- 1.12. Hospital or university rounds in ophthalmology for a maximum of 5 credits per year. See note below.
- 1.13. Journal club qualifies for a maximum of 5 credits per year. See note below.

- 1.14. Other meetings, not listed above, related to pediatric ophthalmology, strabismus, or neuro-ophthalmology may be eligible for CE credit with approval of the CE Chair. See note below.

Note:

- An employer (manager), Chief Orthoptist and/or the ophthalmologist must verify in writing the orthoptist's attendance and the topics/journals discussed at the meetings (so that the activity can be classified as core or non-core credit) for credits claimed under 1.12 & 1.13.
- Orthoptists wishing to obtain credits for attending a meeting under 1.14 must request that the meeting co-ordinator provide details of the meeting to the CE Committee at least 8 weeks prior to meeting for determination of CE credit allocations (see page 1 for details).

2. Publications and Presentations

- 2.1. Publishing a paper in a refereed journal
 - 2.1.1. as first author = 10 credits
 - 2.1.2. as subsequent author = 5 credits
- 2.2. Presentation of paper or poster at COC-approved meeting (see list above) = 5 credits
- 2.3. Preparation of instructional course at COC-approved meeting = 1 credit per hour

3. Self-study of the AAO Basic and Clinical Sciences Course Manuals

Note that:

- Each can only be claimed once per 3-year cycle.
- The self-assessment quiz must be completed
- Only the current version of each manual is acceptable
 - 3.1. Completion of AAO Basic Science Course Book 5 = 10 core credits (neuro-ophthalmology)
 - 3.2. Completion of AAO Basic Science Course Book 6 = 10 core credits (pediatric ophthalmology & strabismus)
 - 3.3. Completion of any other volume in AAO series = 5 non-core credits

4. Self-study of other texts & materials

4.1. Completion of American Orthoptic Journal = 5 core credits

The quiz (which is available through the American Association of Certified Orthoptists at <http://www.orthoptics.org>) must be completed and submitted.

4.2. Reading of any other national orthoptic journal = 5 core credits (non-verifiable)

4.3. Completion of AACO self-evaluation quiz = 5 core credits

4.4. AOC Basic Science DVDs (<http://www.orthoptics.org/BSVideos.htm>)

This credit may only be claimed once *every other* 3-year cycle (i.e., once every 6 years).

4.4.1. Non-verifiable core credit awarded 1:1 (i.e., 1 credit per 1 hour of activity) for watching the DVDs

4.4.2. If the associated quiz is completed and submitted then 1 hour core credit is awarded per quiz

4.5. Reading texts or journals on orthoptics, strabismus or pediatric ophthalmology awarded 1:4 (i.e., 1 credit per 4 hours of activity) non-verifiable core credits (maximum 5 credits per year)

5. Attendance at lectures/meetings that have not applied for COC credit approval.

5.1 Lectures and meetings that have not applied for COC approval will be granted 1:1 *non-core* credits with proof of attendance.

6. Visit to another orthoptic department

1 hour core credit per half day up to a maximum of 5.

These credits may be claimed once per 3 year cycle.

7. On a ONE-TME BASIS only

7.1 Completion of S.A.I.T., Centennial College Course for Ophthalmic Medical Assistants (with certificate of completion) = 5 non-core credits

7.2 AAO Home Study Course for Ophthalmic Medical Assistants qualifies for 5 non-core credits (non-verifiable)

7.3 Successful certification as JCAHPO medical assistant at:

7.3.1 assistant level = 5 non-core credits

7.3.2 technician level = 10 non-core credits

7.3.3 technologist level = 10 non-core credits

7.4. Completion of a Canadian Orthoptic Master's program qualifies for 15 core credits

Note: final approval for a satisfactory passing of a CE submission or auditing thereof will be at the discretion of the CE Chair.