



AIA Continuing Education System

Member Manual

CES Guidelines for Members

Revised February 2013

This AIA Continuing Education System (AIA CES) Member Manual is designed to help AIA members understand continuing education requirements for AIA membership and for licensure renewal in states requiring continuing education. It is not intended to explain the AIA CES program in its entirety, but to provide answers to frequently asked questions and tips to help members get the most out of the AIA CES program. It also points out common errors that impede the reporting process and offers leads on Web resources for continuing education courses.

PROGRAM BASICS

What Is AIA CES?

First developed in 1994, the AIA CES is a continuing education system developed by the AIA to organize and track professional development activities required for AIA membership. AIA CES enables members to keep current on issues in the field, master new knowledge and skills, plan for the future, and responsibly meet the role society entrusts to a professional architect. By making available learning opportunities in every area of knowledge relevant to today's architect, the AIA CES program has grown into a major force in the improvement and revitalization of the architecture profession in the twenty-first century.

What Is My Annual Requirement?

As a condition of membership renewal, all active AIA members must successfully complete 18 learning units each calendar year, with at least eight of the 18 learning units in subject areas relating to health, safety, and welfare (HSW). **Beginning in January 2012, AIA members will be required to complete 12 hours of health, safety, and welfare (HSW) education.** AIA members cannot take more than 12 learning units (LU) of continuing education per day to retain acquired knowledge. AIA members can take the same course once every 12 months to receive credit.

Member Continuing Education Audits

AIA CES conducts an annual audit of members' transcripts. Members who do not complete the calendar year's annual requirement of general LU/HSW are subject to the random audit, in which auditors review the transcript for the minimum number of credits. Members' credits are calculated as follows:

Overage from previous year + audit year + current year

Credits earned in the current year that apply toward the previous year's requirements are not subtracted from the current year's totals. If a member is randomly audited for the audit year's requirements and the credits are not completed by September 30 of the current year, the member is not eligible for membership renewal until nine new credits dated October 1 of the current year or later are completed.

Member activities are randomly reviewed throughout the year to ensure compliance. If a member attended the same course twice within three years, one of the courses is removed from the transcript. A course title self-reported by a member that does not indicate a relevance to architecture will probably be rejected.

Reinstatement Policy

The AIA CES Reinstatement Policy allows members who have been disqualified for noncompliance to reinstate their memberships at any time. Once the member is reinstated he or she is responsible for meeting the annual 18 learning units (12 HSW) requirement. The [Reinstatement Form](#) must be completed for reinstatement consideration.

Exemptions

Exemptions from the continuing education requirement may be granted for the following reasons:

- Severe medical difficulties for at least the last three months of the audit year (this includes immediate family members)
- An unexpected or temporary international assignment of more than 6 months or during the last three months of the membership year
- Severe financial hardship

Other unusual circumstances may be considered but must be reviewed by AIA CES. Documentation is required. Fill out the [AIA CES Exemption Form](#) if your circumstances meet the above criteria, and submit it to your local component who will forward it to AIA CES. AIA CES will forward it to the Secretary of the AIA for review and consideration.

Reporting AIA CES Approved Provider Course Credits

Within 10 business days of a course's conclusion, AIA CES Providers verify and report the course attendees to AIA CES Records.

Self-Reporting

Attendance at courses offered by non-AIA presenters, and other non-structured educational activities can be self-reported online. Self-reports may be reported for

learning units credit only. In order to fulfill HSW requirements, members must take approved courses from AIA CES Providers.

Provider Audits

Approved AIA CES Providers are responsible for providing quality education and reporting attendance of AIA members online to the AIA CES Discovery System. If a member does not see course credits posted within ten (10) business days of completing the course, the member should check the status of the credits by contacting the Provider, or email AIAMemberCareCES@aia.org.

How Will Quality Be Maintained?

Quality control begins when approved Providers and AIA members file their records within the CES Discovery learning management system. If the information submitted is incomplete or inaccurate, the submitter is notified with instructions for correcting the error. AIA CES will determine the type of credit (LU, HSW) for each course. On another level, course quality is monitored through audit/review reports filed by members, subject matter experts, and course Providers. The main object of an audit/review is to determine how well course content meets the course description and stated learning objectives.

AIA CES transcripts constitute a six-year history of each member's continuing education credits. We recommend that members keep course materials and documentation of course completion for six years. These materials will be useful if a member's CES records are audited by AIA or a state licensing board.

SUSTAINABLE DESIGN REQUIREMENT

Please Note: At December, 2012 Annual Meeting of the AIA Board of Directors, the Sustainable Design (SD) Continuing Education Credit Requirement was terminated.

Recognizing that sustainable design practices have become a mainstream design intention in the architectural community, the Board of Directors voted to allow the sustainable design education requirement to sunset at the end of calendar year 2012.

How Does “Sustainable Design” Tie in to CES? (for 2010-2012 only)

The Sustainable Design (SD) requirement does not replace the original requirement for 18 total learning units, 12 of which must be in Health, Safety, and Welfare (HSW) subjects. **Beginning in January 2012, AIA members will be required to complete 12 hours of health, safety, and welfare (HSW) education.** HSW is a subset of the total required learning units, and SD is a subset of HSW.

HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELFARE

How Does Health, Safety, And Welfare Tie into CES?

The AIA requires members to earn a minimum of eight of the annual 18 Learning Unit requirements in the area of health, safety, and welfare (HSW). **Beginning in January 2012, AIA members will be required to complete 12 hours of health, safety, and welfare (HSW) education.** Seventy-five percent of the course content must cover HSW-related topics to qualify for HSW credit. This accomplishes three goals:

- Ensuring that HSW-related courses have a real relevance to AIA members
- Eliminating any question of whether the content of a course was actually related to HSW
- Meeting the requirement of many states with mandatory HSW continuing education (MCE) requirements

Am I Supposed to Add My LU and HSW Hours Together to Meet the Requirements?

No. The LU and HSW columns on your transcript simply show how many of your total learning units are related to HSW. The annual requirement is 18 LU's, of which a minimum of 12 must be related to HSW. Eight hours is the minimum requirement for HSW, but those numbers may be exceeded. **In January 2012, twelve HSW credits will be required per calendar year.**

What is the Relationship between HSW and State Mandatory Continuing Education Requirements?

Both the AIA and state licensing boards with mandatory continuing education requirements base their courses on the contact hour. A majority of states require at least eight contact hours of HSW for their mandatory continuing education (MCE) requirements. Some now require 12 HSW contact hours per year. Beginning January 2012, the AIA CES program will require a minimum of twelve contact hours of HSW from a structured Provider. Some states allow some form of self-reporting. Due to the quality assurance issues, the AIA does not accept self-designed activities for HSW credit; however, a member may chose to submit those directly to his state licensing board.

SELF-REPORTED ACTIVITIES

In order to improve the level of quality and consistency of continuing education programs eligible for HSW credits, beginning on January 1, 2012, AIA members will no longer be permitted to self-report HSW credits. Only AIA Registered Providers can report such credits. If a Provider is negligent in reporting credits to the AIA, the AIA recommends that the member contact the Provider.

To be eligible for credit, self-reported activities must be planned educational activities that provide new knowledge that can be applied toward the member's practice of architecture. Members self-report online, and calculate learning units hours for self-

reported activities by reporting the number of hours spent in architecture-related education.

Self-Designed Activity: Self-designed learning activities are organized by an AIA member to meet specific individual needs. A self-designed activity frequently involves more than one type of medium or method of delivery, such as research, reading, interviewing subject experts, researching with Web search engines, listening to CDs, podcasts, or viewing videos. To determine what activities qualify for self-reporting, the following questions should all have an affirmative response:

- Is this a planned learning activity directly applicable to the field of architecture?
- Is this activity intended to be educational?
- Are you acquiring new knowledge or are you sharing your knowledge with others?
- Will you be able to apply this new knowledge to your practice?

Examples of acceptable categories for self-reporting Self Designed or Structured, or Professional Community Service activities include:

- Authorship
 - Edited or peer-reviewed works
- Structured courses from a non-CES provider
- Professional Community Service where the experience or expertise of the architect is sought
 - Boards, panels, commissions, committees, etc.
 - Planning commission, Habitat for Humanity, etc.
 - Board of Architect Examiners
- Business and firm management
 - Financials
 - Staffing

- Risk management
- Business insurance
- Contracts where the primary beneficiary is the architect or firm
- Workplace culture
- Project management
- Client management
- Technology
 - Acquisition and training on new software, such as BIM, Specifications, 3D Rendering, Firm or Project Management, Construction Administration, etc.
- Academics
 - Research, lecturing, or guest lecturing in an academic environment
 - Prep time for teaching architectural related topics
 - Other academic for-credit activities taken after earning a first professional degree
- Independent intellectual endeavors and/or projects that enhance the member's overall knowledge of architecture in some way
 - Structured architectural tours

Examples of non-acceptable categories for self-reported activities include:

- Mentorship or supervision for IDP
- Volunteer work not related to the practice of architecture
 - General association committee work
 - Association board service
- Casual reading
 - Books and articles, even those related to architecture.
- Non-structured time spent studying for exams
- Time spent taking exams

Self-reported activities are submitted [online](#).

AIA CES Distance Learning and Tours Guidelines

The AIA CES recognizes distance learning as a useful and convenient way for architects to engage in professional development and earn continuing education credit. Distance learning is considered a viable alternative to traditional classroom-style continuing education programs. It is a practical way to provide architects ready access to ongoing, state-of-the-art, and up-to-date continuing education. With distance learning delivery methods improving in speed, technological capacity, and efficiency, there are more and more opportunities to deliver high-quality continuing professional education via the latest technology. However, distance learning does not have to be technology based; traditional correspondence courses (for example, articles or “paper and pen”) are also effective ways to deliver continuing education.

AIA CES Distance Learning Defined

AIA CES Distance Learning is defined as a method of instruction in which there is a separation of place or time between the learner and the instructor. All online courses qualify for AIA CES distance learning.

Online/Live (Instructor led) and on-demand (No-Instructor) delivery defined

AIA CES accepts online/live (no onsite courses) and all on-demand course delivery formats for distance learning.

Online/live courses are courses in which the learner and instructor engage in the learning activity simultaneously regardless of the location. Examples of online/live courses include Webinars and live video streaming.

On-demand courses are courses in which the learner and the instructor do not interact during the learning activity because there is a separation of time. Examples of on-demand courses include courses which are prerecorded and available 24/7, (anytime, anywhere), magazine articles, prerecorded tours and podcasts.

Please note that distance learning courses must also follow the provider administration, course development, and course delivery guidelines outlined in this manual.

Course delivery format options

As with any learning activity, priority should be given to the subject content and desired outcome. The method of delivery should be based upon the course’s learning objectives and the desired outcome. Although technology is a tool used to deliver or support a quality educational activity, it is not required for distance learning. Traditional written correspondence materials (for example, magazine articles) are also effective methods of delivery for distance learning.

Distance learning courses may be offered through various delivery methods, used alone or in combination. The course may use a single medium (for example, a CD-ROM) or a combination of sources (for example, a podcast with a workbook).

AIA CES Distance Learning course delivery methods may include one or a combination of the following:

Online/Live (Instructor led)*	On-Demand (No Instructor)
Live podcasts	Audiotape or CD-ROM
Live video streaming	Computer-based training (CBT)
Live virtual tours	Correspondence (written)
Live Virtual Convention	Electronic Books

<p>*Instructor is present via distance to answer your questions.</p>	<p>Podcasts</p> <p>Publications/Articles</p> <p>Videotape or DVD</p> <p>Prerecorded virtual tour</p> <p>Workbooks</p> <p>Web-based training (WBT)</p> <p>Wiki, RSS, blogs, etc.</p>
---	--

Providers authorized to offer AIA CES distance learning

Not all AIA CES Approved Providers may offer distance learning. The only Providers authorized to offer AIA CES distance education are AIA Components, Passport, Professional Organizations, Architecture Firms, and Platform Providers. Other CES Provider types are not eligible to offer AIA CES distance learning.

On-demand course quiz/exam requirement

All on-demand distance learning programs must offer a quiz or exam at the end of the course. The quiz or exam should be outcomes based and quantifiable, as members will need to pass it with a score of 80 percent or better to be eligible to receive AIA CES credit. If they do not score 80 percent or better, they should be allowed to retake the quiz as many times as necessary until they pass. Providers are responsible for creating, distributing, and grading all quizzes or exams. In addition, Providers are only to award AIA CES credit for a certificate of completion to participants with an 80 percent or better score. Please note that there is a minimum of 10 quiz or exam questions required per course.

Acceptable Quiz/Exam types include

- True and False

- Multiple Choice
- Fill in the blank
- Essay

Course Registration and Documentation Required for Distance Learning

Distance learning courses must be registered, using the Course Registration, in accordance with the timeframes and guidelines of registering any other type of course.

Providers are required to keep the following materials on file for six years:

- A copy of the course including the Quality Assurance Slides
- A copy of the course quiz or exam and answer key
- Any course support materials that a participant taking your course will see or use, such as learning materials, instructions, worksheets, or Web links

Common Distance Learning Definitions

The following definitions were compiled from various sources, including online encyclopedias in technology, general business and training and development.

Webinar (live): a live presentation, lecture, workshop, or seminar that is transmitted over the Web

Webcast (live or on-demand): a presentation in which [data transmission](#) flows in one direction and does not allow for interaction between the presenter and the audience

Video conferencing (live): a presentation in which two or more locations interact simultaneously via two-way video and audio transmissions

Podcast: an audio broadcast that has been converted to an MP3 file or other audio file format for playback in a digital music player or computer and is distinguished from other

digital media formats by its ability to be syndicated, subscribed to, and downloaded automatically

MANDATORY CONTINUING EDUCATION (MCE)

What Is Mandatory Continuing Education?

Mandatory Continuing Education (MCE) is education required by a state in order for an architect to renew his/her license. Forty-six jurisdictions have implemented a MCE requirement, but the requirements vary from state to state. Alabama, for example, requires 12 hours per year, Florida requires 20 hours every two years, and New York requires 36 hours every three years. Most states with MCE requirements also require that 8–12 of these hours be in the area described as health, safety, and welfare (HSW). California requires five hours in an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) subject every renewal cycle, and Texas requires one hour in ADA and one hour in SD as part of the eight hours required per year. For more information about individual state requirements, please see the [MCE Interactive Map](#) on the AIA.org website.

Each state has the legal right to establish its own guidelines and requirements for licensure. However, most states' requirements are similar, whether they require architects to meet them annually or biannually. The typical AIA member has four or more state licenses and must meet the continuing education requirements for each of the states in which the member practices.

To date, most states that require MCE indicate that they will accept AIA CES transcripts as documentation for completion of the continuing education credit. *For AIA members, this means that our single record-keeping system is the documentation needed for reporting most of your state MCE requirements.* We do, however, strongly suggest that you keep backup documentation of your activities as support, especially if the credit is a self-reported activity. The AIA or your state licensing board may require you to show

backup documentation at renewal time or if you are under an audit.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

I Am a New AIA Member. Am I Required to Earn Learning Units?

First-time registered architect members or those that upgraded to registered architect from Associate membership of the AIA are not required to complete the annual 18 LU's (12 HSW) the year they join, although records are kept for those who submit activities. Any credit received in the first year will not apply toward the following year's requirement unless the total credits exceed the requirement of 18 LU's.

Are Associate, Allied, and Emeritus Members and Intern Development Program (IDP) Participants Required to Earn Learning Units?

Associate, allied, and emeritus members are exempt from the learning unit requirement but are encouraged to participate for their own benefit and that of the profession. Records are kept for all members who report their activities. IDP participants may also use the AIA record-keeping services. Download the [application](#) from AIA.org.

How Are Transcript Records Kept and How May They Be Accessed?

Individual member transcript records are updated daily on www.aia.org. Anyone with an active AIA membership number can access a transcript online. Access your individual transcript [online](#). Sign in on the left, and enter your member number in the space provided. You may then print an unofficial copy of your CES transcript.

More [FAQ](#) can be found on our website.

TIPS

Know Your Member Number

Use your member number on attendance forms at events.

Always Check Your Transcripts

This is the only way to make sure your records are up to date. Don't assume that the record will be on your transcript simply because you went to a course. AIA CES providers register courses and report attendance online. With online transmissions, the occasional computer glitch or system crash may cause information to be lost. The only way to ensure that you get all the credit you've earned is to check your transcript more than ten business days after an activity, which only takes a few minutes [online](#). At the end of a course presentation, please also encourage Providers to report credit for you online via CES Discovery as soon as possible.

Keep Your Documentation

Always keep documentation of courses you've attended and forms you've submitted. Don't forget to print out online forms. This habit will save you a lot of work if information is missing from your transcript. In addition to the AIA CES requirement, many members have state license renewal requirements. Keeping documentation ensures that you will be prepared if additional information is requested from your state licensing board. We recommend that you keep documentation for a minimum of three years.

Contact the Course Provider If Your Record Is Inaccurate

Course information is submitted by the Providers to the CES Discovery learning management system. Contact the course Provider if you attended a course offered by an AIA CES Provider and the course does not appear on your transcript ten business days later. If the Provider has submitted the information already, contact AIA CES at 800-242-3837 option 3. Staff can assist you if you are having problems with an AIA CES Provider but cannot report a course that a Provider has not filed.

Contact the AIA National Staff If Your Record Is Inaccurate

If you find an error on your transcript including incorrect course titles, HSW or SD credit missing, or credits for courses you did not complete notify the CES Member Care staff at 800-242-3837 option 3.

Ways to Achieve Your Annual CE Course Requirements

- Attend the AIA National Convention.
- Attend courses or conferences offered by your local, state, or regional AIA chapter.
- Take advantage of convenient online courses with [AIA Virtual Convention](#). More than 30 courses are available and courses are added each month that cover topics in ADA, Sustainability, Health Care, Regional Planning and Disaster Recovery.
- Attend courses or conferences offered by the AIA Knowledge Communities or the AIA Contract Documents Department. The AIA Knowledge Communities sponsor more than 40 continuing education courses every year, at sites across the country. Call AIA Information Central, 800-242-3837, or check the [AIA Web](#).
- Attend courses offered by other AIA CES approved Providers [in your state](#).
- Attend courses related to the practice of architecture offered by other organizations, associations, schools, and public or private groups.
- Complete courses offered by AIA CES-approved Providers.
- Attend brown-bag or lunchtime courses offered within your AIA CES registered firm.
- Do you teach a course? If it is not a full-time job, self-report the course you teach or the time you spend researching new knowledge (for example, codes, designs, or structures) to prepare for a presentation. For more information, visit the [FAQ](#).
- Are you traveling? Planning a tour of a city? Identify in advance what you want to learn and then report your architectural learning opportunities (for example, a tour and description of the historic preservation of houses in Charleston, S.C.).*
- Are you spending time researching the latest codes or specifications for a new project? What new knowledge do you hope to gain that you can apply toward

your profession? Record time spent researching this new knowledge for a committee or community group.*

* You should self-report these activities online.

CES COURSES

Do you want to know what CES courses are coming up next month or next year? Are you looking for courses in a specific geographic location? Are you looking for a course on a specific topic? A directory on the AIA Web site lists thousands of courses and provides a quick, easy way to find educational activities offered by AIA CES Providers. You can search the directory by course date, location, or title. Course information submitted by the Providers is updated daily in the [directory](#) on the website.

Contact Information

AIA NATIONAL

The AIA CES member services staff answers questions about the CES course and annual audits.

Continuing Education

Phone: 800-242-3837 option 3

Email: AIAMemberCareCES@aia.org

MEMBERSHIP

AIA Information Central handles all general membership inquiries and requests.

Phone: 800-242-3837 option 2

Email: infocentral@aia.org

AIA NATIONAL CONVENTION

Workshops and other educational activities at the convention are a good place to earn CES credits.

Phone: 800-242-3837 option 3

Email: convention@aia.org