

ASHA Continuing Education Board Standards for Provider Approval

Standard 1: Eligibility and Responsibilities of an ASHA Approved Continuing Education Provider

Quality continuing education should promote lifelong learning and continuous professional development for audiologists, speech-language pathologists, and speech, language, and hearing scientists as well as support their role on the teams with whom they work. To achieve this, continuing education providers must have personnel and processes in place to support the development of high-quality programming, as defined by adherence to ASHA Continuing Education Board (CEB) Standards. Sound administrative practices are a prerequisite for maintaining and continuously improving the quality of continuing education courses and ensuring a professional environment that supports those involved in the continuing education program.

1.1 Eligibility

The provider:

- 1.1.1 Is incorporated, registered, or otherwise recognized as a legal entity.
- 1.1.2 Identifies the continuing education team and position(s) within the organization responsible for compliance with ASHA CEB Standards and policies.
- 1.1.3 Identifies how the continuing education team's work supports the organization's mission.
- 1.1.4 Has sufficient fiscal, human, and physical resources to support the continuing education program as well as its continued improvement.
- 1.1.5 Ensures that all individuals involved in the continuing education process (including course planners and instructors) demonstrate high standards of professional conduct, respect the rights of individuals served, and foster a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

1.2 Responsibilities

The provider must:

- 1.2.1 Establish internal policies and a review process that ensures adherence to the most current CEB Standards and policies.
- 1.2.2 Demonstrate efforts toward program improvement, including the use of data from needs assessments, learner assessments, and program evaluations from previous courses.

- 1.2.3 Appoint an ASHA Continuing Education Administrator (CEA) who is responsible for developing a sound working knowledge of the CEB Standards and ensuring the provider's adherence to those standards.

The CEA can be EITHER:

- an ASHA-certified audiologist; speech-language pathologist; speech, language, or hearing scientist; and/or ASHA member with current knowledge of the professions; OR
 - a professional who is not an ASHA member and/or who is not certified by ASHA. In this case, the organization must designate a Continuing Education Content Consultant who meets the above criteria.
- 1.2.4 Ensure adherence to the CEB Standards when agreeing to offer a course with an organization that is not an approved provider. The provider must be significantly and directly involved in the planning, promotion, implementation, evaluation, and reporting of that course.
- 1.2.5 Ensure the privacy and security of participants' records and adhere to all relevant laws and regulations.
- 1.2.6 Develop policies that address and honor intellectual property rights and adhere to all relevant laws and regulations.
- 1.2.7 Ensure that records related to compliance with ASHA CEB Standards, as well as learner completion, are retained for at least 4 years or, if longer, for the period defined by applicable federal, state, and/or local regulations.

Standard 2: Needs Assessment Used in Planning Continuing Education

Needs assessment is vital to ensuring the provision of courses that are effective, meaningful, and positively impact learners' professional practice and patient care. Needs assessment allows providers to identify both the current state of the target audience's knowledge, competence, or performance and gaps that may exist in these areas. It is most useful when the provider uses multiple methods to identify learning needs.

The provider must ensure that learner needs are:

- 2.1 Systematically identified based on an analysis of one or more of the following sources:
- a. The expressed needs of the target audience.
 - b. The needs of individual patients, communities, or populations.

- c. Available data and information about gaps in the knowledge base of audiologists, speech-language pathologists, and/or speech, language, and hearing scientists.
 - d. New or updated legislation or regulations.
 - e. New research or practice guidelines.
- 2.2 Documented and updated, as needed.
 - 2.3 Used to inform the educational design of continuing education.
 - 2.4 Used by those responsible for content development.
 - 2.5 Used to assess or evaluate the effectiveness of continuing education activities.

Standard 3: Transparency in Continuing Education

Transparency in continuing education allows learners and those involved in planning and conducting courses to consider the impact of bias and conflicts of interest on course content and delivery. Understanding this impact and implementing processes to minimize that impact enhances trust and accountability between continuing education providers and instructors as well as individuals considering participating in an educational activity. The disclosure process is not just for the learner; it is also important that planners and instructors consider, recognize, and address any bias or conflicts of interest as they develop and present content. It is the continuing education provider's responsibility to ensure that everyone involved in course planning and development understands the importance of the disclosure process and approaches it thoughtfully and completely.

3.1 Content

The provider must protect learners from the marketing and sales of products and services in courses offered for ASHA continuing education units (CEUs) by:

- 3.1.1 Ensuring that there are no attempts to persuade organizations and individuals involved in planning, implementing, or evaluating the course to favor, recommend, purchase, use, or promote a particular product, equipment, device, or service. Attempts to persuade learners of the same are also not permitted.
- 3.1.2 Ensuring that the sale or promotion of products or services is not included in or the focus of course content and related materials.
- 3.1.3 Providing information in a scholarly manner regarding theoretical aspects related to the product or service and/or the details of operation.

- 3.1.4 Providing content disclosures that describe when a specific product or service will be discussed and whether there will be limited information about similar products.
- 3.1.5 Communicating with learners prior to registration if it is recommended or required that they purchase a product or service to participate in a course.

3.2 Course Planner and Instructor

The provider must identify, mitigate, and disclose relevant associations, activities, and financial relationships by:

- 3.2.1 Encouraging thoughtful consideration and discussion of potential bias and conflicts of interest with everyone involved in planning, developing, and presenting course content.
- 3.2.2 Disqualifying individuals who refuse to disclose relevant financial and non-financial relationships from participation in course planning, delivery, or evaluation.
- 3.2.3 Providing disclosures to potential registrants in promotional materials and at the start of the course.

3.3 Financial and In-Kind Support

The provider must ensure that the education remains independent of influence when receiving financial or in-kind support from an organization not involved in course planning, development, or implementation by:

- 3.3.1 Communicating that financial or in-kind support does not require the provider to accept advice or services from contributing organizations concerning planners, instructional personnel, learners, course content, planning, implementation, or evaluation as a condition of support.
- 3.3.2 Disclosing the names of other organizations contributing financial and in-kind support to learners prior to the beginning of the course.

3.4 Advertising and Exhibits

The provider must ensure that promotional or sales activities, such as advertising and exhibits, are kept separate from the instructional portion of the course, and learners must never be required to engage in such activities.

Standard 4: Content Validity in Continuing Education

Continuing education content must include the latest advances in scientific evidence and technological advances relevant to the learners' practice and educational needs. The goal should be to provide information that contributes to the learners' competency and ultimately enhances the quality and safety of care provided to patients/clients and their families. When appropriate, course planners and instructors should incorporate the three components of evidence-based practice: clinical expertise/expert opinion, client/patient/caregiver perspectives, and internal and external evidence.

The provider must ensure that the content presented for ASHA CEUs:

- 4.1 Focuses on the science and/or contemporary practice of audiology and/or speech-language pathology.
- 4.2 Is determined by individuals who have knowledge, skills, and expertise in the content area and who actively engage in ongoing professional development to remain current in their field.
- 4.3 Is relevant and responsive to the identified needs of the target audience.
- 4.4 Addresses the range of competencies relevant to the discipline of communication sciences and disorders.
- 4.5 Addresses the levels of evidence behind any clinical recommendations that are made.
- 4.6 Is balanced by informing learners about potential benefits and risks, especially if the content is based only on expert opinion.
- 4.7 Reflects best practice in the disciplines and ensures that personal bias in course content is recognized, limited, and communicated to learners.

Standard 5: Quality of Educational Design in Continuing Education

Educational design is critical to the provision of effective education. Multi-modal, episodic, and interactive education best meets the needs of adult learners. Education must also be adaptable to support the participation of learners with diverse needs. The quality of a continuing education course and its value to the participant rests heavily on the course planners' and instructors' competence in the subject matter, and ability to communicate and facilitate learning.

The provider must ensure that the design of education offered for ASHA CEUs:

- 5.1 Is determined by individuals who have knowledge, skills, and expertise in developing and delivering continuing education.

- 5.2 Includes learner outcomes that describe anticipated changes in knowledge, skills, and competencies.
- 5.3 Utilizes educational formats and techniques appropriate to the intended goals and outcomes of the education.
- 5.4 Includes flexible teaching and design that adjust for learners' strengths and needs.
- 5.5 Facilitates the translation of new knowledge, skills, and competencies into practice; supports thoughtful reflection; and fosters a culture of learning.

Standard 6: Outcomes from Continuing Education

The assessment of the impact of—or outcomes from—continuing education allows the provider to determine whether the education has been effective. Providers can also use outcomes data to identify additional educational needs and inform program improvement.

The provider must ensure that courses offered for ASHA CEUs:

- 6.1 Include one or more assessment methods (appropriate to the intended goals or outcomes of the course) to measure improvements in knowledge, skills, competencies, and/or intent-to-change.
- 6.2 Measure improvements in learner performance (where applicable).
- 6.3 Measure changes in patient outcomes (where practical).

Standard 7: Satisfactory Completion of Continuing Education

The provider must have a process in place to accurately and appropriately capture and report learner participation so that the CE Registry can award ASHA CEUs to learners.

The provider must:

- 7.1 Have a process for calculating the number of ASHA CEUs available for each course.
- 7.2 Establish satisfactory completion requirements for each course based on the course's purpose and learning outcomes and communicate the completion requirements to learners before the course.
- 7.3 Have a systematic process for identifying individuals who satisfactorily complete a course and are eligible to earn ASHA CEUs.

- 7.4 Have a system in place to collect information required to report participants' successful completion to the ASHA Continuing Education Program.

Adapted from the *Standards for Substantive Equivalency Between CPD/CME Accreditation Systems*, International Academy for CPD Accreditation. Used with permission.

DRAFT