

AAERT CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAM RULES

Abstract: This document defines the rules under which the American Association of Electronic Reporters and Transcriber's (AAERT's) Continuing Education Program operates.

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Table of Contents

Article I. Overview of the Continuing Education Program

- Section 1.01 Purpose and Scope
- Section 1.02 Authority
- Section 1.03 CEU Program Accreditation and Standards
- Section 1.04 Definition of the Continuing Education Unit (CEU)
- Section 1.05 Mandatory Credit Requirements and Cycles
- Section 1.06 Cycle Extensions
- Section 1.07 Carryover Credit
- Section 1.08 Reinstatements

Article II. Criteria for CEU Eligibility

- Section 2.01 Valid Educational Learning Objectives
- Section 2.02 Primary Target Audience(s)
- Section 2.03 Relation to Professional Competence
- Section 2.04 Capable Instructor(s)
- Section 2.05 Qualified Responsible Sponsor(s)
- Section 2.06 Minimum Duration
- Section 2.07 Attendance Verification for In-Person Activities
- Section 2.08 Evaluation Procedures
- Section 2.09 Attendance Verification for Distance Learning Activities

Article III. Topics Eligible for CEUs

- Section 3.01 Language Skills, Literature, and Linguistics Activities designed to each Language
- Section 3.02 The Reporting Profession, the Law, and the Courts
- Section 3.03 Medicine and Medical Terminology
- Section 3.04 Court Reporting Software and Technology
- Section 3.05 Legal and Business Technology
- Section 3.06 Business Administration
- Section 3.07 Ethics and Professionalism

Article IV. Activities Eligible for PDCs

- Section 4.01 Networking, Public Speaking, and Business Communication
- Section 4.02 Psychological Health Issues Directly Related to Court Reporting
- Section 4.03 Safety and Emergency Preparedness

Section 4.04 Educational Tours
Section 4.05 Service on an AAERT Board or Committee
Section 4.06 AAERT-Sponsored Book and Article Tests

Article V. Ineligible Activities

Section 5.01 General Exclusions
Section 5.02 Activities Ineligible for CEUs or PDCs
Section 5.02(a) Sports, Fitness and Exercise
Section 5.02(b) Arts and Music
Section 5.02(c) Recreation and Hobbies
Section 5.02(d) Personal Development, Health and Welfare
Section 5.02(e) Religion and Spirituality

Article VI. Technology CEUs

Section 6.01 Criteria for Technology CEUs

Article I. Overview of the Continuing Education Program

Section 1.01 Purpose and Scope

This document has been developed by the Education Committee of the American Association of Electronic Reporters and Transcribers (AAERT) to define the rules under which AAERT's Continuing Education Program operates.

These rules are intended to apply to both continuing education activity sponsors seeking pre-approval of those activities, as well as to individuals seeking to claim CEUs from AAERT for non-pre-approved activities.

At its most basic level, continuing education is defined as the education of an individual beyond the basic preparation for his or her profession. In the AAERT setting, as in many other professions, continuing education plays a crucial role in ensuring that the high levels of knowledge, ability, and professional competence that are needed to become certified are maintained and improved over time.

The goal of continuing education for AAERT is to equip credential holders with the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a world of ever-changing information and technology. A uniformly applied continuing education program ensures that clients will experience a consistently high level of quality, proficiency, and knowledge among AAERT credential holders. The world of knowledge is constantly changing driven by technology, and in this spiraling explosion of information, AAERT credential holders must keep abreast of new developments or face being left behind. The obvious benefits of continuing education are learning new skills, keeping up with technological advances, and developing new areas of expertise. However, the hidden benefits may be even more valuable—keeping the mind open to new ideas, honing the skills of learning and developing as a well-rounded professional.

Section 1.02 Authority

AAERT's Continuing Education Program is established and administered under the authority of the Education Committee. The operation of this Committee is mandated by the Bylaws of AAERT and its Chair is appointed by the AAERT President. Any request for exemption from the policies outlined below must be addressed to the Education Committee.

Section 1.03 CEU Program Accreditation and Standards

AAERT's certifications and other credentials are developed, independently validated, and maintained on an ongoing basis. AAERT strives to meet the highest credentialing standards in an effort to prepare our membership for success.

Section 1.04 Definition of the Continuing Education Unit (CEU)

The Continuing Education Program uses the ACCET-defined Continuing Education Unit (CEU) to measure formal continuing education activities. The ACCET-approved definition of a CEU is as follows:

The Continuing Education Unit (CEU) is in the public domain and is commonly recognized as a standard unit of measure for attributing continuing education and training activities, particularly as it applies to the personal and professional development of adult learners in a formalized, educational setting.

The CEU is defined as ten contact hours of participation in an organized continuing education experience under responsible sponsorship, capable direction, and qualified instruction. To compute the number of clock hours that can be awarded, the number of 60-minute clock hours attributed to actual classroom activity is divided by ten. Therefore, if a class is two days at 8 hours per day, the units awarded would equal 1.6 CEUs. Instructional hours do not include breaks, meals, registration time, etc.

AAERT strongly believes that different individuals learn differently, and therefore continuing education must be flexible. To that end, credential holders may earn CEUs either through activities that have been pre-approved by AAERT, or they may apply for CEUs for non-pre-approved activities, provided that those activities meet the criteria contained in this document. Both pre-approved and non pre-approved activities are subject to the same criteria for CEU eligibility.

Section 1.05 Mandatory Credit Requirements and Cycles

Each AAERT credential requires the holder to earn a certain number of credits (CEUs) per continuing education cycle. A continuing education cycle consists of a three-year period. An individual's first cycle shall begin immediately upon being awarded his or her first AAERT credential.

The cycle end date for the first cycle will be the first September 30 that occurs at least three years after the cycle start date. The next three-year cycle will begin on the following October 1, and so forth. The credit requirements for each AAERT credential are below:

AAERT Credential(s) Credit Requirement per Cycle
Certified Electronic Reporter
3.0 total credits

AAERT Credential(s) Credit Requirement per Cycle
Certified Electronic Transcriber
3.0 total credits

Section 1.06 Cycle Extensions

In the event that a credential holder fails to earn the required credits by the cycle end date, one four-month extension shall be available. This four-month extension will be subtracted from the beginning of the credential-holder's next cycle. No more than one extension per credential holder per cycle will be allowed. AAERT will charge a fee for cycle extensions (See Fee Chart) for an

Application for Extension of Time. This application and fee must be submitted 60 days prior to the expiration date of the certification.

Section 1.07 Carryover Credit

Credential holders who earn more CEUs than are required to fulfill the above-mentioned requirements may carry over up to 0.5 CEU into the next cycle, provided that the credits being carried over were earned in the last six months of the cycle.

Section 1.08 Reinstatements

In the event than any AAERT credentials are allowed to lapse, the credential holder may be eligible for a once-per-lifetime reinstatement provided that the reinstatement is requested within four years of the termination date of the credentials in question, the credential holder has not received such reinstatement in the past, and the credential holder has submitted at least 0.5CEU since the beginning of the lapsed cycle.

Article II. Criteria for CEU Eligibility

In order to be eligible for CEU's an activity must meet ALL of the following criteria:

Section 2.01 Valid Educational Learning Objectives

The activity must include stated learning objectives. Those learning objectives must be designed primarily to provide instruction within an eligible topic area(s).

Section 2.02 Primary Target Audience(s)

The activity must be designed primarily to meet the continuing education needs of a specific AAERT credential holder segment or segments, including court reporters, transcriptionists, court reporting educational instructors and administrators.

Section 2.03 Relation to Professional Competence

The learning objectives of the activity must be closely related to improving or maintaining the professional competence of one or more of the target audiences mentioned above.

Section 2.04 Capable Instructor(s)

Each activity or session must be led by at least one instructor who is demonstrably and objectively capable to instruct participants on the topic(s) relevant to the stated learning objectives.

Section 2.05 Qualified Responsible Sponsor(s)

The activity must be sponsored by at least one established education provider in good standing

with AAERT. Qualified sponsors include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Independently accredited schools, colleges, and universities
- (b) Local, state, national, and international professional and trade associations
- (c) Entities that employ or contract the services of AAERT certification-holders.

Sponsor organizations or entities formed exclusively for the purpose of conducting one educational activity typically are not considered qualified for the purposes of determining CEU credit.

Section 2.06 Minimum Duration

In order to qualify for CEUs, each portion of the activity must be at least 60 minutes in duration, excluding any breaks and non-CEU-eligible content.

Section 2.07 Attendance Verification for In-Person Activities

The sponsor must be willing to certify that the participant was present and participated in the activity. For in-person activities, the exact method of attendance verification may be determined by the sponsor. If a participant does not fully complete an activity, it is his or her ethical duty to report partial completion to the sponsor. The sponsor must then certify only partial credit for that participant.

Section 2.08 Evaluation Procedures

The sponsor must establish and implement evaluation procedures in order to determine participant satisfaction and the effectiveness of the continuing education offering.

Section 2.09 Attendance Verification for Distance Learning Activities

For distance learning activities (i.e., those that are delivered remotely, with the participant in a different physical location from the instructor), the sponsor must use an approved tracking method to verify completion of at least 80% of the approved activity. Approved verification methods include:

- (a) Key letters or words embedded in the content which are required to certify completion
- (b) Intermittent prompts that require input from the participant before the activity can continue
- (c) Mandatory quizzes or content summaries at the completion of the activity
- (d) Minute-by-minute tracking of how long the attendee participated in the activity

Verification must be established in such a way that at least 80% of the activity is verified. For instance, if a distance learning activity consists of 60 minutes of continuing education, the final verification point cannot occur more than 12 minutes before the end of the activity.

Asynchronous activities must prevent the user from bypassing attendance verification points or skipping ahead to complete the activity in less time.

Article III. Topics Eligible for CEUs

The following topics of instruction are deemed to meet and thereby qualify for CEUs, provided that all other criteria are met. Other topics may be deemed eligible on a case-by-case basis by the Education Committee.

Section 3.01 Language Skills, Literature, and Linguistics

Activities designed to teach Language

- (a) English Grammar, Punctuation, Usage, and Syntax
- (b) English Spelling and Vocabulary
- (c) Etymology and History of the English Language
- (d) Literature Courses
- (e) Linguistics, Speech Patterns, and Speech Impairments
- (f) Accents, Dialects, Colloquialisms, and Common Slang
- (g) Sign Language
- (h) Foreign Languages

Section 3.02 The Reporting Profession, the Law, and the Courts

- (a) Courtroom and Deposition Procedure
- (b) Transcript Formatting, Preparation, and Chain of Custody
- (c) Legal Terminology
- (d) History of Court Reporting and Legal History
- (e) Legal Research
- (f) Continuing Legal Education (CLE) Courses (approved by a state, local, or national CLE authority)
- (g) Basic Trial Advocacy
- (h) AAERT Certification Training (e.g. Realtime Systems Administrator Workshop, CLVS Workshop, Trial Presentation Workshop, etc.)
- (i) Notary Training
- (j) Paralegal Training
- (k) Process Server Training

Section 3.03 Medicine and Medical Terminology

- (a) Medical and Pharmaceutical Terminology
- (b) Medical Jurisprudence
- (c) Forensic Medicine
- (d) Clinical Pharmacology
- (e) Medical Ethics
- (f) Hearing Loss, Hearing Disorders

Section 3.04 Court Reporting Software and Technology

- (a) Digital recording software
- (b) Case management software
- (c) Transcript production software

Section 3.05 Legal and Business Technology

- (a) Synchronization software
- (b) Document management software
- (c) Videography software

Section 3.06 Business Administration

- (a) Marketing, Public Relations, and Social Media for Business
- (b) Accounting Practices and Software
- (c) Strategic Planning, Finance, and Administration
- (d) Management and Human Resources
- (e) Succession and Exit Planning
- (f) Legal Issues and Risk Management

Section 3.07 Ethics and Professionalism

- (a) AAERT's Code of Professional Ethics
- (b) Professionalism and Business Etiquette

Article IV. Activities Eligible for PDCs

The following topics of instruction are deemed to meet and thereby qualify for PDC, provided that all other criteria are met. Other topics may be deemed eligible on a case-by-case basis by the Education Committee.

Section 4.01 Networking, Public Speaking, and Business Communication

- (c) Work/Life Balance
- (d) Workplace Gender Issues
- (e) Repetitive Stress Injuries, Carpal Tunnel, and Other Physical and

Section 4.02 Psychological Health Issues Directly Related to Court Reporting

- (f) Professional Mental Health and Stress Management
- (g) Violence and Sexual Harassment in the Workplace
- (h) Substance Abuse and Depression in the Workplace

Section 4.03 Safety and Emergency Preparedness

- (a) CPR/AED, First Aid, and Emergency Preparedness (Up to 1.2 CEUs per cycle)
- (b) Workplace Safety and Security

Section 4.04 Educational Tours

- (a) Tours of Courts, Law Firms, or Law Schools
- (b) Tours of Police Stations and Correctional Facilities
- (c) Historical Tours closely related to the Law, Literature, the English Language, Hearing Loss, or the Court Reporting Profession

Section 4.05 Service on an AAERT Board or Committee

- (a) Eligible credential holders may earn 0.25 PDC per year of service on an AAERT board or committee.

Section 4.06 AAERT-Sponsored Book and Article Tests

- (a) Eligible credential holders may earn 0.25 PDC for passing one AAERT book or article test.
- (b) A passing score is defined as correctly answering at least 75% of the quiz questions for article tests and at least 85% of the quiz questions for book tests.

Article V. Ineligible Activities

Section 5.01 General Exclusions

CEU credits may NOT be claimed for the following types of activities:

- (a) Courses primarily intended to teach a non-verbal skill, including but not limited to sports, general fitness and exercise, arts, and music.
- (b) Any activity for which one receives remuneration as part of one's regular employment.
- (c) Attending association business meetings and/or elections.
- (d) Any activity primarily intended for advertising or promotional purposes, including, but not limited to, visiting exhibit and tradeshow booths.
- (e) Any activity primarily intended for recreational purposes, including, but not limited to, beer/wine tastings, receptions, parties, boat cruises, recreational tours, and meals. "Lunch and learn" sessions and educational dinner speakers are acceptable provided that all other requirements in Article II are met. In such cases, CEUs will be determined based on the duration of instruction rather than the duration of the meal.

Section 5.02 Activities Ineligible for CEUs or PDCs

The following topics are deemed not to meet requirements and are therefore ineligible for CEUs or PDCs. Other topics may be deemed ineligible on a case-by-case basis by the Education Committee.

Section 5.02(a) Sports, Fitness and Exercise

- (a) Yoga, Pilates, etc.
- (b) Zumba and Similar Workout Programs
- (c) Weightlifting, Calisthenics, and Aerobics
- (d) Exercise Science
- (e) Organized Sports (participation or study)

Section 5.02(b) Arts and Music

- (a) Musical Instruments
- (b) Music Appreciation, Theory, and History
- (c) Arts and Crafts
- (d) Art Appreciation and Art History

Section 5.02(c) Recreation and Hobbies

- (a) Cooking and Food
- (b) Recreational Tours and Events
- (c) Relaxation and Meditation

Section 5.02(d) Personal Development, Health and Welfare

- (a) Community service unrelated to the professions of court reporting
- (b) Holistic and/or Alternative Medicine
- (c) Diet Classes, Meetings, and Programs
- (d) Childbirth, Parenting, Caregiver, and Family Classes
- (e) Self-Help and Rehabilitation
- (f) Massage, Acupuncture, and Hypnosis
- (g) Psuedoscience and Protoscience

Section 5.02(e) Religion and Spirituality

- (a) Theology and Belief Systems
- (b) Religious Languages, Literature, Art, and Music
- (c) Religious History and Philosophy
- (d) Worship, Prayer, and Faith Healing

Article VI. Technology CEUs

Holders of AAERT's technology-focused credentials are required to earn CEUs exclusively within the area of technology.

Section 6.01 Criteria for Technology CEUs

In order to be considered eligible for Technology CEUs, an activity must meet both the criteria for CEU eligibility and these additional criteria:

- (a) The learning objectives must be designed to provide instruction primarily related to technology.
- (b) The technology in question must be closely related to the professional competence of the target audience(s).

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