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**Introduction**

The International Association for Continuing Education and Training (IACET) developed the *Authorized Provider Accreditation Guide* for organizations who are interested in attaining IACET Authorized Provider (AP) accreditation. It provides a general overview of the organization and AP program and also walks prospective applicants through the eligibility requirements and application and development process. The goal of IACET’s AP program is to provide an opportunity for organizations conducting continuing education and training to benchmark their current operations to the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) approved IACET Continuing Education and Training Standard. IACET is responsible for the development, implementation and maintenance of the ANSI/IACET Standard for Continuing Education and Training. IACET’s mission is to promote and enhance quality in continuing education and training through research, education, and the development and continuous improvement of IACET criteria, principles, and standards.
Development of the CEU

What is the CEU and what does it measure?

The CEU is in the public domain. Use of the CEU is voluntary and no permission or approval is required. Any organization can offer the traditional CEU. Unfortunately, there are organizations which award the CEU which do not adhere to the standard developed by IACET. This has led to consumer misunderstanding and distrust of the value of the CEU; therefore IACET has taken steps to ensure the credibility of the IACET CEU.

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

What is the purpose of the IACET CEU?

The primary purpose of the CEU is to provide a permanent record of the educational accomplishments of an individual who has completed one or more significant non-credit educational experiences. Awarding the IACET CEU also provides a quality indicator for your continuing education and training programs because it means that you have been reviewed and approved as complying with the internationally recognized standard.

How does the CEU compare to college credit?

CEUs are different from college credits and were originally designed for professionals who had already attained a certain level of education and needed to take a certain amount of continuing education and training per year to renew their license or certification—such as engineers, nurses and other health-care-related professionals, teachers, early childhood educators, human resource professionals, etc. Most colleges will not directly accept CEUs for college or graduate credit. However, some colleges and universities will look at an individual’s portfolio that includes work experience and continuing education and training offerings (measured by CEUs). The Council on Adult and Experiential Learning helps universities set up programs to turn work experience and continuing education and training activities into college credits, and it may have a list of institutions that have such programs. Also, the American College Advisory Service helps individuals turn CEUs into undergraduate and graduate credit for a fee.

How did IACET become the standard bearer and the caretaker of the CEU?

IACET grew out of a National Task Force on continuing education commissioned by the U. S. Bureau of Education (now the Department of Education) in 1968. The Task Force included leaders in continuing education, such as the American Medical Association and American Nursing Association. The Task Force developed the Continuing Education Unit (CEU) and determined universal guidelines for continuing education and training. IACET (originally the Council on the Continuing Education Unit) was created by the task force to provide both a forum for discussion of education standards and an organizational body
to promote quality standards. IACET’s guidelines which are now the ANSI/IACET Standard is based upon in-depth research on the learning process.

IACET is the premier standard setting organization accredited by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) for continuing education and training. Our ANSI/IACET Standard shapes the criteria organizations use to develop and implement high quality Continuing Education and Training (CE/T) programs.

For more information on the IACET CEU, go to http://www.iacet.org/ceus/about-the-ceu.
Purpose and Benefits of IACET AP Accreditation

IACET’s Authorized Providers (APs) are organizations that meet IACET’s internationally recognized continuing education and training standard. Only Authorized Providers may award IACET Continuing Education Units (CEUs).

IACET APs vary widely in the markets they serve, ranging from associations of technicians and nurses; to colleges and corporate universities that provide professional development; to boards, bureaus and government agencies that offer training and certification.

Why should my organization apply to become an IACET Authorized Provider?

“IACET confers the stamp of excellence in training on any organization which goes through its tough accreditation process. Every organization can claim ‘high level training’ as part of its offering and customers can have a hard time distinguishing low quality teaching from high quality training. Having a rigorous process to certify high standards is very valuable when one works with large, demanding companies.”

Dr. Benjamin Gilad, President
The Fuld-Giland-Herring Academy of Competitive Intelligence
Cambridge, MA
AP since 2001

IACET is a must for us. With members like ours that rely on facts and data and benchmarking, IACET participation allows us to demonstrate to our community that we are being benchmarked against the best in class.

Peter O’Neil, Deputy Executive Director
AIHA
Fairfax, VA
AP since 2000

What are some of the benefits to obtaining AP accreditation?

- **Stay Current and Connected**: Through IACET’s network of over 5,000 CE/T professionals and IACET’s bi-weekly eNewsletter, keep abreast of trends that impact your programs and customers.
- **Credibility adds value**: Nearly 90% of APs stated in a recent survey that IACET increased their organization’s credibility to their customers.
- **Create a brand with distinction**: All Authorized Providers receive the AP logo for print and on-line use to showcase their ability to grant IACET CEUs on brochures, websites and other collateral. IACET also provides you certificates and other collateral suitable for on-site display.
• **Straight talk:** IACET has text, FAQs and other resources you can directly apply to your website to help answer your customer’s questions about the IACET AP program, CEUs and other topics related to CE/T.
Organization Eligibility

Is my organization eligible to become an IACET Authorized Provider?

Any organization that creates and administers continuing education and/or training activities, courses or programs may apply for IACET Authorized Provider (AP) accreditation if it:

- Is a governmental unit, or is incorporated, chartered, or otherwise legally-recognized as a business entity, and
- Has been in business for at least one (1) year and operating under the conditions described in the application for at least three (3) months, and
- Has a well-defined organizational structure in which the authority and responsibility for administering continuing education and/or training activities, courses, or programs is assigned to a particular unit, and
- Has its educational activities, courses, or programs administered by an individual or group that can ensure that the ANSI/IACET Standard for Continuing Education and Training is met, and
- Has written policies and processes that are compliant with the ANSI/IACET Standard for Continuing Education and Training, and
- Can provide required documentation with the application and to an IACET site visitor.

An applicant organization must define the organizational unit that seeks Authorized Provider accreditation. Applicants may apply on behalf of the entire organization, or a specific unit, or department within the organization. An Authorized Provider must operate under a single set of policies and processes, with authority, responsibility, and administrative control over the learning events offered under its auspices. Large, complex organizations and organizations with multiple geographic units may encompass several distinct CE/T providers, each of which may need to apply separately for IACET AP accreditation.
Purpose of AP Application

What is the purpose of the Authorized Provider application?

The AP application serves as a self-study and allows your organization to benchmark current operations to the American National Standard for CE/T.

Based on the original Criteria and Guidelines, IACET's ANSI/IACET Standard addresses processes for designing, developing, and delivering continuing education and training, not the content of individual programs, which means that our Standard applies across all disciplines. Through an emphasis on the educational processes, the Standard ensures clear program development and valuable learning outcomes.

IACET Authorized Providers demonstrate that their programs meet ten nationally-recognized standard categories. The rigorous application evaluates the CE/T aspects listed below and allows the applying organization to conduct an internal audit of their CE/T processes and processes. The IACET paper and site visit review of these policies and processes then provides an external audit lending credibility through IACET and ANSI to the organization’s CE/T programs.

- **Category 1:** Continuing Education and Training Organization
- **Category 2:** Responsibility and Control
- **Category 3:** Learning Environment and Support Systems
- **Category 4:** Learning Event Planning
- **Category 5:** Learning Outcomes
- **Category 6:** Planning and Instructional Personnel
- **Category 7:** Content and Instructional Methods
- **Category 8:** Assessment of Learning Outcomes
- **Category 9:** Awarding CEUs and Maintaining Learner Records
- **Category 10:** Program Evaluation
AP Application and Annual Fees

What does it cost to become an IACET Authorized Provider?

An organization must pay $450 to obtain the ANSI/IACET Standard and AP application. Once the organization has completed the application and is ready to submit, they must submit a non-refundable fee of $3,250 that includes the following:

- An application review and one review of additional submitted information, if requested by the Commission*, and
- Administrative costs, site visit expenses** and Commission honoraria.

What is the renewal cycle for an Authorized Provider? What does it cost each year I am an AP? What does it cost to renew my AP accreditation?

The AP accreditation is valid for five (5) years and the organization must pay yearly accreditation fees of $835. Upon AP accreditation approval, the organization will immediately be invoiced for the first year fee of $835.

If you are a current IACET Authorized Provider and are seeking reaccreditation during your fifth year, the non-refundable reaccreditation application fee is $2,500* following the purchase of the Standard and application of $450.

*There will be an additional fee of $400 for each application review required beyond these two reviews.

**International applicants may be subject to additional site visit fees.
Application Process

Application Review

*What does the application process look like? How long does it take to become approved?*

Once an application is submitted to IACET headquarters, staff does an initial check to ensure that all necessary materials have been included with the application along with the application fee. Staff then assigns a lead reviewer and a site visitor from IACET’s volunteer Commission ([http://www.iacet.org/about/commission](http://www.iacet.org/about/commission)) and sends on the application for review.

Members of the IACET Commission review the application to determine if the applying organization’s policies and processes demonstrate compliance with the ANSI/IACET Standard. The Commission team’s review will determine whether the applicant is approved for a site visit, additional information is needed, or if the application should be denied the request for approval. (Note: The regular application review fee includes two review cycles: one initial review and a review of additional information, if requested by the Commission. Any further reviews after these two cycles will require payment of an additional fee.)

An organization applying for IACET Authorized Provider accreditation is asked to:

1. Review the ANSI/IACET Standard, including the minimum requirements, interpretations, and intent of each standard category, attachments and glossary of terms;
2. Conduct a self-study to align current policies and processes used in (a) the administration of its continuing education and training program, and (b) the planning, implementation, and evaluation of its learning events;
3. Modify any policies and/or processes to ensure compliance with the ANSI/IACET Standard, and show evidence of these modified policies and/or processes having been implemented for at least three months; and
4. Submit compliant policies and processes for IACET Commission review and approval.

Typical Timeline

Generally, the full review process takes about 3 to 4 months from the time the application is received to the time a final decision is made and the applicant is notified. However, the timeframe can vary depending on whether or not the Commission needs additional information from your organization as well as when a site visit can be scheduled.

Once the application has been received, the Commission has 4 weeks to complete the initial review of the application. At this time a decision is made to either request more information, defer the application due to lack of control and application of the ANSI/IACET Standard, or proceed with a site visit. If a site visit is recommended by the lead reviewer, the selected site visitor is notified. At this time...
IACET staff will email the applicant and notify the site visitor to contact the applicant personally to arrange a visit at a mutually convenient time. The scheduling of the site visit is handled by the site visitor and the applicant organization and can occur as soon as within a few days, if extensive travel is not involved, or can be moved out to 2 weeks in the future or longer depending on scheduling needs.

**IACET staff role within the application process**

IACET staff performs an initial review of each new application to check for completeness before sending the application to the IACET Commissioners who will review it and conduct the site visit. In addition, staff tracks the accreditation of applications, handles billing, and answers general questions.

**Site Visit**

A site visit is conducted after the Commission reviews the application and determines the organization’s continuing education and training policies and processes are in compliance with the ANSI/IACET Standard. The purpose of the site visit is to validate the information described in the application by reviewing records and requested materials.

**Attention! Please be advised...** If your organization resides in a country that has a current U.S. travel warning, IACET may not be able to accept your application for Authorized Provider accreditation. Situations and risks in countries are continuously changing so before purchasing the ANSI/IACET Standard and application, please take a look at the most current Travel Warnings list at [http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html) and contact IACET Headquarters to ask whether we can accept your application.

**Recommendation Decision**

Following the report made by the site visitor, a recommendation will be made to approve the applicant as an Authorized Provider or deny approval. If the decision is made to approve the applicant, they will receive notice from staff of this decision.

If the decision is made to deny approval, the applicant may appeal the decision to the Board of Directors, following the IACET appeals process.

When approval is denied, either in the initial review of the application or in the final review (post site visit), the Commission Chair sends a written letter to the applicant of the denial and advises the applicant of the next possible steps.

**Appeals Process**

*Help, I am not happy with the Commission’s decision to deny my application, what can I do?*
If the IACET Commission denies or withdraws approval, or places a provider on probation, the provider may appeal that decision using the following process.

The request for reconsideration must be made in writing to the Commission within 30 days from the postmark date on the decision letter. The request should include any desire by the applicant or provider to appear personally before the Commission.

The right to request reconsideration shall be waived if such request is not made within the 30-day period.

The applicant must provide evidence that:

- The Commission committed an error or violated its procedures
- The Commission made an oversight in its decision-making process or
- Matters have arisen in the activity, course, or program since the on-site visit or the Commission decision that might indicate current compliance with the criteria.

For further details on the appeals process, please contact IACET at info@iacet.org.
Application Development

What resources should be allocated for the application process?

People

In order to complete the AP application, the individual(s) who work on the application should be very familiar with the organization’s CE/T programs, how the programs are administered and how the ANSI/IACET Standard will be maintained throughout the five year authorization period. If certain aspects of the CE/T program are outsourced or handled by subcontractors, these individuals should be involved in completing the application as well. Senior officials within the organization should be aware of the CE/T program and what is being submitted to IACET so that they may confidently and truthfully sign off on the agreement letter. A primary and secondary contact should be listed within the application and updated whenever changes are made within the organization.

Time

The amount of time it takes an organization to complete the IACET Authorized Provider application depends on the individual applicant. The range we have heard to date has been from 4 weeks to a full year. It really depends on how familiar the organization is with the Standard category elements, how much the organization already has in place to meet the Standard as well as how much time the individual(s) can devote to the application. We recommend that each organization read through the application thoroughly, conduct a self audit of the policies and processes already in place and those that may need to be developed and/or implemented and attend a workshop, an AP application assistance webinar and/or take an online training module to answer questions before submitting the application.

*Ensuring that you have the most recent version of the AP application

IACET updates the application periodically and will notify those who have purchased the Standard so that they are working with the most current version of the application. The most current application will always be available to download from the IACET website. Any changes to the application will also be posted online, with a new revision number and date, so be sure to check the site regularly for updates.

Financial

Each organization applying for Authorized Provider accreditation should be in good financial standing and prepared to pay approximately $4,535 (for new applicants and $3,785 for renewing applicants) the first year for application fees and the annual accreditation fee. The cost of the Standard and application is $450. At the time of application submission, the organization is required to submit a non-refundable application fee of $3,250, which includes administrative costs, site-visit expenses, and honoraria. After approval, an organization pays yearly accreditation fees of $835.

How do we get started?

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First, review the ANSI/IACET Standard, including the minimum requirements, interpretations, and intent of each standard category, attachments and glossary of terms. Then, conduct a self-study to align current policies and processes used in (a) the administration of its continuing education and training program, and (b) the planning, implementation, and evaluation of its learning events.

Modify any policies and/or processes to ensure compliance with the ANSI/IACET Standard, and show evidence of these modified policies and/or processes having been implemented for at least three months.

Remember:

- A policy is a written statement of defined expectations that guide, influence and determine decisions or actions. Policies define scope, roles and/or responsibilities within a learning program.
- A process is a series of written, step-by-step actions one takes to accomplish a procedure.
- Evidence comes in the form of documentation affirming that the Provider is adhering to the ANSI/IACET Standard. Evidence includes, but is not limited to, electronic database records, written charts, handwritten notes, training transcripts, and hard copies of the certificates presented following the event.

Ensure that all policies and processes are:

- Written in clear, concise, simple language.
- Written so that what needs to be done can be easily followed by all users.
- Describe who is responsible for doing what.
- Present a consistent, logical framework for action.

(Note: A sample format is provided within the application. However, the organization can use any appropriate format as long as it contains the basic information needed.)

And finally, provide evidence to demonstrate that the organization is in compliance with each standard category, including the additional documents required in the application under each element as identified in the following pages.

A word about the application, why IACET does not provide a sample completed application for reference:

Sample applications almost beg for imitation and that really defeats the purpose of becoming an IACET Authorized Provider. Each organization is different and thus there is not necessarily one right response to each part of the application. We want to see that your organization understands each of the Standard Category Elements and can show how your organization goes about meeting each element within the continuing education and training you provide. Your application should describe your organization, how it administers training and provides continuing education units.
What resources does IACET provide to assist with completing the application?

IACET offers monthly AP Application Assistance webinars, in-person workshops, online training modules targeted as well as continuing education and training resources on the IACET website at www.iacet.org. IACET staff is also available during regular business hours to answer any questions via e-mail or telephone.

What role does the IACET staff play in the application process?

IACET staff performs an initial review of each new application to check for completeness before sending the application to the IACET Commissioners who will review it and conduct the site visit. In addition, staff tracks the accreditation of applications, handles billing, and answers general questions.
Application Submission

1. Two (2) spiral bound hard copies of the completed application with all attachments must be submitted. The spiral bound copies must be organized and tabbed for each of the 10 standard categories. Additional documents required for each standard category that cannot be bound easily, such as marketing brochures, should be put into top-loading, clear-sheet protectors and included in the appropriate section.

   **Please note:** Applications submitted in 3-ring binders or that exceed 3 inches in width will be returned.

2. Submit one (1) additional copy of the completed application, including attachments scanned and bookmarked (tabbed) in a single PDF file on CD-Rom or jump drive for IACET archiving purposes.

   **Please note:** The PDF file must be bookmarked (tabbed) to correspond to the tabs in the hard copy application. If you are unfamiliar with bookmarking a PDF, please visit [http://www.iacet.org/accreditation/application-process](http://www.iacet.org/accreditation/application-process) to download a brief guide on bookmarking your application.

3. Mail the two (2) spiral bound applications, the single bookmarked PDF copy on CD-Rom or jump drive and the application fee to:

   IACET
   AP Application Submission
   7918 Jones Branch Drive, Suite 300
   McLean, VA 22102

   **Note:** It is recommended that the applicant keep an additional copy at its location.
Authorized Provider Accreditation Approval

Your organization has been approved, now what?

Once the Commission team approves your application, you will be notified by IACET staff and invoiced for your first year of annual fees. We will add your organization’s information to our Authorized Provider Directory which will link to your website if you wish to have it hot-linked within your organization’s profile. Members of your organization will be invited to take advantage of a variety of IACET benefits and get involved in IACET’s volunteer opportunities.

Your IACET Authorized Provider accreditation is active for five years, provided you remain in good standing adhering to the ANSI/IACET Standard and paying your annual fees. IACET will send you a notice of annual fees along with an Annual Report which will allow you to provide any relevant updates to your organization’s profile. At the beginning of your fifth year of your IACET AP accreditation, we will send you a reminder that you need to renew your Authorized Provider accreditation.

How will our organization be notified of changes to the ANSI/IACET Standard?

IACET Providers will be notified via e-mail about any changes or upcoming changes to the ANSI/IACET Standard. Notification will also be posted on the IACET website, at www.iacet.org.

How often must organizations renew their application and go through a formal audit?

Authorized Provider accreditation is conferred on an organization for five years. During your fifth year, you must re-apply to renew your Authorized Provider accreditation.

What if our organization creates new programs while we are already accredited as an Authorized Provider, do we need to submit all new activity, course, or program materials to you?

No. Authorized Provider accreditation is approval of your organization and its policies and processes, not individual programs. Among the requirements for your organization to be approved is that you have an internal review process to make sure all of your current and any new programs for which you award the IACET CEU meet the ANSI/IACET Standard.

Once our organization is an Authorized Provider, can we co-sponsor CEU activities, courses, or programs with other organizations and award the IACET CEU?

Only an Authorized Provider may use the IACET AP logo and offer IACET CEUs. If your organization is awarding the IACET CEU under your name at an event, and if you are responsible for overseeing and ensuring that the activities, courses, or programs presented meet all of the ANSI/IACET Standard categories and elements, then you may offer IACET CEUs. However, you cannot authorize another organization to offer IACET CEUs.

Please note: Your AP accreditation strictly prohibits your organization from approving other providers of continuing education and training courses or programs for IACET CEUs.

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Who can use the AP logo?
The IACET Authorized Provider logo and approved statement is reserved for use only by the IACET Authorized Providers. The logo may not be used by individual members or those outside of IACET (i.e., non-members).

Would it be permissible to award IACET CEUs retroactively if the Authorized Provider Commission approves the course of study?
No, IACET CEUs cannot be awarded retroactively. A determination has to be made before the activity is conducted that it meets the ANSI/IACET Standard and has been approved by the provider’s internal review process.

Can an Authorized Provider offer IACET CEUs for courses it purchases from another provider?
Yes, but only if the Authorized Provider ensures that the content of the courses purchased fully meets the ANSI/IACET Standard, just as you would if you developed the courses internally. For example, you must conduct a needs analysis and review the materials before purchasing them; ensure that appropriate learning outcomes are incorporated into course design, development, delivery, and assessment; verify that qualified personnel instruct the courses; ensure that effective methodology is employed in delivery; and ensure that the program is comprehensively evaluated, with the results of the evaluation used for continuous improvement of the program. In other words, the purchased courses must undergo the same policies and processes described in the AP application and used on courses your organization develops itself.

Can an Authorized Provider use non-employee instructors to deliver courses?
Yes, as long as the same policies and processes described in your application for selecting, monitoring, and evaluating employee instructors are also used for non-employee instructors.