



**Academy**  
*of General Dentistry*

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**PACE**

**Program Approval for  
Continuing Education**

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## Program Approval for Continuing Education (PACE)

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Each year, thousands of continuing education courses are presented by hundreds of program providers - dental schools, dental societies and companies that specialize in course presentations. Most provide dentists with valuable information that can be successfully integrated into the dental practice. The Academy of General Dentistry (AGD) Program Approval for Continuing Education-PACE was created to assist members of the AGD and the dental profession in identifying and participating in quality continuing dental education.

The program provider approval mechanism is an evaluation of the educational processes used in designing, planning and implementing continuing education. Approval by the AGD does not imply endorsement of course content, products or therapies presented, nor does this approval imply that a state or provincial board of dentistry will accept courses. Approved program providers are expected to comply with all relevant state and federal laws. Continuing education offered by approved program providers will be accepted by the AGD for Fellowship/Mastership credit.

### ***Purposes and Goals***

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The Program Approval for Continuing Education (PACE) will operate:

1. To improve the educational quality of continuing dental education programs through self-evaluation conducted by the program provider in relation to the Standards and Criteria, and/or through counsel and recommendations provided to program providers by the PACE Committee.
2. To assure participants that approved continuing education program providers have the organizational structure and resources necessary to provide CDE activities of acceptable educational quality.
3. To achieve interstate acceptance for AGD Fellowship and Mastership credit for activities put on by approved program providers.
4. To promote uniformity in identification of those CDE activities that is acceptable for AGD Fellowship and Mastership credit.
5. To promote uniformity of standards for continuing dental education that can be accepted by the dental profession.
6. To promote, through consistent and meaningful application of standards, an increased credibility for AGD's Fellowship and Mastership awards.

### ***Eligibility***

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The program provider organization, is approved, not, speakers or courses. The applicant may be a major unit or department within an institution. To be eligible for Program Approval for Continuing Education the following criteria must be met:

1. The program provider must be national in scope, putting on programs in more than one state/province or drawing a significant amount of participants from more than one state/province.
2. The program provider must have been offered a planned program of continuing dental education activities for at least 12 months.
3. The provider must ensure that all courses offered have a sound scientific basis in order to adequately protect the public. PACE reserves the right to require acceptable substantiation from providers that their courses have a sound scientific basis, proven efficacy, and ensure public safety.

### ***Guidelines for Joint Program Provider Approval***

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1. Joint program provider approval is defined as an educational activity planned and presented jointly by two organizations, only one of whom is a PACE-approved program provider. Both organizations assume financial and administrative responsibility for planning and implementing the program.
2. The approved program provider is held accountable for upholding the PACE standards of the Academy of General Dentistry, and must be able to provide documentation that the educational activity was jointly planned and implemented in compliance with the standards.
3. All printed material for educational activities that are provided jointly must carry the following statement:  
"This activity has been planned and implemented in accordance with the standards of the Academy of General Dentistry Program Approval for Continuing Education (PACE) through the joint program provider approval of (approved program provider) and (non-approved program provider). The (approved program provider) is approved for awarding FAGD/MAGD credit."
4. Jointly provided educational activities may be considered toward the eligibility of an organization applying for its initial PACE approval.

# Standards/Criteria for Approval

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Program providers are expected to adhere to published standards/criteria in different areas in order to obtain and then retain approval status. These standards/criteria are accompanied in most areas by recommendations. Though these recommendations

do not represent requirements for approval, they provide suggestions and guidance that can improve the program provider's continuing dental education program or make its administration easier.

## Standard I. Administration

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1. Administration of the program must be consistent with:
  - a. The goals of the program;
  - b. The objectives of the planned activities.
2. The program must be under the continuous guidance of an administrative authority and/or individual responsible for its quality, content and ongoing content.

### Criteria

- A. The continuing education program must be under the ongoing supervision of an individual or an administrative authority so that there is continuity in the program provider's continuing education efforts.
- B. The administrative authority/administrator will have the responsibility for assuring compliance with the quality contained in these standards and guidelines.
- C. To maintain continuity, the program provider must develop specific procedures for personnel changes. This is particularly important with regard to the administrator or the administrative authority (program planner).
- D. The program planner must commit sufficient time to planning and conducting the CDE program relative to its planned size and scope of activity.
- E. Where the size or extent of the CDE program warrants, there must be provision for adequate support personnel to assist with program planning and implementation.
- F. The administrative authority/administrator is required to maintain accurate records of participants' attendance. The administrative authority/administrator will be responsible for retaining information on the formal planned activities offered, including needs assessment, methods, objectives, course outlines, and evaluation procedures. This information must be available at the time of application or reapplication for program provider approval.
- G. Sole providers are required to have a committee that meets regularly and at least one member of the committee must be a dentist. The committee will also be required to maintain minutes from its meetings. The minutes of the meetings will be attached to the PACE Application when applying for participation and continued participation.

- H. CE providers must assume responsibility for the compliance by participants with applicable laws and regulations. The provider must ensure that participation in its program by dentists not licensed in the jurisdiction where the program is presented does not violate the state practice act. Unless malpractice coverage for attendees participating in clinics is arranged by the CE provider, notice must be given to participants to obtain written commitments of coverage from their carriers.

- I. Continuity of administration and planning is necessary for the stability and growth of the program. It is required that:
  1. Members of the administrative authority or advisory committee be selected for a term of longer than one year.
  2. Members of the administrative authority or advisory committee serve staggered terms of office

### Recommendations

- A. The responsibilities and scope of authority of the individual or administrative authority should be clearly defined.
- B. The program planner should have background and experience appropriate to the task.
- C. When two or more approved program providers act in consort for development, distribution and/or presentation of an activity, each should be equally and fully responsible for assuring compliance with these standards.

NOTE: Determination of the adequacy of a program provider's administration to its program's goals and its activities' objectives should necessarily be based on the PACE Committee's evaluation of each program provider's individual situation. The PACE Committee will evaluate administration in the following areas:

- a. Clarity of lines of authority and responsibility;
- b. Strength of planning process;  
Adequacy of the qualifications and quantity of personnel to manage the program;
- d. Continuity of administration.

Ongoing supervision of the continuing education program by an individual or continuing authority provides continuity for a program provider's efforts, and experience has shown that better educational experiences are the result.

## Standard II/Fiscal Responsibility

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Administrative responsibility rests with the approved program provider whenever the program provider acts in consort with non-approved program providers for development, distribution, and/or presentation of continuing education activities.

1. Resources must be sufficient to meet:
  - a. The goals of the program;
  - b. The objectives of the planned activities.

### ***Criteria***

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- A. Adequate resources must be available to fund the administrative and support services necessary to manage the continuing education program.
- B. In instances where continuing education is only one element of a program provider's activities, resources for continuing education must be a clearly identifiable component of the program provider's total budget and resources.
- C. The program provider must provide a budget for the overall continuing education program, to include all costs and income, both direct (e.g., honoraria, publicity costs, tuition fees, refunds, or foundation grants) and indirect (e.g., use of classroom facilities or equipment, non-paid instructor time, etc.).
- D. Financial aid must be acknowledged in printed announcements and brochures.

### ***Recommendations***

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- A. Resources should be adequate for the continual improvement of the program.
- B. Separate budgets for each activity should be prepared as guidelines, but institutional or organizational policies requiring that each individual activity to be prepared be self-supporting tend to restrict the quality of the CDE program unduly, and are discouraged.

## Standard III/Goals

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1. The program provider must develop and operate in accordance with a written statement of its broad, long-range goals related to the continuing education program.
2. Goals must relate to the health care needs of the public and/or interests and needs of the profession.

### ***Criteria***

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- A. The individual or authority responsible for administration of the CDE program must have input into development of the overall program goals.
- B. There must be a clear formulation of the overall goals of both:
  1. The program provider institution or organization, and
  2. The entire CDE program.

### ***Recommendations***

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- A. The goals of the CDE program should be consistent with the goals of the organization or institution.
- B. The goals of the CDE program should be relevant to the educational needs and interests of the intended audience.
- C. A mechanism should be provided for periodic reappraisal and revision of the program provider's continuing education goals.

## Standard IV/Needs Assessment

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1. Program providers must utilize identifiable mechanisms to determine objectively the current professional needs and interests of the intended audience, and the content of the program must be based upon these needs.

### **Criteria**

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- A. The program planner must be responsible for carrying out or coordinating needs assessment procedures.
- B. Identified needs/interests must be developed from data sources that go beyond the program provider's own perceptions of needs/interests.
- C. The program provider must document the process used to identify needs/interests.
- D. The program provider must state the needs/interests identified and indicate how the assessment is used in planning educational activities.

### **Recommendations**

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- A. The program provider shall involve members of the intended audience in the assessment of their own educational needs/interests.

NOTE: The needs assessment method used is not critical, provided it serves the purpose of consulting (or otherwise gaining insight into) the needs and interests of the potential audience. Advisory committees representing a cross section of the intended audience or constituency can be effective. Surveys may be conducted by mail, phone or electronic media, or during the specific CDE activities.

It is advised that cooperative efforts to utilize the needs assessment data be used, if appropriate. Where intended audiences are the same, use of another organization's needs assessment data may provide much better information than the program provider's resources would otherwise provide.

## Standard V/Objectives

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1. Specific written educational objectives must be developed for each activity and published in advance for the intended audience.

### **Criteria**

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- A. The program planner must be ultimately responsible for assuring that appropriate objectives are developed for each activity. The educational objectives may, however, be prepared by instructor, course director or program planner.
- B. Educational objectives must be developed for each activity during the earliest planning stages. These provide direction in selecting specific course content and choosing appropriate educational methodologies.

The written educational objectives must be published and distributed to the intended audience as a mechanism for potential attendees to select courses on a sound basis.

Educational objectives must not conflict with or appear to violate the AGD Ethics and Code of Professional Conduct.

### **Recommendations**

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- A. Educational objectives shall form the basis of evaluating the effectiveness of the learning activity.

NOTE: Accurate educational objectives succinctly describe the education that will result from attending the course. Specific educational objectives must describe the expected outcome(s) of the learning experience. They may include, but are not limited to, the following categories:

1. Changes in the attitude and approach of the learner To the solution of dental problems;
2. Corrections of outdated knowledge;
3. Provision of new knowledge in specific areas;
4. Introduction to and/or mastery of specific skills and techniques;
5. Alterations in the habits of the learner

## Standard VI/Admissions

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1. In general, continuing education activities must be made available to all dentists.
2. If activities require previous training or preparation, the necessary level of knowledge, skill or experience must be specified in course announcements.

### Criteria

- A. As an activity is designed, the program planner may determine that previous training or preparation is necessary for learners to participate effectively in the activity. In all such cases, the program provider must:
1. Provide a precise definition of knowledge, skill or Experience required for admission;
  2. Demonstrate the necessity for any admission restriction, based on course content and educational objectives;

Specify in advance, and make available a method whereby applicants for admission may demonstrate that they have met the requirement.

Develop methods that are objective, specific and clearly related to the course content and stated requirements.

### Recommendations

- A. Where activities are offered at an advanced level, program providers are encouraged to provide sequentially planned instruction at basic and intermediate levels, to allow participants to prepare for the advanced activity. Though program providers are not obligated to provide CDE activities for all dental occupational groups, admission policies that discriminate arbitrarily among individuals within an occupational group, without a sound educational rationale, are not acceptable. Where restrictive registration requirements have been determined to be necessary on the basis of the foregoing Standards and Criteria, course applicants might demonstrate compliance with the requirements through documentation of attendance at CDE activities, submission of patient treatment records, or actual demonstration of required skills or knowledge.

## Standard VII/Educational Methods

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1. Educational methods must be appropriate to the stated objectives for the activity.
2. Where participation is involved, enrollment must be related to available resources to assure effective participation by enrollees.

### Criteria

- A. The CDE program planner must be responsible for choosing the educational methods to be utilized in consultation with advisory committees, instructors, educational advisors, or potential attendees.
- B. Educational methods must be appropriate to the characteristics or composition (especially skill level) of the intended audience.
- C. Educational methods must be appropriate to the facilities used for the activity.
- D. For participation activities, group size must be limited in coordination with the nature of available facilities and the number of instructors/evaluators. Very careful attention to group size is mandatory when planning an activity that requires participants to perform complex tasks requiring supervision and evaluation.
- E. For self-instructional activities, provision must be made for participant feedback and interchange with individuals having expertise in the subject area. A mechanism by which the learner can assess his mastery of the material shall be supplied
- F. If providing electronically mediated distance learning, participant interaction with faculty and other participants is an essential characteristic and can be facilitated through a variety of methods such as voice mail, e-mail or chat rooms, in a timely manner.

- G. For combination on-site/in-office participation (protocol) programs, the following requirements must be met:

1. The course director or course instructor must be a member of a faculty in an accredited dental program; or, must be approved by the Dental Education Council PACE Committee.
2. Specific course objectives must be written for the protocol course.
3. A bibliography of current literature in the subject being taught should be assembled by the speaker giving the course. Alternately, if the instructor does not provide this bibliography, each participant of the class will provide an appropriate article to review.
4. The initial formal course session(s) will include both lecture and demonstration of the procedures to be studied. Demonstrations may be hands-on for the students, but are not required.
5. Participants will do whatever procedures they are studying on patients in their offices. They will keep complete records on these patients, which must include at least the following:
  - a. Patient consent and release form;
  - b. Preoperative medical/dental history;
  - c. Preoperative radiographs, if indicated
  - d. Preoperative mounted diagnostic casts, if applicable
  - e. Preoperative photographs
  - f. Preoperative dental charting
  - g. Rationale for treatment being provided.

6. During treatment, records will be kept to demonstrate:

Treatment rendered materials, methods, etc.  
Timing of the treatment plan, especially if multidisciplinary;

- b. Mounted treatment casts, if applicable;
- c. Photographs of treatment progress, if appropriate
- d. Radiographs taken during treatment, if indicated.

7. Upon completion of treatment:

- a. Photographs of completed treatment;
- b. Postoperative radiographs, if indicated;  
Outcomes of treatment, both successes and failures.

8. After an agreed-upon time needed to complete patient treatment, the group will reconvene with the course director/instructor. Utilizing records developed during treatment, each participant will make a complete case presentation of approximately 15 to 20 minutes to the group. The presentation must fulfill the assignment given and the documentation criteria specified. Following the presentation, the group will be allowed to challenge the presentation. The course director/instructor will critique each presentation and award credit appropriately.

NOTE: The ideal person to hear the presentations is the original lecturer. Therefore it should be the goal to have that person back for the presentation day. If it is impossible to have the speaker back due to illness or other unforeseen circumstances, the following individuals may be engaged to hear the presentations:

A local specialist in that field. The specialist should have heard the lecture, spoken to the lecturer, and/or reviewed the handout materials to prepare for the presentations.

A member of the faculty of a dental school who is either a specialist in that field or a GPR/AEGD instructor. This individual can be a full or part time instructor who attended the first lecture or has spoken to the original speaker, and/or has reviewed the handout materials.

The Mastertrack director who is preferably MAGD or ABGD and has had his/her credentials reviewed and approved by the DE council PACE Committee. A CV should be submitted to the council for this purpose. This person should have attended the original lecture. They should also be able to make comments and decisions without prejudice due to friendships, etc.

The presentations can be done electronically by CD sent to the original lecturer, reviewed and returned to the student. In this case, the presentations must be posted on an available website for the other participants to review. Hours awarded should be consistent with the time taken to review the website. They can also be done by live internet connection to the instructor with the class members present.

The presentations can be done at a different venue where an appropriate person is available to listen to the presentations.

9. After all participants have presented cases, a seminar session will be held during which the bibliography will be discussed as it relates to the cases that were presented.

10. It is highly recommended that the participants prepare their presentations in a power point presentation.

### ***Recommendations***

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- A. For self-instructional activities, use of audiovisual materials may offer valuable learning experiences when their usefulness as a means, rather than an end, is appreciated.

NOTE: Program providers who plan self-instructional activities should assure the input of individuals having technical expertise in both media and self-directed learning techniques, and the application of these techniques to adult learning.

The size of the potential audience for any CDE activity is important in determining appropriate methods. A potentially active method can become purely passive if the group is too large.

Methods requiring learner involvement (seminars, discussion groups, case reviews/preparations, laboratory work and patient treatment) have been shown to provide more effective learning experiences. Over-emphasis on purely didactic methods (lectures, panel discussions) is discouraged.

The appropriate use of films, slides, video, electronic media and other teaching aids can support and enhance other teaching methods as integrated into a planned educational program.

Program providers are encouraged to provide attendees with resource materials and references to facilitate post-course practical application of course content, as well as continued learning.

## Standard VIII/Facilities

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1. Facilities selected for each activity must be appropriate to accomplishing:
  - a. The educational method(s) being used;
  - b. The stated educational objectives.

### **Criteria**

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- A. The program provider must be responsible for assuring that facilities and equipment (including those borrowed or rented) are adequate and in good working condition, so that instruction can proceed smoothly and effectively.
- B. Program providers must assume responsibility for the safety of the attendees in their activities.
- C. Adequate space and equipment must be provided to accommodate the size of the intended audience.
- D. For participation courses, sufficient space and equipment (and patients, if used) must be available to allow active participation by each learner without any learner experiencing undue idle time.
- E. If attendees are required to provide materials and equipment, the program provider must make this requirement clear to potential enrollees, and the program provider must provide enrollees with specific descriptions of all equipment and materials required.

- F. If the course is delivered through electronic media, the intended audience must be informed of specific requirements for hardware and software, and must have access to technical assistance throughout the duration of the course.

### **Recommendations**

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- A. Course program providers should direct course participants to where appropriate software needed to utilize the electronic media used in the course can be obtained or downloaded.
- B. If providing electronically mediated distance learning, security measures should be in place to ensure both quality standards and the integrity and validity of information (e.g., password protection, encryption, back-up systems, firewalls, secured servers).

## Standard IX/Patient Protection

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1. Participants must be cautioned about the hazards of using limited knowledge when integrating new techniques into their practices.
2. Where patient treatment is involved, either by course participants or instructors, patient protection must be assured as follows:
  - a. The program provider must seek assurance prior to the course that participants possess the basic skill, knowledge, and expertise necessary to assimilate instruction and perform the treatment techniques being taught in the course.
  - b. Informed consent from the patient must be obtained in writing prior to treatment.
  - c. Appropriate equipment and instruments must be available and in good working order.
  - d. Adequate and appropriate arrangements and/or facilities for emergency and postoperative care must exist.

### **Criteria**

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- A. Participants must be cautioned about the dangers of incorporating techniques and procedures into their practices if the course has not provided them with adequate, supervised clinical experience in the technique or procedure to allow them to perform it competently.

The program provider must assume responsibility for assuring that participants treating patients (especially those from outside the state/province where the course is held) are not doing so in violation of state dental licensure laws.

- C. The program provider is responsible for obtaining the informed consent of all patients.
- D. Patients must be informed, in non-technical language of:
  - a. The training situation;
  - b. The nature and extent of the treatment to be rendered;
  - c. Any benefits or potential harm that may result from the procedure;
  - d. Available alternative procedures;
  - e. Their right to discontinue treatment.
- E. The program provider must assume responsibility for completion of treatment by a qualified clinician, should any question of the course participant's competence arise.
- F. There can be no compromise in adequate and appropriate provisions for care of patients treated during CDE activities; aseptic conditions (where possible, and where not possible antiseptic conditions), equipment and instruments, as well as emergency care facilities, must be provided.

- G. Sufficient clinical supervision must be provided during patient treatment to assure that the procedures are performed competently.
- H. The program provider must assume responsibility for providing the necessary post-course treatment, either through the practitioner who treated the patient during the course, or through some alternative arrangement.

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### **Recommendations**

- A. In order to meet course objectives, patients should be screened prior to the course to ensure that an adequate number is present, with conditions requiring the type of treatment relevant to the course content.
- B. Program providers, instructors and participants should have adequate liability protection.
- C. Program providers are advised to consult legal counsel regarding informed consent requirements in their locale and appropriate procedures for obtaining patient consent.

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## Standard X/Instructors

- 1. Instructors chosen to teach courses must be qualified by education and/or experience to provide instruction in the relevant subject matter.
- 2. The number of instructors employed for a CDE activity must be adequate to assure effective educational results.

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### **Criteria**

- A. Program providers must assume responsibility for communicating specific course objectives and design to instructors early in the planning process.
- B. The number of instructors assigned to any activity must be predicated upon the course objectives and the educational methods used.
- C. The instructor-to-attendee ratio is most critical in participation courses. Great care must be taken to assure that close supervision and adequate direct interchange between participants and instructors will take place.
- D. When a program provider is a sole provider and utilizes only one instructor, the provider must submit a CV containing a biography, education/training, positions held, courses, and publicity for the instructor to demonstrate his/her competency in regard to the goals and objectives of the program.

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### **Recommendations**

- A. Program providers should work closely with instructors during course planning to assure that the stated objectives will be addressed by the presentation.
- B. Each program provider should have a carefully formulated plan for selecting qualified instructors. A wide variety of sources for qualified instructors should be explored and utilized.
- C. The teaching staff for any CDE program should consist of dentists and other professionals in related disciplines, who have demonstrated ability, training and experience in the relevant fields.
- D. Instructors should also possess the demonstrated ability to communicate effectively with professional colleagues, and possess an understanding of the principles and methods of adult education.
- E. Expertise and assistance in development and use of instructional materials and aids, when needed, should be available to support the teaching staff.
- F. Program providers should develop clearly defined policies on honoraria and expense reimbursement for instructors.

## Standard XI/Publicity

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1. Publicity must be informative and not misleading. It must include:
  - a. Course title;
  - b. A description of course content
  - c. The educational objectives;
  - d. A description of teaching methods to be used
  - e. Costs
  - f. The name of the program provider and contact person
  - g. Course instructor(s) and their qualifications;
  - h. Refund and cancellation policies;
  - i. Location;
  - j. Date
  - k. Specifics as to approvals granted and credits available.
2. For effective presentation and assimilation of course content, the prior level of skill, knowledge, or experience required (or suggested) of participants must be clearly specified in publicity materials.

### Criteria

- A. Any publicity on CDE activities must provide complete and accurate information to the potential audience.
- B. Care must be taken to avoid misleading statements regarding the nature of the activity or the benefits to be derived from participation.

- C. Accurate statements concerning credits or approvals granted for the activity must be included. Great care must be taken to assure that such statements follow the wording prescribed by the agency granting the credits or approvals, so that participants cannot misinterpret them.
- D. The name of the program provider, as well as of any co-program providers or agencies providing financial support must be clearly stated.
- E. Approved program providers must use the approved AGD PACE logo/brand with the appropriate credit statement in all the printed brochures and promotional materials for their educational program.

NOTE: The Program Provider must submit with the application, the six most recent samples of publicity from all forms of media (i.e. printed advertisements, radio spots, on-line web postings, etc.) in print format.

The attendees' expectations concerning course content and anticipated learning are based on course publicity. Materials containing less than complete and accurate information will almost always result in disappointment and dissatisfaction on the part of all or some attendees. Further, complete and detailed publicity materials will help assure that those who want and need the course will attend, and that they will be motivated to learn.

## Standard XII/Evaluation

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1. The program provider must develop and utilize activity evaluation mechanisms that:
  - a. Are appropriate to the objectives and educational methods;
  - b. Measure the extent to which course objectives have been accomplished
  - c. Assess course content, instructor effectiveness, and overall administration

### Criteria

- A. The program provider must provide an evaluation mechanism that will allow participants to assess their achievement of personal objectives. Such mechanisms must be content-oriented provide feedback to participants so that they can assess their mastery of the material. This is especially important if the activity is self-instructional in nature. The educational objectives for the activity must form the basis for the evaluation.
- B. The program provider must provide an evaluation mechanism that will help the program provider assess the effectiveness of the CDE activity and the level at which stated objectives were fulfilled, with the goal being continual improvement of the program provider's activities.
- C. The program provider is required to periodically conduct an internal review to determine:
  - a. The extent to which the goals are being achieved;

- b. The extent to which activity evaluation effectively and appropriately assesses:
  1. Educational objectives;
  2. Quality of the instructional process;
  3. Participants' perception of enhanced profession effectiveness;
- c. If evaluation methods are appropriate to and consistent with the scope of the activity;
- d. How effectively activity evaluation data are used in planning future CDE activities.

### Recommendations

- A. Minimally, the evaluation mechanisms should:
  - a. Be appropriate to the educational objectives and methods for the activity
  - b. Measure the extent to which objectives have been met
  - c. Determine participant assessment of course content with regard to whether it was practically useful, comprehensive, appropriate, and adequately in-depth.
  - d. Assess instructor effectiveness
  - e. Assess adequacy of facilities
  - f. Assess overall administration of the activity.
- B. The program provider should provide feedback to the instructor concerning the information which evaluation of the CDE activity has produced.

## Standards XIII Course Records

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1. Program providers must maintain permanent and accurate records of individual attendance and make such records accessible to attendees.
2. Any record supplied in connection with the continuing education activity must not be, nor resemble, a certificate or diploma that attests to or might appear to attest to specific skill, specialty or advanced educational status.
3. Credit awarded to participants of an approved program providers' educational activity must be in compliance with Academy policies related to credit allocation.
4. Program Providers must submit continuing education credits for all attendees directly to the AGD by fax, mail or online within 30 days using a standardized form set forth by the AGD.
5. A course completion code for each educational activity must be given to the attendees at the end of each course.

### ***Criteria***

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- A. Program providers must accept the responsibility of maintaining accurate, permanent records of individual attendees at each activity, to accommodate the growing number of legal and professional requirements.
- B. Credit must be awarded based on the following calculations:
  1. For formal structured lectures, credit will be awarded based on actual number of contact hours (excluding breaks, meals and registration periods). No credit will be awarded if the course is less than one hour in duration.
  2. For courses in which at least 30% of course content involves the participant in the active manipulation of dental materials or devices, the treatment of patients or other opportunities to practice skills or techniques under the direct supervision of a qualified instructor, participation credit will be awarded based on actual number of contact hours (excluding breaks, meals and registration periods).
  3. AGD members who complete audio, audio-visual or electronically delivered self-instructional programs must receive credit equal to twice the length of the instructional time provided, with a minimum of one hour of credit.
  4. AGD members who complete self-paced self-instructional programs must receive credit granted based on an educator's estimate of the time required to complete the program segment,

with the minimum being one credit hour and the maximum being eight credit hours.

5. The number of CE credits awarded should be based on the following formula:  
Number of classroom hours for the initial section (Lecture and demonstrations)  
Up to, but not exceeding the same number of hours, may be added for the in-office "homework."  
Number of hours in the classroom on return day for presenting and critiquing case presentations.

The total number of credits awarded is a combined total from a, b and c for those who returned to present their case. The combined credits may be considered 'participation'. In an individual does not return to present a case, partial credit can be awarded based on the hours actually spent in class at the initial lecture. The course director and clinician will determine how much credit is given for step 2, homework, in each case.

NOTE: Because of the extended length of time between the lecture series and the presentation of the case, the hours for this type of course may not be turned in for several months. No hours may be turned in until all steps are completed, as all students may not complete the case presentation.

### ***Recommendations***

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- A. Program providers should be aware of the professional and legal requirements for continuing dental education that may affect their participants.
- B. Program providers should cooperate with course participants and with requiring agencies in providing documentation of course attendance, as necessary.
- C. Such records and documentation should clearly indicate at least:
  - a. The name of the program provider;
  - b. The date(s) of the activity;
  - c. The title of the activity and specific subjects;
  - d. Educational methods used (e.g., lecture, videotape, clinical participation);
  - e. Speaker name;
  - f. Number of credit hours (excluding breaks and meals);
  - g. A course completion code for each educational activity.

## Standards XIV Commercial or Promotional Conflict of Interest

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1. The PACE standards and criteria are designed to ensure that:
  - a. Activities offered by CE program providers must be independent of commercial influence, either direct or indirect.
  - b. If commercial relationships exist between the program provider, course presenters and/or a commercial company and its products, they must be fully disclosed to participants.
- E. CE program providers must disclose to participants any monetary or other special interest the program provider may have with any company whose products are discussed in its CE activities. Disclosure must be made in promotional material and in the presentation itself.
- F. CE program providers must ensure that a balanced view of all therapeutic options is presented and that any promotional nature of the activity is fully disclosed. Whenever possible, generic names must be used to contribute to the impartiality of the program presented.

### ***Criteria***

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- A. CE program providers must assume responsibility for ensuring the content quality and scientific integrity of all CE activities.
- B. CE program providers must operate in accordance with written guidelines and policies that clearly place the responsibility for program content and faculty selection on the program provider. These guidelines must not conflict with the PACE Standards/Criteria for Approval. Each CE learning experience offered must conform to this policy.
- C. The ultimate decision regarding funding arrangements for CE activities must be the responsibility of the CE program provider. CE activities may be supported by funds received from external sources if such funds are unrestricted. External funding must be disclosed to participants 1) in announcements, brochures or other educational materials, and 2) in the presentation itself.
- D. CE program providers receiving commercial support must develop and apply a written statement or letter of agreement outlining the terms and conditions of the arrangement and/or relationship between the program provider and the commercial supporter.
- G. CE program providers must assume responsibility for the specific content and use of instructional materials that are prepared with outside financial support.
- H. CE program providers must assume responsibility for taking specific steps to protect against and/or disclose any conflict of interest of the faculty/instructors presenting courses. Signed conflict of interest statements must be obtained from all faculty members.
- I. If providing electronically mediated distance learning, embedded advertising and direct commercial links are inappropriate within the educational content and must be avoided.

### ***Recommendations***

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- A. The following are examples of outside or commercial support that is customary and proper: payment of reasonable honoraria, reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses for faculty, modest meals or social events held as part of the educational activity.
- B. The CE program provider and the commercial supporter or other relevant parties should each report to the other on the expenditure of funds each has provided, following each subsidized CE activity.

# Application/Evaluation Procedures

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A program provider that wishes to apply for approval to give Fellowship/Mastership approved continuing education credit from the PACE program is required to submit data documenting its compliance with program Standards/Criteria. To apply for approval, the program provider must complete the "Application Program Provider Approval," in English. This application, together with other required or pertinent data, is submitted in English for evaluation to the Committee on Program Approval for Continuing Education (PACE).

## Fees

All applications must be submitted with a \$575 application fee. The check or money order should be made payable to the Academy of General Dentistry. Completed applications should be mailed to:  
Academy of General Dentistry  
PACE  
211 E. Chicago Avenue Suite 900  
Chicago, IL 60611-1999

## Approvals

The maximum term of approval will not exceed four years. Shorter terms of approval may be awarded if there are deficiencies or concerns that would justify an earlier reevaluation date. In these cases, the reason(s) for a shorter period of approval will be identified and provided to the program provider. In no case will approval be granted for a period of less than one year.

Program providers approved by the PACE Committee shall be designated "approved program providers" for the length of the approval. Approval of a program provider does not imply recognition or approval of that program provider's satellite organizations, cooperating agencies or divisions.

Any reference to the awarding of approved continuing education credit by a PACE-approved program provider in its announcements; promotional materials, publications or any other form of communication must conform exactly to one of the following:

"(Name of program provider) is designated as an Approved PACE Program Provider by the Academy of General Dentistry. The formal continuing dental education programs of this program provider are accepted by AGD for Fellowship/Mastership and membership maintenance credit. Approval does not imply acceptance by a state or provincial board of dentistry. The current term of approval extends from (date to date)."

OR

Academy of General Dentistry  
Approved PACE Program Provider  
FAGD/MAGD Credit  
(date to date)

If this alternative is used, the entire notice must appear in the same type size and color. The terms "accreditation" or "accredited" must not be used in conjunction with PACE approval.

The Academy of General Dentistry will publish an official list of program providers approved by the Committee on Program Approval for Continuing Education and update this list whenever there are additions, deletions or status changes. This list is available on the Academy's web site, [www.agd.org](http://www.agd.org). The list will also be made available to constituent academies for inclusion in their publications.

## Confidentiality

The Academy of General Dentistry will not release in any form the name of any continuing dental education program provider that (1) has initiated contact with AGD concerning application for approval; (2) has applied for approval but has not yet been apprised of a decision; (3) has applied for and been denied approval. Further, the Academy will not confirm that a program provider has not applied for approval, or weaknesses of a program provider that has been approved. All inquiries as to the approval status of a specific program provider will be answered by referral to the published, official list of approved program providers. The Academy of General Dentistry reserves the right to notify its members in the event that a program provider's approval has been withdrawn, or if a program provider's approval status has changed, or if a program provider uses false or misleading statements regarding AGD PACE approval.

Prior to the expiration of a program provider's current approval period, the Committee may solicit comments regarding the program provider's past performance in complying with the standards. Comments may be solicited from each AGD Constituent Academy and from a random selection of AGD members and will be reviewed at the time the Committee evaluates the approved program provider's application for re-approval.

In order to provide informed comments, the constituent academies are allowed to monitor CDE courses presented by approved program providers. Of course, the Committee can only review evaluations made available to them. To ensure that evaluations of nationally approved program providers contain information, which can be used by the Committee in its decision process, the Committee has adopted the following guidelines:

# PACE Committee Program Provider Monitoring Program

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## ***A. Role of the PACE Committee Chair***

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1. The PACE Committee Chair will be responsible for identifying monitors and will select the courses of nationally approved program providers appropriate for monitoring.
2. PACE Committee members may be asked by the PACE Committee to monitor specific program providers.
3. The PACE Committee Chair will authorize only ONE monitor per course.
4. The Constituent Continuing Education Chair will ensure that nationally approved program providers will be monitored only once per year per constituent. Even in instances in which the program provider offers several different courses, only one course from the program provider's entire list of offerings for that calendar year may be monitored.
5. The Monitor will forward one copy of the completed Monitor Evaluation Form to the PACE Committee within two weeks of its submission by the monitor. He/she will retain one copy of the form.

## ***B. Role of the Monitor***

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1. The monitor will evaluate the course, using the Standards and Criteria of the PACE program as the guide.
2. The monitor will receive participation or lecture credit for his/her attendance at the course monitored.
3. The monitor will return the completed Monitor Evaluation Form to the PACE Committee Chair within 10 days of the course.

## ***C. Role of the Program provider***

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1. The program provider will admit one monitor per constituent per calendar year as requested by the PACE Committee Chair.
2. The program provider has the right to determine if the monitor may take part in the participation portions of the course.

# Regulations Governing the Approval Process Program

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## ***Process***

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1. All program providers interested in approval by the AGD PACE program must complete an Application form and submit it to the PACE Committee for consideration.
2. Within 14 days after receipt of an Application for Program Provider Approval, the PACE Committee will acknowledge its receipt.
3. If the application does not appear to provide adequate information on which to base an approval action, the Committee may seek additional information from the application program provider within 30 days of receipt of the application.
4. If the program provider does not meet the PACE program eligibility requirements, the application will be returned to the program provider, with a full refund of the application fee, within 30 days of receipt.
5. Applicant program providers will be notified of the action taken by the PACE Committee within 30 days after it meets to determine approvals.
6. If approval is granted, the program provider will be provided with the following information:
  - a. The effective dates of the approval;
  - b. A statement and logo that must be used to announce or publicize the approval;
  - c. The correct AGD program provider code for use in reporting attendance at activities;
  - d. Responsibilities and procedures for reporting attendance at activities;
  - e. Statement explaining the right of the PACE Committee to audit future activities;
  - f. General procedures and time frames regarding expiration of approval and reapplication;
  - g. Recommendations and suggestions for alterations of improvements in the program provider's CDE program.
7. After approval is granted the PACE Committee reserves the right to reevaluate a program provider at any time by requesting progress reports by surveying participants in the program provider's CDE activities, by reviewing activities in person, or by requiring additional information concerning the program provider and/or its activities. AGD Constituent Academies may lodge a formal written complaint with the PACE Committee if they can document substantial noncompliance with the Standards by an approved program provider. Upon receipt of such a formal complaint from an AGD Constituent Academy, the PACE Committee will initiate a formal review of the program provider's approval status. An approved program provider may also be reevaluated at any time if information is received from the program provider or other sources that indicates the program provider has undergone changes in program administration or scope, or may no longer be in compliance with the Standards/Criteria for Approval. Such monitoring activities will be undertaken by the PACE Committee solely to assure ongoing compliance with the Standards/Criteria for Approval.

8. Approval will be denied if there is substantial noncompliance with the Standards/Criteria for Approval. If approval is denied, the applicant program provider will be provided with the following by return receipt mail:
  - a. The Standards and Criteria with which the Committee found noncompliance;
  - b. Recommendations and suggestions for alterations and/or improvements in the continuing dental education program;
  - c. Rules and mechanisms governing appeal of the Committee's decision.
9. Approval may be withdrawn by the Committee if:
  - a. The approved program provider makes a request for voluntary withdrawal of approval
  - b. The Committee finds that there is substantial noncompliance with the Standards/Criteria for Approval Continuing dental education activities have not been offered for a period of two years or more.
  - c. The provider submits false or misleading information
10. The effective date of approval is the day on which action is taken by the Committee. However, retroactive approval may be granted by the PACE Committee when a written request outlining the situation is received on behalf of a program provider who is applying for or who has received program provider approval for continuing education via PACE previously.
11. The Committee will notify approved program providers of the need to reapply for approval within no less than 11 months prior to the date that the program provider's approval will expire. Program providers must submit a new Application for Program Approval no less than three months prior to the expiration date. In addition to the formal application for approval, the program provider must submit other relevant materials documenting its continued compliance with the Standards and Criteria, as well as improvements in any previously identified areas of deficiency or weakness. Program providers that anticipate promoting courses that will be presented after their approval expires are encouraged to submit a renewal application early to assure that approval statements will be accurate.
12. Approved program providers who did not provide self-instructional or on-site/in-office participation programs at the time their application was reviewed, but who may provide such programs in future are expected to conform to the Standards and Criteria unique to these areas, specifically:

Standard VII, Criteria E, F, G, and I  
Standard IX, Criteria A through H

### **Program Administration**

The AGD Program Approval for Continuing Education program will be administered by the PACE Committee. This committee shall be composed of nine members of the AGD, appointed by the AGD's president. Each member shall be appointed for staggered three-year terms, and each may serve a maximum of two full terms on the Committee.

The PACE Committee will be responsible for overall administration of the AGD PACE program, and for recommending alterations in the policies governing the program. The Committee will evaluate and take approval action on all applications for AGD Program Approval for Continuing Education. The Committee will be responsible for hearing appeals of all approval action.

The PACE Committee shall meet at least two times during each calendar year for the purpose of reviewing and determining action on pending applications.

### **Complaints Policy**

The PACE Committee is interested in the continued improvement and sustained quality of continuing dental education programs, but does not intervene on behalf of individuals or act as a court of appeal for individuals in matters not related to the AGD's Program Approval for Continuing Education standards and criteria or established recognition policies. If a complaint includes matters that are currently the subject of, or directly related to, litigation, the PACE Committee will not proceed with consideration of the complaint until the litigation is concluded.

Potential complaints will be evaluated to ascertain that they pertain to PACE standards and criteria and/or recognition policies. A potential complainant will be asked to provide information and documentation about the alleged lack of compliance with the standards and criteria or recognition policies.

The PACE Committee will consider appropriate complaints against PACE approved programs from course participants, faculty, other CDE providers, constituent dental societies, state boards of dentistry and other interested parties. In this regard, an appropriate complaint is defined as one alleging that there exists a practice, condition or situation within the program of a PACE approved provider which indicates potential non-compliance with PACE standards and criteria or established recognition policies. The PACE Committee will review and make recommendations to the Council regarding disposition of such complaints.

Attempts at resolution between the complainant and the provider should be pursued prior to initiating a formal complaint. Only written, signed complaints will be considered by the PACE Committee. The complaint will be considered at the earliest possible opportunity, usually at the next scheduled semi-annual meeting of the PACE Committee. When setting this date, the due process rights of both the provider and the complainant will be protected to the degree possible.

The following procedures have been established to review appropriate complaints:

- The complaint will become a formally lodged complaint only when the complainant has submitted a written, signed statement of the program's non-compliance with a specific standard and/or recognition policy; the statement should be accompanied by documentation of the non-compliance whenever possible. At the request of the complainant, the complainant's identity will be withheld from the provider when possible.
- The continuing dental education provider will be informed that the PACE Committee has received information indicating that compliance with a specific standard or recognition policy has been questioned.
- The provider will be required to provide documentation supporting its compliance with the standard or policy in question by a specific date (usually within 30 days). The PACE Committee reserves the right to seek additional information from the provider, including but not limited to course evaluation forms completed by participants and the names, addresses and telephone numbers of all course participants. The PACE Committee also has the right to seek information from alternate sources including, but not limited to, surveys of program participants, on-site visits, observation of the provider's CE activities, or other means considered necessary to determine whether the CE provider is in compliance with the standards and criteria. Refusal or failure to provide all requested information, or to cooperate with the Committee's information-gathering efforts, will be considered cause for withdrawal of the provider's approval.
- The provider's report and documentation, as well as any additional information obtained from other sources, will be considered by the PACE Committee at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

Following consideration, the PACE Committee will take action, as follows:

- If the complaint is determined to be unsubstantiated and the provider is found to be in compliance with PACE standards and criteria or established approval policies, the complainant and the provider will be notified accordingly and no further action will be taken.
- If the complaint is substantiated and it is determined that the CE provider is not in compliance with the standards and criteria or established recognition policies, the PACE Committee may:
  - Postpone action pending the receipt of additional information through:
  - A comprehensive re-evaluation of the provider.
  - A written report by the provider documenting progress in meeting the relevant standards or policies prior to the next regularly scheduled meeting of the PACE Committee.
  - A personal appearance by the complainant and/or the provider or their representatives before the PACE Committee to present oral testimony in support of the written documentation provided. Legal counsel may represent the complainant and the provider. The costs to the complainant and the provider of such personal appearances and/or legal representation shall be borne by the complainant and the provider, respectively; or
  - Withdraw the provider's recognition status.

The complainant and the provider will receive written notice of the PACE Committee's action on the complaint within thirty - (30) - days following the Committee's meeting. The records/files related to such complaints shall remain the property of the PACE Committee for five years and shall be kept confidential. After five years, these records will be destroyed.

### ***Policy Statement of Reporting Substantive Changes***

**Substantive Changes:**

A substantive change to a provider's continuing education (CE) program is one that may impact the degree to which the approved provider complies with the PACE Standards & Criteria. Substantive changes may include, but are not limited to:

- Changes in ownership, legal status or form of control.
- Introducing a new educational method beyond the scope described in the application, e.g., adding patient treatment courses or self-study activities.
- Changes in the CE program's source(s) of financial support, especially if funding is from an external commercial source.

When substantive changes occur, the primary concern of the PACE Committee is that the provider continues to meet the PACE standards and criteria. Recognized providers must be able to demonstrate that any substantive change(s) to their CE program will not adversely affect the ability of the organization to comply with established standards. If the program changes are judged to represent a sufficient departure from practices in place at the time of application, the PACE Committee may elect to re-evaluate the provider before the next formal reapplication is due.

**Reporting Substantive Changes:**

- All approved providers are expected to report substantive changes in writing to PACE in a timely manner. If a provider is uncertain whether a change is substantive, the provider should contact PACE staff for clarification and guidance. The following procedures shall apply to substantive changes:
- PACE approved providers must report any substantive change(s) to their CE program.

The provider must submit a description and/or documentation describing the change(s) and explaining how the CE program will continue to comply with PACE standards and criteria.

Providers will receive written notification that:

- The information is acceptable and will be kept on file for review at the time of the provider's next scheduled reapplication, or
- Additional documentation is required for re-evaluation prior to the next scheduled reapplication

The PACE Committee may exercise its right to re-evaluate an approved provider at any time during the three-year approval period. When a provider has received written notification to provide additional documentation, failure to submit the requested documentation shall be considered grounds for withdrawal of PACE approval status at the next regularly scheduled meetings of the PACE Committee. Submission of false or misleading information shall be grounds for withdrawal of PACE approval.

### ***Appeals***

In the event that the PACE Committee takes adverse action on an application for program provider approval, that program provider may appeal the decision. The following conditions and policies apply:

#### **PROCEDURES FOR RECONSIDERATION OF AN ADVERSE ACTION AGAINST A CE PROVIDER**

If the PACE Committee takes an adverse action on an application for approval or against an approved provider, the provider may request reconsideration by the PACE Committee. An adverse action is defined as denial or withdrawal of approval. A reconsideration would be considered by the PACE Committee at its next regularly scheduled meeting. Reconsiderations are conducted in accord with the following procedures. The principal purpose of a reconsideration is to determine if, based on the information and documentation previously submitted to the PACE Committee, the Committee's decision to deny or withdraw recognition was in accordance with the PACE Committee's procedures and policies. Reconsiderations may not be based on the length of the recognition period or disagreement with the recognition standards and criteria. To ensure due process, the Committee will, when appropriate, review substantive procedural issues raised by the provider.

### ***Procedures***

If the Committee denies or withdraws recognition for cause, the CE provider shall be informed of this decision within fourteen (14) days following the Council meeting. Such provider must file a written request for a re-consideration with the Committee's Program Coordinator, by certified mail, within twenty-one (21) days after notification of the Committee's decision. In the absence of receipt of a request for reconsideration as prescribed above, the Council's decision will automatically be final.

If a request for reconsideration is received, the Committee shall acknowledge notification of such intent and indicate the deadline for submission of documentation.

The provider must submit a non-refundable Reconsideration Fee of \$300 with its request for reconsideration. The provider must submit twenty (20) copies of evidence an argument in writing to refute or overcome the decision of the Council.

Reconsiderations will be evaluated by the PACE Committee. Representatives of the provider may make an appearance before the PACE Committee. If desired, legal counsel may accompany the provider and observe the appearance. Legal counsel for the AGD PACE Committee may be present for the appearance(s) and the executive session(s) thereafter. No tape-recording of the appearance(s) is permitted.

The provider will be given the opportunity to offer evidence and argument to refute or overcome the adverse action. The Committee will only review information and documentation that was previously available to the PACE Committee at the time the

Committee made its decision to take the adverse action. No change in the approval status of the provider will occur pending disposition of the reconsideration.

### ***Mechanism for the Conduct of a Personal Appearance***

A brief opening statement may be made by a representative of the PACE Committee for the purpose of establishing the Committee's findings and reasons therefore and to restate to the representative(s) the amount of time, 30 minutes, allocated for the hearing. The provider will then present its argument to the Committee.

Committee members may ask questions of the provider's representative(s) to clarify information presented.

After hearing the evidence, the PACE Committee shall meet in closed session to discuss the reconsideration and determine its decision. The recommendation shall be based on a majority vote of the members of the Committee present. The decision shall be based on a majority vote of the members of the Committee present. The decision of the Committee is final.

The Committee's decision will be sent by registered mail to the provider within ten (10) days following the Council's action.

AGD PACE reserves the right to modify or change these procedures

1. Program providers who are rejected for Program Approval for Continuing Education have the opportunity to appeal the decision of the committee if they believe the decision to be capricious, arbitrary, or prejudicial. Appeals may not be based on the length of the approval period, disagreement with the Standards/Criteria, or solely on the desire to provide additional information to the PACE Committee.

2. The PACE Committee must be notified by certified mail of the program provider's interest in appeal within 30 days of the program provider's receipt of rejection.

Appeals will be heard by the Council on Dental Education at its next regularly scheduled meeting. The program provider will be required to submit an appeal fee of \$1,000.00 at least four weeks prior to their scheduled appearance before the Council on Dental Education. The decision of the Council on Dental Education is final.

Many discussions of continuing dental education result in misinterpretation or confusion because frequently-used terms may be defined differently in the context of continuing education (CE). To clarify the intent of this document, the following terms are defined, as they will be used in relation to continuing dental education. CE providers should familiarize themselves with these definitions to ensure complete understanding of information provided in this document.

# Lexicon of Terms

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**ACTIVITY:** An individual educational experience such as a lecture, clinic or home-study package. (See COURSE)

**BEST PRACTICES:** Those strategies, methods, activities or approaches which have been shown through research and evaluation to effectively promote continuous quality improvement of continuing dental education in accordance with the ADA CERP Recognition Standards and Procedures AGD PACE Program Guidebook.

**COMMERCIAL SUPPORT:** Financial support, products and other resources contributed to support or offset expenses or needs associated with a provider's continuing dental education activity.

**COMMERCIAL SUPPORTER:** Entities which contribute financial support, products, and other resources to support or offset expenses and /or needs associated with a provider's continuing dental education activity.

**CONTINUING DENTAL EDUCATION:** Educational activities designed to review existing concepts and techniques, to convey information beyond basic dental education and to update knowledge on advances in dental and medical sciences. The objective is to improve the knowledge, skills and ability of the individual to deliver the highest quality of service to the public and profession. The basic sciences and behavioral and social sciences should be considered inseparable from technical knowledge in their influence on the professional person, and for this reason, educational experiences in these areas are an equally valid part of continuing dental education.

Continuing education programs are usually of short duration and are not structured or sequenced to provide academic credit toward a certificate or degree. Such courses are not applicable to advanced standing in specialty education programs. CE courses are conducted in a wide variety of forms using many methods and techniques and are sponsored by a diverse group of institutions, schools and organizations. Continuing education should favorably enrich past educational experience. These programs should make it possible for dentists and allied team members to attune dental practice to modern knowledge as it continuously becomes available. All continuing education should strengthen the habits of critical inquiry and balanced judgment that denote the truly professional and scientific person.

**COURSE:** A type of continuing education activity; usually implies a planned and formally conducted learning experience. (See ACTIVITY)

**EDUCATIONAL METHODS, METHODOLOGIES:** The systematic plan or procedure by which information or educational material is made available to the learner. Some examples include lecture, discussion, practice under supervision, audiovisual self-instructional units, case presentations and internet-based or other electronically mediated formats.

**GOAL:** A statement of long-range expectations of a continuing dental education program.

**JOINT SPONSOR:** An AGD PACE recognized or non-AGD PACE recognized provider that shares responsibility with an AGD PACE recognized provider of continuing education for planning, organizing, administering, publicizing, presenting, and keeping records for a program of continuing dental education. Administrative responsibility for development, distribution, and/or presentation of continuing education activities must rest with the AGD PACE -recognized provider whenever the provider acts in cooperation with providers that are not recognized by the AGD PACE. (AGD PACE Recognition Standards and Procedures, Standard IX. Administration, Criteria 12). When two or more AGD PACE -recognized providers act in cooperation to develop, distribute and/or present an activity, each must be equally and fully responsible for ensuring compliance with these standards. (AGD PACE Recognition Standards and Procedures, Standard IX. Administration, Criteria 13).

**NEEDS ASSESSMENT:** The process of identifying the specific information or skills needed by program participants and/or interests of the program participants, based on input from participants themselves or from other relevant data sources. The specific needs thus identified provide the rationale and focus for the educational program.

**OBJECTIVE:** Anticipated learner outcomes of a specific continuing dental education learning experience or instructional unit, stated in behavioral or action-oriented terms for the participant.

**PLANNED PROGRAM:** The total efforts of a sponsoring organization as they relate to continuing dental educational activities offered to professional audiences. A sequence or series of continuing education activities, courses or events that in total constitutes the sponsoring organizations' activities as they relate to continuing dental educational activities offered to professional audiences. These individual activities, courses or events must be substantially distinguishable from one another. A planned program of continuing dental education activities must consist of more than a single course offered multiple times. A single course offered multiple times may not exceed 50 percent of the total number of courses offered per year. The CE provider's administrator must not function as a sole lecturer/author.

**PROGRAM PLANNING:** The total process of designing and developing continuing education activities. This process includes assessing learning needs, selecting topics, defining educational objectives, selecting faculty, facilities and other educational resources, and developing evaluation mechanisms. All steps in the program planning process should be aimed at promotion of a favorable climate for adult learning.

**PROTOCOL:** Protocol is a means of providing participation credit. The format consists of combination on-site/in-office courses. Attendees are given credit for completing assignments while not under the direct supervision of an instructor, as well as for regular classroom attendance. The in-office assignments are typically hands-on work with patients, models or devices. The program concludes with presentations of case studies by each participant to his/her peers.

**PROVIDER:** An agency (institution or organization) that is responsible for organizing, administering, publicizing, presenting, and keeping records for the continuing dental education program. The CE provider assumes both the professional and fiscal liability for the conduct and quality of the program. If the CE provider contracts or agrees with another organization or institution to provide facilities, faculty or other support for the continuing education activity, the recognized provider must ensure that the facilities, faculty or support provided meet the standards and criteria for recognition. The CE provider remains responsible for the overall educational quality of the continuing education activity. (See SPONSOR)

**RECOGNITION:** Recognition is conferred upon CE providers or sponsoring organizations which are judged to be conducting a continuing dental education program in compliance with the standards and criteria for recognition. (The term "accreditation" is not used in the context of continuing dental education, as "accreditation" has a precise educational meaning that implies that an on-site review based on curricular or patient service standards have been conducted by an accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education or the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation. The review process used by the AGD PACE does not meet these specific criteria.)

**RECOMMENDATIONS:** Detailed suggestions and/or assistance in interpreting and implementing the standards and criteria for recognition. (See STANDARDS AND CRITERIA FOR RECOGNITION)

**SPONSOR:** Another term used to designate the agency (institution or organization) that is responsible for organizing, administering, publicizing, presenting, and keeping records for the continuing dental education program. (See PROVIDER)

**STANDARDS AND CRITERIA FOR RECOGNITION:** The criteria which applicant continuing dental education providers will be expected to meet in order to attain and then retain recognition status. (See RECOMMENDATIONS) The verbs used in the standards and criteria for recognition (i.e., must, should, could, may) were selected carefully and indicate the relative weight attached to each statement. Definitions of the words which, were utilized in preparing the standards are:

Must express an imperative need, duty or requirement; an essential or indispensable item; mandatory.

Should express the recommended manner to meet the standard; highly recommended, but not mandatory.

May or could express freedom or liberty to follow an idea or suggestion.