



Irish Agricultural Supply Industry Standards

Continuing Professional Education (CPE)

CPE Rules for Course and Event Providers

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BACKGROUND

The Continuing Professional Education system operated by the IASIS CPE Committee is overseen by the IASIS Management Committee on behalf of the Board of IASIS.

Achievement of **100 credits** annually are mandatory for re-certification of advisors in January of each year, while achievement of **25 credits** annually are mandatory for re-certification of distributors in January of each year.

Each certified pesticide advisor must demonstrate achievement of either: -

- a. a minimum of **100 credits** over the previous calendar year, unless exempted,
- or**
- b. an average of **100 credits** per annum over the previous two calendar years, to be eligible to be re-certified.

Each certified pesticide distributor must demonstrate achievement of either: -

- c) a minimum of **25 credits** over the previous calendar year, unless exempted,
- or**
- d) an average of **25 credits** per annum over the previous two calendar years to be eligible to be re-certified.

Averaging may be availed of in instances where the number of credits earned in a particular year is inadequate, but the average number of credits earned in that and the subsequent year is such that the minimum requirement can be achieved through averaging. The averaging facility cannot be used to bring credits earned above the minimum specified for a particular year, forward to the subsequent year *i.e.* excess credits can be applied retrospectively but cannot be carried forward.

DEFINITIONS

The following definitions apply to the system:

- **Continuing Professional Education (CPE)** is a continuous process by which certified pesticide advisors and certified pesticide distributors maintain and develop the skills, knowledge and competencies they had at the time of certification and which are relevant to their current professional positions.
- The **legal basis for CPE** is provided by the S.I. No. 155 of 2012¹ which gives effect to Directive 2009/128/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 establishing a framework for Community action to achieve the sustainable use of pesticides ².
- The **IASIS CPE Committee** is a sub-committee of the IASIS Management Committee appointed to approve, accredit and audit course and event programmes and providers of further such education.
- The **IASIS CPE Appeals Committee** is a sub-committee of the IASIS Management Committee appointed to review, assess, endorse or overturn decisions of the IASIS CPE Committee, as appropriate, having regard to relevant IASIS CPE Rules, on application properly made.
- A **programme of further education** means a programme of education or training for certified persons that relates to the use and management of pesticides or to the management of a

¹ European Communities (Sustainable Use of Pesticides) Regulations 2012, S.I. No. 155 of 2012

² OJ No L309, 24th November 2009, p71

pesticide business or store, intended to maintain and develop the professional knowledge, skills and abilities of advisors and distributors.

- A **provider of education** or **course provider** means a person, organisation or company who provides a programme of education or a programme of further education.
- An **approved programme of further education** is one which is QQI (FETAC) approved and has satisfied the requirements set by the IASIS CPE Committee.

1. Introduction

Event organisers are responsible for providing both attendance sheets and supervised facilities to allow attendees to sign an attendance sheet at each event and for providing signed attendance sheets to IASIS CLG following each event.

The requirements for submitting events or courses for accreditation are set out hereunder. The requirements outlined apply, to a greater or lesser extent, to events or courses according to their type, duration and whether, or not, they are certified by a third party. **Events or courses should be pre-approved before being held**, but consideration will be given to accrediting events or courses after they have been completed. Application for pre-approval of courses and events must be made at least 14 days in advance of the date on which the event is to take place or the course is to be provided.

2. Events and Courses that may merit CPE credit approval

- 2.1 In fulfilling its remit, the IASIS CPE Committee will have regard to CPE events or courses with content that is generally relevant to the work of the individual pesticide advisor or distributor.
- 2.2 The manner of determining credits is outlined in the IASIS CPE Rules for Pesticide Advisors and in the IASIS CPE Rules for Pesticide Distributors (www.IASIS.ie), while the IASIS CPE Credit Allocation Tables also provide relevant information.

3. Events and Courses that may not merit CPE credit approval

- 3.1 Events and courses **other than those that relate** to the subject matter specified in the IASIS CPE Rules for Pesticide Advisors and in the IASIS CPE Rules for Pesticide Distributors (www.IASIS.ie), may not merit CPE credits. Decisions regarding the CPE credits to be allocated for particular courses can only be made by the IASIS CPE Committee.

4. Event and Course Approval Requirements

- 4.1 In the absence of an adequate range of CPE courses and events offered by other providers, IASIS may itself establish CPE creditable events or courses.
- 4.2 The IASIS CPE Committee reserves the right to approve providers of courses or events before they provide any courses or events.
- 4.3 All CPE events or courses conducted by approved providers must meet the requirements for CPE events or courses set from time to time by the IASIS CPE Committee.
- 4.4 For the purposes of gaining accreditation for the provision of courses and events that qualify for CPE credits, a Provider must meet, and assure compliance with the requirements outlined in Section 4.5 under the following headings:

- a. Provider Resources and Organisation;
- b. Event or Course Content;
- c. Event or Course Approval Procedure;
- d. Methods of Delivery of Event or Course;
- e. Event or Course Presenters' Qualifications;
- f. Record Keeping; and
- g. Certification of Participation.

4.5 Satisfactory attainment of requirements by Providers will be subject to monitoring and audit by the IASIS CPE Committee. The following requirements must be satisfied: -

a. **Provider Resources and Organization**

The Provider shall nominate an individual person as Administrator holding continuous authority and responsibility for administration of the CPE activity. Any change in that role shall be reported to the IASIS CPE Committee within 30 days of the effective date of such change. At all times, it is the responsibility of the Provider to ensure that the person with whom the administrative function is vested shall be suitably qualified.

If the person, who is presenting the CPE event or course, is also responsible for administrative activities, that person shall be academically or practically competent to perform both functions.

A Provider may work with others in the development, distribution, and / or presentation of CPE programmes (co-sponsor). Similarly, a Provider may present an event or course under licence from a body producing suitable material. Responsibility for ensuring that all requirements are met rests with the Provider.

b. **Event or Course Content**

CPE events or courses must be designed to reflect the educational needs of the pesticide advisor or distributor, as appropriate. Such events or courses shall refresh and **build on the knowledge the participants acquired for initial certification** as pesticide advisors or distributors.

Content must include significant intellectual or practical content on the subject matter set out in Section 3.1 of the *IASIS CPE Rules for Advisors* and the *IASIS CPE Rules for Distributors*, as appropriate. The course or event documentation must include a statement of the objective of the event or course and of the knowledge, skills and / or competences that participants will gain from attendance at the event or course.

c. **Event or Course Approval Procedure**

Individual event or course approval

Where a Provider wishes to obtain prior approval he/she must submit a completed application to the IASIS CPE Committee at least fourteen (14) days prior to the date on which the event or course is to be given.

Prior to conducting a CPE activity, the Provider shall complete and submit the Event or Course Description Form for each proposed event or course. This Form will require details of: -

- i. the event or course outline and schedule or timetable - *i.e.* times, topics and speakers;
- ii. a statement of the objectives of the educational activity and the knowledge, skills and / or competences that participants should gain from participation;
- iii. the time, duration and location of the event or course; and
- iv. a brief CV for each presenter, including their name, address, telephone number, email address, qualifications (academic and / or experience) and affiliations.

In addition to the completed Course Description Form, the Provider shall submit an undertaking: -

- to provide a certified list of all participants to the IASIS CPE Committee,
- to, where practical, request participants to complete evaluation forms.

CPE events or courses or segments of those already approved and presented by a Provider need not be re-submitted for approval.

Retrospective applications for approval of an event or course for credit may be made to the IASIS CPE Committee. It should be appreciated that approval is not guaranteed in such circumstances.

Event or Course [multiple] approval

To facilitate processing and programme development, all the 'paper work' for groups of courses and events should be submitted as far in advance as possible. However, it should not be submitted more than 60 days in advance of the first event or course or educational activity for the period in question.

Applications for approval will not be processed until all documentation is provided, including any additional information sought by the Committee.

Approval notification will be by post, fax or electronic means.

d. Methods of event or course delivery

The method of delivery of an event or course must be appropriate to its objective and educational content and be presented in an effective manner that will best benefit the participants.

The method of delivery should, where practical, encourage active participation and involvement on the part of the participants.

Events or courses must allow for feedback from participants to permit evaluation of different aspects of the event or course.

e. Course Presenters' qualifications

Presenters must be qualified either through practical experience or academic training to teach each segment, course, or module covered.

A brief CV for each Presenter must be maintained by the Provider and be submitted to the IASIS CPE Committee with the Event or Course Description Form.

f. Record keeping

The Provider must maintain copies of all documentation used in the delivery of approved events and courses. The records must be adequate to serve the needs of the

participants and to permit the IASIS CPE Committee to monitor and audit for compliance with the accreditation requirements for the CPE event or course.

These records will include, but are not limited to, the following: -

- i. event or course outlines;
- ii. timetables and location of event or course;
- iii. details of presenters' qualifications and/or experience that render them competent to present material provided during the event or course (e.g. CVs);
- iv. registration and attendance records, including names and registration numbers of participants;
- v. evaluation forms; and
- vi. a copy of IASIS CPE Committee's accreditation for the event or course and the credits allocated as part of this approval.

The Provider shall retain records for a minimum of two years.

g. Participant certification

Participation in an event or course should either be confirmed by: -

- A. The Provider issuing each individual with a certificate of attendance identifying the participant and specifying: -
 - i. the title of the event or course;
 - ii. the provider's name and address;
 - iii. the date and duration of the educational event or course;
 - iv. the subject-matter category(s); and
 - v. the number of contact hours of CPE credit earned.

The certificate shall be signed by the Administrator, or person nominated by the Provider. The certificate of attendance must contain the following statement in addition to the list of inclusions listed above:

"Event or Course (Specify) has been accredited by the IASIS CPE Committee for X CPE credits."

or alternatively

- B. The Provider may undertake to provide the above information directly to the IASIS CPE Committee.

h. Participant feedback

All participants must be afforded an opportunity to evaluate the quality of each CPE programme in which they participate. This is to be achieved using Evaluation Forms approved by the IASIS CPE Committee and when completed by participants must be returned to the Provider. A specimen course evaluation form for use by participants in providing feedback on the course, or on individual sections thereof, can be downloaded from the IASIS website www.IASIS.ie. These evaluations shall be made available to the IASIS CPE Committee upon request made up to two years after the event or course has concluded.

5. IASIS CPE Committee recognition of specific events or courses

- 5.1 The IASIS CPE Committee reserves the right to recognise specific single programmes or segments of single programmes approved or provided by for example, Teagasc, ACA, ASA, UCD, *etc.*
- 5.2 Single programmes may include CPE Courses conducted in sessions over a number of days.

6. Denial of CPE credits for an event or course

- 6.1 The IASIS CPE Committee may deny an application for approval of a CPE event or course programmes or may suspend or revoke such approval on the following grounds: -
- a. the event or course fails to meet or no longer meets the requirements laid down in this document; or
 - b. insufficient or incorrect information was supplied when approval was requested.
- 6.2 Should an application for a CPE event or course be denied, the applicant shall be sent a notice setting out the reasons for the determination.
- 6.3 Denial of an application submitted by a Provider will become final fifteen (15) days after the mailing of the notice unless the Provider, within such fifteen (15) day period, gives written notice to the IASIS CPE Committee of an appeal.
- 6.4 The IASIS CPE Appeals Committee will issue, at the conclusion of each appeal made, a final order setting out the results of the appeal. The decision of the Appeals Committee shall be binding on both parties.

7. Audit of Pesticide Advisors and Distributors, and approved CPE events and courses and providers

- 7.1 The IASIS CPE Committee shall periodically select in a random manner, at a minimum, a five percent sample of record cards for audit of CPE credits.
- 7.2 **Each pesticide advisor or distributor shall be responsible for maintaining his / her personal files** containing certificates and records of credit for accredited CPE activities undertaken.
- 7.3 Each pesticide advisor or distributor selected for audit shall be required to produce documentation of his / her attendance at the CPE courses or events listed on his / her Record Card.
- 7.4 Upon IASIS CPE Committee request, as part of a routine audit, a pesticide advisor or distributor must furnish, within 30 days, proof to the IASIS CPE Committee of having satisfactorily met the required number of CPE credits established by the Committee or of qualifying for a waiver.
- 7.5 The proof required shall be in the form of attendance certificates, diplomas, and proof of course fee payment or class timetables accompanied by an event or course brochure or other documentation acceptable to the Committee.
- 7.6 Except for good cause, *e.g.* serious and protracted illness of the applicant or of a member of the applicant's immediate family, failure to comply with audit requirements shall be grounds for cancellation of CPE credits.

- 7.7 The IASIS CPE Committee from time to time shall carry out audits of events and courses, that attract CPE credits and of their providers. All documentation listed as being required for approval of courses run by Providers, along with evaluation forms completed by participants shall be examined during such audits.
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