



Irish Agricultural Supply Industry Standards

Continuing Professional Education (CPE)

CPE Rules for Pesticide Distributors

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IASIS
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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 **25 credits** annually is mandatory for re-certification of distributors in January of each year.

Each certified pesticide distributor must demonstrate achievement of either: -

- a. a minimum of **25 credits** over the previous calendar year, unless exempted as provided for in section 2,
- or**
- b. 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 pesticides².
- 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 management of a 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 European Communities (Sustainable Use of Pesticides) Regulations 2012, S.I. No. 155 of 2012

² OJ No L309, 24th November 2009, p71

1. Individual CPE credit requirements

1.1 The credit year runs from January 1st until December 31st, each year.

Pesticide distributors must accumulate at least **25 credits** in any calendar year or an average of at least **25 credits** per annum in any two calendar year period, unless exempted as provided for in section 2, to satisfy the IASIS CPE requirement. There is no cap on the number of credits which can be claimed in any year over and above 25 credits. The requirement to accumulate 25 credits can generally be achieved through participation for **half a day per annum** in relevant courses and events.

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.

1.2 **Each individual is responsible for signing the attendance sheet at each event and for checking the return of his or her CPE credit claim.**

1.3 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.

1.4 Additional credits to the ones submitted through the attendance record sheets may be claimed by filling in a CPE Record Card and submitting it to IASIS. Record Cards are available for downloading on the IASIS website (www.IASIS.ie). Details of the information and materials to be submitted in support of claims for credits are outlined in section 4 below.

2. Extension and waiver of CPE requirements

2.1 The IASIS CPE Committee may grant, in part or in total, on application made, an extension or waiver of CPE requirements, upon proof that circumstances beyond the applicant's control prevented completion of the requirements.

2.2 The IASIS CPE Committee may, in individual cases involving medical disability or protracted illness of the pesticide distributor or of a member of the applicant's immediate family, grant waivers of the CPE requirements or extensions of time within which to fulfil the requirements. In such instances a written request for waiver or extension of time, with supporting documentary evidence, must be submitted.

2.3 The yearly CPE credit requirement may be satisfied in the following circumstances, where suitable supporting evidence is provided to the CPE Committee showing that:

the pesticide distributor practises and maintains certification in another jurisdiction that has CPE requirements equal to or higher than the Committee's requirements.

Evidence to support all such claims made must be provided to the CPE Committee.

2.4 Individuals that seek certification in the year of gaining the appropriate qualifications will be given one year's grace before they are required to conform to the CPE requirements *i.e.* individuals concerned must accumulate **25 credits** by the end of the year following certification or an average of **25 credits** per annum in each of the following two calendar years (by end of year 3), as appropriate.

- 2.5 Where the IASIS CPE Committee grants an extension or waiver of CPE requirements, the applicant will be notified within thirty (30) days of the decision made.
- 2.6 When the IASIS CPE Committee refuses an application for extension or waiver of CPE requirements, it shall send to the applicant within thirty (30) days of the decision made, a notice setting out the reason(s) for refusal.
- 2.7 The applicant shall have fifteen (15) days from the date of receipt of the refusal notice to make a written request to the IASIS Management Committee, appealing the decision made.
- 2.8 The IASIS Management Committee shall refer requests received to the IASIS CPE Appeals Committee.
- 2.9 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.

3. CPE credit determination

- 3.1 Credits for pesticide distributors can be achieved in the areas of: -
 - a. **pesticide store management** (*i.e.* storage practice, mechanical handling, transport, disposal of waste, environmental protection, human and animal safety including first aid and emergency procedures, record keeping and legislation), and
 - b. **other meetings and events** relevant to the work of a pesticide distributor.
- 3.2 Credits may be obtained in a number of ways, for example, through attendance at courses, seminars, demonstrations, discussion groups, lectures, field days or conferences. The IASIS CPE Credit Allocation Table for Distributors provides further detail on the credits to be allocated to specific types of activities and events.
- 3.3 Credit for attendance at events will be given only for the actual number of hours of creditable CPE segments. To facilitate the credit certification procedure, organisers / providers of events should provide as much information as possible to the IASIS CPE Committee regarding the content of the event to assist the Committee in allocating the appropriate number of credits.
- 3.4 In general, CPE credit will be given for each period of not less than 30 minutes of attendance at an approved CPE course or event, in accordance with the IASIS CPE Credit Allocation Table for Distributors.
- 3.5 On application made, the same CPE credit will be given to persons that present an event, course or segments thereof as are given to participants in the event or course concerned. Regardless of the number of times a particular course or event is held in a particular year, CPE credit for the presenter can only be awarded once for each such event or course in any particular calendar year.
- 3.6 CPE credits will not be given for the reading of trade papers and magazines. Pesticide distributors are expected to read relevant trade papers and magazines as a matter of routine.

4. Certification procedure

4.1 In normal circumstances applicants should for the purposes of accumulating the required CPE credits, choose from the range of events and courses that have been pre-approved and allocated an appropriate number of CPE credits by the IASIS CPE Committee.

4.2 In exceptional cases consideration will be given to accrediting events and courses after they have been completed.

4.3 *Certification procedure for attendance at pre-approved events and courses where the course Provider does not submit the required attendance documentation to IASIS*

4.3.1 CPE Record Cards may be downloaded from the IASIS website ó www.IASIS.ie.

4.3.2 Applicants must provide evidence of completion of required CPE credits not already submitted by the course provider, by submitting with the completed Record Card the following information with respect to each CPE event or course:

- a. the name and address of the Provider[s] of the CPE event or course;
- b. the name of the event or course, and its location;
- c. a description of the subject matter covered, the number of hours and, if appropriate, days involved;
- d. the names of the instructors;
- e. the dates on which the applicant attended the event or course;
- f. the number of CPE credits earned; and
- g. a certificate or other evidence of attendance.

The applicant must sign the declaration at the bottom of the Record Card requesting accreditation for the number of CPE credits listed on the Record Card. The completed CPE Record Card and supporting documentation must be returned to IASIS by **31st October** for the preceding CPE credit year.

4.3.3 The IASIS CPE Committee reserves the right to require a pesticide distributor to submit additional supporting evidence in respect of any claim for credits within 30 days of receipt of an application made. It is the responsibility of each applicant to maintain records, certificates or other evidence of compliance with the CPE requirements. Pesticide distributors must retain such receipts, vouchers, certificates, or other papers, as may be necessary to verify completion of the CPE credit requirements for a period of not less than two years from the date the course / programme was taken.

4.4 *Certification procedure for attendance at events and courses that were not pre-approved*

4.4.1 Individual applicants may petition the IASIS CPE Committee to review events or courses or specific segments of events or courses that they wish to attend, or have attended, to determine relevance to their role. In such cases, the onus is on the applicant to satisfy the IASIS CPE Committee of the relevance of the activity for which credits are requested and the applicant must provide details of the objectives of the event or course, its content, contact hours and proof of attendance or participation in the event or course. For guidance purposes a form for use in petitioning for such a review is provided on the IASIS website - www.IASIS.ie.

4.4.2 Such petitions or request may also be made for: -

- a. conferences held by recognised professional associations or other recognised providers in other jurisdictions; or

- b. participation in workshops and seminars held whether within the jurisdiction or in other jurisdictions, by recognised providers.
- 4.5 In addition to the requirements specified in the two preceding sub-paragraphs for the approval of courses or events that were not pre-approved, the documentation specified under section 4.3 must also be submitted by applicants.
- 4.6 The IASIS CPE Appeals Committee is the final determining authority as to the acceptability of submitted CPE documentation.
- 4.7 If a pesticide distributor reports false or misleading information, the IASIS CPE Committee, or the IASIS CPE Appeals Committee, as appropriate, shall deny the pesticide distributor credit.
- 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 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 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 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.

8. IASIS evaluation of CPE requirements

- 8.1 The Board of IASIS shall from time to time evaluate and review the CPE system to ensure that all requirements are being met and that the accredited events or courses are of a form, content and impact to contribute to the advancement, extension or enhancement of relevant professional skills or knowledge.