



Accredited Activity Standards for the Maintenance of Certification (MOC) Program Self-assessment activities (Section 3)

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In order for an activity to be accredited in the Royal College Maintenance of Certification (MOC) Program, it must be developed or co-developed with a physician organization, planned to meet the following accreditation activity standards, and reviewed by a [Royal College accredited CPD provider](#).

Part A: Administrative Standards

Administrative Standard 1: All accredited self-assessment programs must be developed or co-developed by a physician organization as defined by the Royal College.

A **physician organization** is a not-for-profit group of health professionals with a formal governance structure, accountable to and serving, among others, its specialist physician members through continuing professional development, provision of health care and/or research.

This definition includes (but is not limited to) the following groups:

- Faculties of medicine
- Hospital departments or divisions
- Medical societies
- Medical associations
- Medical academies
- Physician research organizations
- Health authorities not linked to government agencies

The physician organization(s) developing or co-developing a CPD activity is responsible to ensure that all accreditation standards are met and to submit the application to an accredited CPD provider.

Note: Accredited CPD providers are permitted to self-approve CPD activities they have developed or-co-developed.

Types of organizations that **are not** considered physician organizations

- Pharmaceutical companies or their advisory groups
- Medical/surgical supply companies
- Disease-oriented patient advocacy organizations (e.g. Canadian Diabetes Association)
- Government departments or agencies (e.g. Health Canada, Public Health Agency of Canada)
- Industry (e.g. pharmaceutical companies, medical device companies, etc.)
- Medical education or communications (MEC) companies (e.g. CME Inc.)
- 'For-profit' on-line educators, publishing companies or simulation companies (e.g. Medscape, CAE)
- Small number of physicians working together to develop educational programming
- Any other for-profit organizations/ventures

All activities must be developed by a planning committee that is representative of the target audience.

See Part C - Ethical Standards for additional requirements for the planning committee.

Administrative Standard 2: All accredited self-assessment programs must have a self-assessment development or scientific planning committee (SPC) that is representative of the target audience.

All CPD activities must be developed by a scientific planning committee (SPC) that is representative of the target audience. The target audience is defined as the specific group of physicians, specialist or other healthcare professionals CPD activity will be aimed. Therefore the target audience must be determined from the inception of the CPD activity so that the SPC can be chosen accordingly.

There is no minimum or maximum number of members required to sit on the SPC. Best practice would suggest that if the CPD activity is aimed at only one specialty, representatives with other demographic factors should be included on the SPC to allow for more comprehensive representation from within a singular target audience.

The SPC is ultimately responsible for the following program elements:

- Identification of the educational needs of the target audience
- Development of educational objectives
- Selection of educational methods
- Selection of all individuals (planning committee members, faculty) or organizations in a position to control the development of content
- Development and delivery of content
- Evaluation of outcomes

Administrative Standard 3: All accredited self-assessment programs must maintain attendance records and provide participants with a certificate of participation that includes the appropriate accreditation statement.

A certificate of participation or written confirmation signed by the chair of the planning committee must be issued to participants for all accredited self-assessment programs. The certificate must specify the following elements:

1. The title of the activity.
2. The name of the physician organization (and co-developer if applicable) responsible for the activity.
3. The date(s) the activity took place.
4. The location of the activity (i.e. city, country, web-based).
5. The total number of *hours* the activity is accredited for.
6. The number of *hours* the registrant attended the activity (or a blank space for the registrant to complete themselves).
7. All applicable accreditation statements (include co-development statement when necessary).

The physician organization is responsible for maintaining attendance records for a 5 year period.

Part B: Educational Standards

Educational Standard 1: The self-assessment program must be planned to address the identified needs of the target audience with a specific subject area, topic or problem.

Self-Assessment Programs must be based on a needs assessment of the target audience that must be performed to identify areas of knowledge, skills, performance and/or health outcomes that the CPD activity intends to address or improve. The needs assessments can identify either perceived or unperceived needs and should be used to inform:

- the development of learning objectives
- the identification of appropriate educational or delivery methods
- the selection of relevant educational content
- the development of evaluation strategies.

Educational Standard 2: Learning objectives that address the identified needs of the target audience must be created for the overall program and each individual module (if applicable). Learning objectives must be printed on the program, brochure and/or handout materials.

The identified learning needs of the target audience should be utilized in the creation/development of the learning objectives.

Learning objectives must clearly describe the intent of the educational activity, be written from the perspective of the learner, and express the expected outcomes determined by the Scientific Planning Committee and faculty.

Learning objectives must be made available to participants prior to the activity and must be incorporated into the evaluation strategy (*See Educational Standard 5*). The planning committee must ensure that the selected educational methods and delivery are consistent with the identified need(s) and stated learning objectives as well.

Educational Standard 3: Self-assessment programs must describe the methods that enable participants to demonstrate or apply knowledge, skills, clinical judgment and/or attitudes.

Self-assessment programs must provide participants with a strategy to assess their knowledge, skills, clinical judgment and/or attitudes in comparison to an established scientific evidence base (clinical practice guidelines, meta-analysis or systematic review, etc.).

All self-assessment programs must use methods that enable participants to demonstrate these abilities across the key areas of the subject area, topic or

problem(s). The selected format must also enable participants to review their current knowledge or skills in relation to current scientific evidence.

Educational standard 4: All accredited self-assessment programs must provide participants with a process to record their answers to the assessment questions.

Recording answers to each assessment question will enable the self-assessment program to provide participants with a summary of their responses to each question.

Educational Standard 5: The self-assessment program must provide detailed feedback to participants on their performance to enable the identification of any areas requiring improvement through the development of a future learning plan.

Providing specific feedback on which answers were correct and incorrect with references enables specialists to determine if there are important aspects of their knowledge, skills, clinical judgment or attitudes that need to be addressed through engaging in further learning activities.

You may also wish to include a reflective tool that provides participants with an opportunity to document:

- Knowledge or skills that are up-to-date or consistent with current evidence
- Any deficiencies or opportunities they identified for further learning
- What learning strategies will be pursued to address these deficiencies; and
- An action plan or commitment to change to address any anticipated barriers

Educational Standard 6: The self-assessment program must provide participants with an opportunity to evaluate the overall program and each individual module (if applicable).

Accredited self-assessment programs must provide participants with an opportunity to evaluate each individual module(s), if applicable, and the overall CPD activity. The evaluation system must:

- Allow participants to identify whether the individual session and overall CPD activity learning objectives were met;
- Ask participants to identify whether the content was balanced and free of commercial or other inappropriate bias;
- Provide opportunities for participants to identify the potential impact of the CPD activity for their practice.

Additional evaluation strategies may include:

- An intent to measure improved patient performance
- An intent to measure improved health care outcomes
- An option for participants to receive feedback related to their learning

Part C: Ethical standards

Note: All activities accredited after January 1, 2018 must comply with the National Standard for support of accredited CPD activities. The Standard applies to all situations where financial and in-kind support is accepted to contribute to the development, delivery and/or evaluation of accredited CPD activities.

The following ethical standards are derived from the CMA Guidelines for Physicians Interactions with Industry and must be met for self-assessment activities to be developed and approved for MOC Section 3.

Ethical Standard 1: The self-assessment development or scientific planning committee must have control over the topics, content and/or authors recruited to develop the self-assessment program.

The process by which the selection of the topic(s), content and/or author(s) are selected for a self-assessment program must be in the control of the self-assessment development or scientific planning committee at all times and cannot be influenced by commercial interest(s).

Ethical Standard 2: The self-assessment development or scientific planning committee must assume responsibility for ensuring the scientific validity, objectivity and balance of the content of the activity.

The scientific integrity and balance is a joint responsibility between the self-assessment development/planning committee and faculty/authors. The self-assessment development or scientific planning committee and faculty/authors cannot be influenced by commercial interest(s). The self-assessment development or scientific planning committee cannot include members from pharmaceutical, medical supply, medical education, or other for-profit companies.

The self-assessment development and scientific planning committee must be representative of the target audience, and industry should never be a focus for educational activities eligible for credit within the MOC Program. Inclusion of members from industry or other for-profit companies on the planning committee is strictly prohibited.

Ethical Standard 3: The self-assessment development or scientific planning committee must disclose to participants all financial affiliations of faculty, moderators or members of the planning committee (within the past two years) with any commercial organization(s).

All faculty, speakers, authors, self-assessment development and/or scientific planning committee members must complete Conflict of Interest Declaration forms irrespective of whether a direct conflict exists. Forms must be submitted to the planning committee prior to the start of the CPD activity.

The Royal College defines a conflict of interest as a situation(s) that may occur where the personal and professional interests of individuals may have actual, potential or apparent influence over their judgment and actions. There must be policies and procedures place for the planning committee to manage identified conflicts of interest once they are disclosed.

All development/scientific planning committee members, faculty, speakers and/or authors must:

1. Disclose, in writing, all financial or 'in kind' relationships, regardless of the relevance to the subject being discussed, for the previous two (2) years. It is the presenter's responsibility to ensure that their presentation (and any recommendations) are balanced and reflect the current scientific literature.
2. Unapproved use of products or services must be declared within the presentation. The only caveat to this guideline is where there is only one treatment or management strategy.
3. All disclosures must be done verbally, displayed in writing on a slide at the beginning of a presentation or included in the written CPD activity materials.
4. Examples of relationships that must be disclosed include (but not limited to):
 - Any direct financial interest in a commercial entity such as a pharmaceutical organization, medical devices company or communications firm (" the Organization")
 - Investments held in the Organization
 - Membership on the Organization's Advisory Board or similar committee
 - Current or recent participation in a clinical trial sponsored by the Organization
 - Member of a Speakers Bureau
 - Holding a patent for a product referred to in the CME/CPD activity or that is marketed by a commercial organization
5. Failure to disclose or false disclosure may require the Planning Committee to replace the speaker.

Note: *The accredited CPD provider or physician organization should consider implementing mitigation policies or strategies to manage any potential or identified conflicts of interest or bias.*

Ethical Standard 4: All funds received in support of the self-assessment program must be provided in the form of an educational grant payable to the physician organization.

Sponsors may provide support for a CPD activity in the form of an educational grant payable to the physician organization or "in kind" support. In kind support can include (but is not limited to) logistical support, goods or services to support the educational activities, learning resources or tools.

Additional funds management responsibilities of the physician organization(s) include:

- The physician organization(s) must assume responsibility for the distribution of funds to all faculty and speakers, including the payment of honoraria, travel, accommodations or hospitality.
- The physician organization can ONLY provide funding to support the travel, lodging, legitimate out of pocket expenses and any honoraria offered to members of the faculty, authors, or members of the planning committee and never for the CPD activity participants and/or their families.
- The physician organization is accountable to ensure that all hospitality and other in-kind arrangements are modest and paid for directly by the planning committee.
- Sponsors must be recognized in a location separately from the educational content.
- Tagging (defined by the Royal College as the linking or alignment of a sponsor's name to a specific educational session within an accredited group learning activity) is strictly prohibited.

Ethical Standard 5: No drug or product advertisements may appear on, or with, any of the written or presented materials for the self-assessment program.

Drug or product advertisements must not appear in any written materials or content, including but not limited to, preliminary or final programs, brochures, slides or advanced notifications.

Ethical Standard 6: Generic names must be used, or both generic and trade names, on all content related to the self-assessment program.

It is the responsibility of the self-assessment development/ planning committee and faculty to ensure that presentations and all related content and materials be consistent in their use of just generic names, or both generic and trade name. Therapeutic recommendations for medications that have not received regulatory approval ("off-label" use of medication) must be declared to the audience during the presentation and in all materials.

Additional Resources

ACCREDITATION PROCESS

1. Review the CPD accreditation standards.
2. Contact a Royal College accredited CPD provider to obtain the appropriate forms, policies and procedures or applicable fees for having the program reviewed and accredited. (*See Directory of Accredited CPD Providers below under Useful Web Links*).
3. Once the activity is accredited, certificates of participation and activity promotional materials can be updated to include the applicable accreditation statement.

USEFUL WEB LINKS

- [Accredited CPD Provider Tools and Resources](#)
- [CMA Guidelines](#)
- [Directory of Accredited CPD Providers](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#)
- [Learning objectives](#)
- [Maintenance of Certification \(MOC\) Program](#)
- [Needs assessments](#)