

NC Board for Licensing of Geologists

Revised Guidelines for Continuing Professional Education (CE) - Effective July 1, 2022

WHAT IS REQUIRED FOR CE

- The North Carolina Board for Licensing of Geologists (the Board) requires each licensee to earn 12 hours of continuing professional education (CE) of Board-approved CE each license year (July 1 to June 30) as a condition of licensure renewal per 21 NCAC 21.0400.
- One hour of contact time is credited as one hour of CE (21 NCAC 21 .0403). CE can be accrued in quarter-hour increments per 21 NCAC 21 .0404 (c).
- CE must be reported accurately and ethically and reflect the amount of CE allowable per these guidelines.
- Licensees are required to report only those CE contact hours that are relevant to the practice of geology per 21 NCAC 21 .0405.

HOW TO DETERMINE CE APPLICABILITY

- A flow chart is provided below to guide licensees through the applicability determination for CE.
- Licensees are *strongly* encouraged to submit CE from [Pre-Approved Providers](#). Licensees should determine if the course content (or portions thereof) is relevant to the practice of geology.
- The Board will **no longer require** Board approval for each activity. Instead, licensees should complete a [Self-Assessment Form](#) for each CE activity to determine applicability. The licensee should maintain records (i.e., Self-Assessment Form, proof of attendance, course description/outline, etc.) for a period of 3 years.
- Continuing education providers seeking pre-approval for the organization or for a specific course may submit information to the Board office from up to 90 days before, to no later than 180 days after the course is offered. An agenda and course description must be submitted with the application and the relevant CE content clearly identified for Board review. This information should include how the contact hours of the activity were derived and an explanation of how the activity is relevant to the practice of geology. Applications for CE Approval may be submitted within 90 days before to 180 days after the event occurs (21 NCAC 21. 0404(e)). Incomplete or illegible applications will be returned without review. The Board maintains a [list of approved courses](#) for use by licensees.

WHAT IS ACCEPTABLE FOR CE

- Acceptable continuing education is identified in 21 NCAC 21. 0404(d) and can be evaluated by each licensee using the [Self-Assessment Form](#).
- To count towards CE, the content of the course or activity **must be technical in nature and must focus on geology or geologically related activities**, at a level commensurate with the professional standing and activities of the licensee.
- CE should be presented in an organized fashion by qualified individuals, such as subject matter experts, with the goal of enhancing the geologic knowledge of the participant. Examples include college courses, seminars, workshops, field trips, and virtual events.
- Conferences should be submitted as one activity. For conferences that include non-geologic content, or conferences with concurrent sessions, licensees should maintain records that identify the applicable sessions attended.

WHAT IS NOT ACCEPTABLE FOR CE

- Receptions, social events, internal corporate training, and practice building activities (*e.g.*, business functions) are generally unacceptable for CE.
- Service on boards or commissions and self-study are not acceptable for CE.
- Breaks and meals are not acceptable as CE unless there is an appropriate instructional element provided concurrently (*e.g.*, lunch speaker or poster session).
- Training that is not related to the practice of geology such as basic computer training or safety and regulatory training, is not acceptable.

- Training that is outside of the scope of geology, such as construction or engineering courses, may not be used to fulfill the CE requirement.
- CE for attendance of meetings, trade shows, conferences, workshops, classes, webinars, and symposiums hosted by non-geologic organizations typically provide limited content that can be used for CE. **Licensees should review the content of these events carefully to determine if they are relevant to the practice of geology utilizing the [Self-Assessment Form](#).**

HOW TO CALCULATE CE

- 21 NCAC 21.0404(c) defines each hour of instruction as one hour of CE. Some providers may define CE differently, and licensees are responsible to ensure CEs reported to the NCBLG accurately represent contact time.
- Partial CE hours should be rounded to the nearest quarter of an hour (21 NCAC 21.0404(C)).

HOW TO DOCUMENT CE

- Each licensee is required to maintain a log of CE earned and provide information as defined in 21 NCAC 21.0404(a) as part of the annual renewal process.
- If the activity is organized by a [Pre-Approved Provider](#) the approval code entered on the Activity Log will be the acronym for the provider, included parenthetically after the provider's name on the list posted on the Board website (*e.g.*, if the course or activity was sponsored by the American Association of Petroleum Geologists, the approval code would be AAPG).
- When reporting CE earned for attending conferences, report the conference as one activity. If the number of CE contact hours are not provided by the sponsoring organization, estimate the total number of CE contact hours you attended that were focused on geology.
- It is the responsibility of the licensee to obtain documentation that verifies the completion of all CE. In the event of a CE audit, any unverified hours will be forfeited. To document participation in CE activities, licensees should retain annual Activity Logs, registration receipts, brochures, attendance verification records such as certificates of completion, confirmation of hours, and other documentation confirming attendance. Preferred forms of documentation include attendance certificates provided by the sponsoring organization, confirmation of hours, letters of acknowledgement, and email confirmation of attendance. Per 21 NCAC 21 .0406, licensees should retain CE records for **three years** in case of an audit.

ANNUAL REPORT OF CE EARNED

- A summary of CE information is reported with and **required** for the annual license renewal. Licensees are not required to send documentation of CE earned unless requested to do so by Board Staff.
- A maximum of 12 hours per year may be carried over into the following renewal year per 21 NCAC 21 .0404(b)

AUDIT OF CE

- The Board will perform an audit of licensees each year. Those who are audited will be required to electronically submit documentation of their attendance or completion of CE. Other documentation may be approved by the Board at their discretion.
- During an audit, if the CE is determined to be unacceptable by the Board based on information provided by the licensee (*e.g.*, proof of attendance, course description, Self-Assessment form), the Board may offer a grace period of 60 days for the licensee to complete additional CE hours that may be lacking.

EXEMPTIONS

- Exemptions for CE may apply per 21 NCAC 21 .0407.
- New licensees *by way of examination* are exempt from the CE requirement for their first license renewal; these licensees will be required to report 12 hours of Board approved CE with their second license renewal. New licensees by comity are required to report 12 CE hours with their first renewal.
- Geologists on inactive status are not required to obtain or report CE hours. However, a geologist returning to active status is required to document 12 hours of Board approved CE in the license year prior to reinstatement per 21 NCAC 21 .0303(g).

- Licensed geologists serving in the armed forces eligible for an extension of the federal tax return deadline may submit a written request for an extension of time to complete the CE requirements.
- Geologists experiencing illness, disability, or other extenuating circumstances may submit a written request with supporting documents to the Board, requesting an exemption from/extension of the CE requirement.

CE Guidance Flowchart

