

Professional Development Guidelines Dispensing Opticians & Contact Lens Fitters

- The Nova Scotia College of Dispensing Opticians requires all Dispensing Opticians and Contact Lens Fitters to obtain mandatory professional development credits on an ongoing basis.
- The continuing education year runs from January 1 of any year to March 31 the following year.
- Contact Lens Fitters have additional credit requirements to those required by Dispensing Opticians.
- A variety of professional development topics will be considered to enhance dispensing skills, customer relations skills, business skills and advancing technology.

1. Categories of Mandatory Continuing Education

There are four categories of mandatory continuing education

1. Eyeglass Dispensing
2. Contact Lenses Dispensing
3. Professional Service
4. Related Fields

2. Providers of Continuing Education

The College anticipates the source of the mandatory continuing education to be:

1. Canadian Educational Institutions with Accredited Opticians Programs
2. Canadian Provincial or National Opticians Associations
3. Canadian Provincial or National Organizations recognized by the College
4. Related Organizations or Corporations

3. Required Mandatory Continuing Education Credits

3.1 Dispensing Opticians (DO's) are required to obtain:

- ❖ 8 credits over the one-year continuing education cycle
- ❖ Minimum **4** credits in "Eyeglass Dispensing"
- ❖ Maximum **4** credits from "Professional Service and/or Related Fields"
- ❖ **70%** of the total requirements (**5 credits**) must come from the Provider Categories 1-3; as outlined in **(2)** above.
- ❖ The remaining **30%** or (**3 credits**) may come from other sources.

3.2 Certified Contact Lens Fitters (CCLF's) are required to obtain:

- ❖ 10 credits over the one-year continuing education cycle
- ❖ Minimum **3** credits in “Contact Lens Dispensing”
- ❖ Minimum **3** credits in “Eyeglass Dispensing”
- ❖ Maximum **4** credits in “Professional Service and/or Related Fields”
- ❖ **70%** of the total requirements (**7 credits**) must come from the Provider Categories 1-3; as outlined in **(2)** above.
- ❖ The remaining **30%** or (**3 credits**) may come from other sources.

Credits obtained in the last quarter (January to March) of any year may be advanced to the next cycle if the required number of credits has been attained.

It is the registrant’s responsibility to advise the College that you wish to have the surplus carried over to the following cycle.

4. Non-Practicing Registrants

To remain current Non-Practicing; Registrants are required to complete the same number of credits as Practicing Registrants.

5. Suspended Registrants

Persons who have had registrations suspended will be required to fulfill mandatory continuing education requirements before returning to registered status. Prior to registration, the Registration Committee, in consultation with the Professional Development Committee will determine the appropriate requirement.

6. Continuing Education Accreditation Submission Procedures

6.1 An "Accreditation Form for Professional Development" must be filled out by the Presenter and returned to the Nova Scotia College of Opticians’ Office; accompanied by all required attachments.

6.2 The presentation will be reviewed by the Professional Development Committee and credits awarded in one of five categories.

7. Definition of Categories

The Professional Development Committee will assign approved courses for the following five categories:

EG – “Eyeglass Dispensing” - Must be used toward an Eyeglass Dispensing Credit

CL – “Contact Lens Dispensing” - Must be used toward a Contact Lens Dispensing Credit for CCLF's or Related Field credit for DO's.

EC – “Eyeglass/Contact Lens Dispensing” - May be used toward an Eyeglass or Contact Lens Credit

PS - "Professional Service" Must be used for Professional Service Credit

RF – “Related Fields” Must be used toward a Related Fields Credit

The presentation will be given a course number for reference purposes on the Continuing Education Course Participation Forms.

These three part forms will be filled out by each Registrant with name, address, license number and signed by the sponsoring agency.

The Registrant retains one copy, one by the Presenter and one is returned to the Nova Scotia College of Dispensing Opticians Office to be entered into the database by the Registrar.

8. Suitable Mandatory Continuing Education Courses

The Professional Development Committee will consider an expansive list of topic categories. Courses in the following categories will be assigned credits on an individual basis. Sponsors wishing to offer courses are required to complete and submit the “Application for Continuing Education Credit” to the Professional Development Committee for accreditation.

8.1 Eyeglass Dispensing

- Lens seminars, lens design, materials and dispensing techniques
- Frame seminars, materials and advancements
- Tints, coating, sunglass lenses, transmission and absorptive properties
- Tools and adjustments
- Equipment, such as diagnostic, surfacing, edging, vision screening
- Ocular Anatomy and Physiology
- Visual Optics
- Others

8.2 Contact Lens Dispensing

- Ocular Anatomy and Physiology
- Pharmacology
- Lens Design and Manufacture
- Lens Material
- Specialty Lens Fitting
- Sponsor a Student
- Others

8.3 Professional Service Opticianry

College registrants attending or serving on College and/or Association Boards or Committees will receive credits as follows for performing professional services:

- Attendance at College (NSCDO) AGM 1 credit per year
- Attendance at Association (NSSDO) AGM 1 credit per year
- Practical Examination Examiner 2 credit per year

- Course Instructor 6 cr/per year in the applicable category
- Sponsor a Student 2 EC cr per year for applicable category
- Con Ed Lecture Preparation & Presentation 2 credit per presentation
- College Board of Directors 2 EC / 2 PS credits per year
- Association Board of Directors 2 EC / 2 PS credits per year
- Committee Member 2 credits per year
- Medical Missionary Work 4 credit per year for optical dispensing
- Practicum Supervisor's Course 4 credits per year
- A written and published article on Opticianry 4 credits per year maximum.
- Vision Screening 4 credits per year
- Others

8.4 Related Fields

- Marketing Techniques Both Internal and External
- Financial Planning, Business, Personal Human Relationships
- Ophthalmic Surgical Techniques and Advances
- Community Service, Including Serving on and Attending Professionally Related Boards and Committees
- Emergency Medical Courses, CPR and Emergency Intervention
- Computer Courses
- Other

9. Certification of Courses

Course attendance certificates must be completed by the sponsoring agency and given to the Registrant.

10. Responsibilities of the Registrant

- All Registrants are responsible for submitting the appropriate continuing education certificates to the Nova Scotia College of Dispensing Opticians.
- The Registrant is advised to keep a copy of education certificates to reconcile against the College Register.
- It is the Registrant's responsibility to resubmit certificates to the College when requested to do so.
- It is the responsibility of the individual applying for or submitting materials already taken to provide all necessary and relevant documents as outlined in "criteria for submitting course material" in order to be considered for continuing education credits.
- Following the guidelines for course submission does not ensure course acceptance and accreditation.