



## LA CES™ Program Manual

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### **Landscape Architecture Continuing Education System™**

*A collaboration of the American Society of Landscape Architects, Canadian Society of Landscape Architects, Council of Educators in Landscape Architecture, Council of Landscape Architectural Registration Boards, Landscape Architectural Accreditation Board, and the Landscape Architecture Foundation.*

### **Introduction**

The Landscape Architecture Continuing Education System (LA CES) establishes, maintains, and enforces standards for evaluating professional development and continuing education programs for landscape architects. Continuing education has never been more important for professionals; it is needed to stay up to date in the profession, to develop new areas of expertise, and is mandated for maintaining licensure in many jurisdictions. LA CES guides professionals in identifying courses that are appropriate for landscape architects and are offered by legitimate organizations that have controls and processes in place to monitor quality and track attendance.

### **Mission**

The mission of the LA CES program is to assure landscape architects and licensing boards that courses provided by LA CES approved providers are of sufficient quality. Only providers that have met LA CES requirements may register courses with LA CES. Registered courses cover a broad range of subject matter and providers are required to identify those courses that meet the LA CES standard of health, safety, and welfare subject matter.

## Approved Provider Guidelines

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### **Provider Approval**

Providers must apply to receive recognition as an LA CES approved provider. Applications are reviewed for approval by the LA CES Application Review Committee.

### **Course Registration**

Approved providers must register courses to promote them in marketing materials or in any other way as being listed under the Landscape Architecture Continuing Education System. Approved providers must submit a description of the course, instructor name(s), scheduled date(s), and contacts (website, email) for potential participants to use to access registration information. This information becomes part of the online, searchable LA CES course database. All LA CES approved provider courses must be evaluated and re-registered, at minimum, every two (2) years.



## Recordkeeping and Reporting

Attendance of landscape architects must be confirmed. Approved providers must issue a confirmation and verification of completion for each participant who completes a registered course. Confirmations must contain essential information such as the name of the provider, participant's name, course title, date, and the number of professional development hours issued. Attendance must be reported on the LA CES website within twenty (20) business days of the event using the template provided. Approved providers must be able to provide participants with verification of their participation on request for a minimum of six (6) years. In addition, approved providers must keep copies of all course materials for a minimum of six (6) years.

## Approval Criteria

Continuing professional education providers seeking LA CES approved provider status for educational course offerings must meet the following criteria:

1. *Registered courses must adhere to the LA CES definition of continuing professional education: Continuing professional education consists of learning experiences that enhance and expand the skills, knowledge, and abilities of practicing landscape architects to remain current and render competent professional service to clients and the public.*

This definition should be viewed broadly to encompass the wide range of competencies and proficiencies needed by design professionals to perform in varied practice settings.

2. *Registered courses must specify whether the primary subject matter qualifies as meeting the LA CES health, safety, and welfare (HSW) definition.*

Seventy-five (75) percent of the course material must qualify under this definition for courses to be identified as meeting the health, safety, and welfare standard. ([Learn more](#) about determining the HSW classification.)

3. *Registered courses must comply with LA CES guidelines in the assignment of professional development hours (PDH). All courses must be at least 1 PDH in length.*

([Learn more](#) for more about calculating PDH and distance education requirements.)

4. *Registered courses must be planned in response to the learning needs of target audiences and include clear and concise written statements of learning objectives/outcomes. Providers are required to include a minimum of three learning objectives/outcomes for each course.*

Learning objectives/outcomes are written statements of what the learner is expected to accomplish as a result of the course. Following are some examples of learning objectives/outcomes:

- Learn how to determine the major functions and components of a green roof.
- Identify the factors that influence costs.



- Learn how to utilize an integrated design process in your project for maximum benefit.

5. *Registered courses must use qualified instructional personnel in course development and delivery; include content and instructional methods that are appropriate for the intended learning objectives/outcomes; and use materials that do not contain proprietary information, are educational and generic in nature, and serve to reinforce the learning objectives.*

*Course instructors should have experience, knowledge, and credentials relevant to the course they are teaching. The instructor should not act as a salesperson to promote any products or services.*

*All course content and materials must be educational and may not be commercial. The promotion or discussion of proprietary information is strictly forbidden during the course.*

6. *Registered courses must include a mechanism for assessing participant attainment of the learning objectives/outcomes.*

Attainment of learning objectives/outcomes may be demonstrated in many ways such as:

- Participant evaluation of the registered course.
- Questions and answers.
- Discussion, summaries, case studies.
- Demonstrations, simulations, games, in-basket exercises.
- Written (required for distance education) or oral examinations, written exercises, reports.
- Projects, plans, decision-making exercises.

Learner demonstration may be done during, on conclusion, or after the learning activity. Regardless of when it is done, learner demonstrations should be an integral part of the learning process. Whether or not scores are provided for each learner depends on the intent of the course. Participants should be advised in advance of what is to be required.

7. *Registered courses must be evaluated by participants and issue a confirmation and verification of completion for each participant who completes a course.*

Evaluations should capture specific information for providers to use to improve courses/programs. ([Download](#) the model evaluation form.)

Confirmations should contain essential information such as the name of the sponsor; participant's name; course title; date; whether the course meets the health, safety, and welfare criterion; a brief descriptive statement of content; and the number of professional development hours issued. ([How to Generate](#) a certificate of completion.)

8. *Registered courses must maintain complete attendance records that are available to participants on request for a minimum of six (6) years and have a review*



*process in operation that ensures that LA CES criteria are met. In addition, approved providers must keep copies of all course materials for a minimum of six (6) years.*

Attendance records must be reported on the LA CES website within twenty (20) days of the completion of the event using the template provided. In jointly sponsored programs the responsibility for attendance records, ensuring the criteria are met, and retention of course materials rests with the organization issuing the professional development hours.

### **Application Process**

To qualify for application, providers must be constituted as follows:

1. Organizations such as manufacturers, service groups, and firms.
2. Schools, colleges, or universities that are regionally or nationally accredited by an agency recognized by the US Department of Education or the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (as appropriate for the institution).
3. Professional associations or other not-for-profit or nonprofit organizations.
4. Federal, state, or local government agencies.

Application forms are accepted for review throughout the year. Applications must be complete and accompanied by provider fees. The following steps will help guide organizations through the application process for LA CES approval:

1. Check to make sure your organization meets the application qualifications for becoming an LA CES approved provider.
2. Study the approval criteria for a complete understanding of what each criterion statement means. Seek guidance from LA CES if necessary.
3. Review each of your responses on the application against the criteria to identify potential weaknesses of your processes.
4. Work to strengthen those weaknesses until your organization is satisfied that it fully meets each criterion. Seek guidance from LA CES if necessary.
5. File a formal application, supporting materials, and pay provider fee.

Applications are forwarded to the LA CES Application Review Committee for evaluation. Applicants are contacted if clarification of information is needed and notified of acceptance, deferral, or denial within thirty (30) days of receipt. When applications are deferred or denied, specific written causes for the action are provided to the applicant. In most cases, applications would be deferred or denied because the application is incomplete or it is clear that at least one of the qualifying criteria has not been met. Applicants may reapply at any time once the cause for deferral or denial has been addressed.

### **Monitoring Process**

LA CES has a responsibility to maintain the integrity and quality of programs offered by approved providers; therefore, LA CES reserves the right to:

- Monitor registered courses and operations as part of periodic random samplings of approved providers.



- Terminate use of the LA CES designation when there is ample evidence that approved providers are not upholding LA CES education criteria and commitments to follow LA CES guidelines.

The LA CES Monitoring Committee annually reviews a minimum of ten (10) percent of approved providers to determine compliance with LA CES guidelines and procedures. LA CES recognition is withdrawn for failure to comply with the criteria and the conditions of qualification. Approved providers are notified in writing of any failure to comply and have a probationary period of thirty (30) days from receipt of notification to demonstrate compliance. If approved providers fail to comply with conditions for acceptance by the end of the thirty (30) day probationary period, registration is withdrawn and providers are removed from the LA CES program.

Withdrawal of LA CES approved provider status may be appealed to the LA CES Administrative Committee within thirty (30) days of receipt of notification. The cost of such appeals is borne by the provider. Appeals consist of a presentation to a three (3) member panel chosen from among the LA CES participating organizations and other approved providers; one panel member must be from an approved provider that is not one of the LA CES participating organizations. Appeal panel decisions are binding and final.

Organizations that have had approved provider status withdrawn by LA CES may apply for reinstatement. Such organizations must wait for a period of one (1) year from the date of withdrawal before submitting an application.

### **Approved Provider Benefits and Fees**

The introductory annual fee for LA CES approved providers is \$399. Approved providers may deliver educational courses or programs to learners through direct contact and/or distance learning formats. Direct contact formats include seminars, panels, debates, demonstrations, site tours, workshops, or any activity in which the learner is not separated from the instructor, other learners, or instructional resources. Distance learning formats include live webinars, recording webinars, or self-study materials that use any combination of print and electronic media. Approved provider benefits include authorization to publicize the organization as an LA CES recognized provider; and license to use the LA CES designation in promotion of related educational programs.

### **LA CES Approved Provider Logo/Designation**

The LA CES logo/designation may be used only by LA CES approved providers in marketing educational programs registered with LA CES. The logo/designation is available for download in the approved provider section of the LA CES website and must be used on all educational and promotional materials produced by the approved provider for the length of the provider's registration period. Educational and promotional materials must also identify courses that meet the LA CES health, safety, and welfare definition. Use of the LA CES approved provider logo/designation is effective for a period of one (1) year from the date of qualification. Thirty (30) days prior to expiration, a renewal notice will be sent to approved providers.



## Administration

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The LA CES program is administered through a collaboration of landscape architecture organizations, including: the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA); Canadian Society of Landscape Architects (CSLA); Council of Educators in Landscape Architecture (CELA); Council of Landscape Architectural Registration Boards (CLARB); Landscape Architectural Accreditation Board (LAAB); and Landscape Architecture Foundation (LAF). These organizations have agreed on the LA CES Approved Provider Guidelines and are responsible for program management and oversight.

ASLA provides staffing and overhead for program administration, including: management and maintenance of the online, searchable LA CES course database; committee and customer service support; and accounting, communications/marketing, and other professional/technical resources. ASLA reports to the Administrative Committee on program operations and finances at least annually.

### Governing Rules and Procedures

LA CES governance includes an Administrative Committee, an Application Review Committee, and a Monitoring Committee. Participating organizations appoint one representative to each committee for a term of three (3) years, with one-third (1/3) of the members of each committee appointed each year. Representatives may be reappointed but may not serve concurrently on more than one committee. Terms begin on the first day of the year and end on the last day of the year. Representatives will continue in their duties until replaced by their successors. If a representative must resign of necessity or is released by the participating organization for failure to act or other cause, an interim representative is appointed by the participating organization to fulfill the remainder of the term.

Should a representative be unable to attend a meeting, the participating organization may appoint a proxy for that meeting by giving advance written notice to the committee. More than one half (1/2) of the entire membership of the committee present in person or by proxy constitutes a quorum for the transaction of business by the committee. Provided a quorum is present, a motion is approved by a simple majority of the votes cast.

The Administrative Committee serves as the LA CES governing body and all votes committing LA CES to any action or policy are taken at a duly called meeting or by mail ballot of the Administrative Committee. The Administrative Committee holds meetings as needed.

The Application Review Committee and the Monitoring Committee meet as frequently as the accumulation of business demands and at dates and times determined by the chair.

### Committees

The **Administrative Committee** is charged to: provide responsible management and oversight of the program and its committees; establish and amend existing



provider guidelines, approval criteria, application and monitoring processes, privileges, and benefits; set provider fees; review and render binding and final decisions in cases of challenge to denial of approved provider status by the Application Review Committee; appoint appeal panels to review and render binding and final decisions in cases of challenge to revocation of approved provider status by the Monitoring Committee; establish and dissolve such other committees or task forces as may be necessary to accomplish the program's mission; and establish and amend existing governing rules and procedures. Administrative Committee members regularly report back to their respective participating organizations on LA CES program operations and finances.

In accordance with the Application Process, the **Application Review Committee** is charged to: review all applications received for completeness and qualification under LA CES criteria for approved provider status; contact applicants if clarification of information is needed; and make a determination for acceptance, deferral, or denial within thirty (30) days of receipt.

In accordance with the Monitoring Process, the **Monitoring Committee** is charged to: annually review a minimum of ten (10) percent of approved providers to verify compliance with LA CES guidelines and procedures; notify approved providers in writing of any failure to comply and the need to demonstrate compliance within a thirty (30) day probationary period from receipt of notification; and, if approved providers fail to comply with conditions for acceptance by the end of the thirty (30) day probationary period, withdraw registration and remove the providers from the LA CES program. Compliance verification may include, but is not limited to: surveying approved providers; reviewing provider materials to include descriptions and evaluations; and surveying provider program attendees.



# LA CES™ Approved Provider Application

## Landscape Architecture Continuing Education System™

**An organization completing this application should already be offering continuing education programs that meet the LA CES criteria or planning to do so shortly.**

Name of organization: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State/Prov: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Country: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ Website: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary contact:  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Confirm: \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ Password: \_\_\_\_\_ Password Confirm: \_\_\_\_\_

Explain the nature and mission of your organization:  
\_\_\_\_\_

- Check below the statement that describes your organization:
- Legally constituted organization – manufacturer, service group, firm, other: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Regionally or nationally accredited school, college, or university – list accrediting agency below: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Professional association or other not-for-profit or nonprofit organization
  - Federal     State     Local government agency

*Criterion 1. Registered courses must adhere to the LA CES definition of continuing professional education: "Continuing professional education consists of learning experiences that enhance and expand the skills, knowledge, and abilities of practicing landscape architects to remain current and render competent professional service to clients and the public."*

- 1.1 Does your organization understand the LA CES definition of continuing professional education and agree to offer courses for landscape architects that meet this definition?
- Yes     No

*Criterion 2. Registered courses must specify whether the primary subject matter qualifies as meeting the LA CES health, safety, and welfare (HSW) definition. Seventy-five (75) percent of the course material must qualify under this definition for courses to be identified as meeting the LA CES health, safety, and welfare standard. ([Learn more](#) about determining the HSW classification.)*

- 2.1 Are courses offered by your organization designated as meeting the LA CES definition of health, safety, and welfare?
- Yes     No
- 2.2 If you answered "no" to question 2.1, does your organization agree to designate registered courses as meeting the LA CES health, safety, and welfare definition?
- Yes     No

*Criterion 3. Registered courses must comply with LA CES guidelines in the assignment of professional development hours (PDH). All courses must be at least 1 PDH in length. ([Learn more](#) about calculating*





*PDH and distance education requirements.)*

3.1 Does your organization follow LA CES guidelines in assigning professional development hours to registered courses?

Yes       No

3.2 If you answered "no" to question 3.1, does your organization agree to follow LA CES guidelines in assigning professional development hours to its registered courses?

Yes       No

*Criterion 4. Registered courses must be planned in response to the learning needs of target audiences and include clear and concise written statements of learning objectives/outcomes. Providers are required to include a minimum of three learning objectives/outcomes for each course.*

4.1 Briefly explain below how your organization determines which courses to offer for landscape architects:

4.2 Does your organization use an organized and systematic process for identifying the professional development needs of landscape architects?

Yes       No

4.3 Describe below any procedures, surveys, or materials that your organization uses to identify the educational needs of landscape architects (samples may be requested by the Application Review Committee):

4.4 Learning objectives/outcomes are written statements of what participants are expected to accomplish as a result of the course. Does your organization develop written learning objectives/outcomes? Check the most appropriate choice below.

Always       Sometimes       Never

4.5 If you answered "always" or "sometimes" to question 4.4, list below the learning objectives/outcomes of two (2) different courses your organization has sponsored. A minimum of three (3) learning objectives/outcomes is required for each course:

4.6 If you answered "never" to question 4.4, does your organization agree to develop written learning objectives/outcomes for all programs submitted to LA CES?

Yes       No

4.7 Submit in the spaces provided below example learning outcomes (you may use one of the examples provided in question 4.5), course outline, and seventy-five-to-one-hundred (75-100) word description of a course:



*Criterion 5. Registered courses must use qualified instructional personnel in course development and delivery; include content and instructional methods that are appropriate for the intended learning objectives/outcomes; and use materials that do not contain proprietary information, are educational and generic in nature, and serve to reinforce the learning objectives. Course instructors should have experience, knowledge, and credentials relevant to the course they are teaching. The instructor should not act as a salesperson to promote any products or services. All course content and materials must be educational, and may not be commercial. The promotion or discussion of proprietary information is strictly forbidden during the course.*

5.1 How does your organization determine the appropriate qualifications for personnel who develop courses:

5.2 How does your organization determine and evaluate the appropriate qualifications for personnel who deliver courses:

5.3 Does your organization evaluate courses to ensure that program content and instructional methods are appropriate for the intended learning objectives/outcomes?

Yes       No

5.4 If you answered "yes" to question 5.3, please list below any procedures, surveys, and/or other evaluation instruments your organization uses to ensure that program content and instructional methods are appropriate for the intended learning objectives/outcomes (samples may be requested by the Application Review Committee):

5.5 Does your organization follow LA CES criteria to use only materials that do not contain proprietary information?

Yes       No

*Criterion 6. Registered courses must include a mechanism for assessing participant attainment of the learning objectives/outcomes.*

6.1 How does your organization assess participant attainment of the learning objectives:

*Criterion 7. Registered courses must be evaluated by participants and issue a confirmation and verification of completion for each participant who completes a course. ([Download](#) a sample model evaluation form and [download](#) a sample certificate of completion.)*

7.1 Are courses offered by your organization evaluated by the participants?

Yes       No       Sometimes

7.2 Does your organization evaluate its programs in ways other than by participants?



- Yes       No       Sometimes

7.3 If you answered "yes" or "sometimes" to question 7.2, please explain the methods you use:

7.4 Does your organization provide certificates of completion to each individual who satisfactorily completes a course? (Samples may be requested by the Application Review Committee.)

- Yes       No

7.5 If you answered "no" to question 7.4, how does your organization provide confirmation of attendance to participants:

*Criterion 8. Registered courses must maintain complete attendance records that are available to participants on request for a minimum of six (6) years and have a review process in operation that ensures that LA CES criteria are met. Attendance records must be reported on the LA CES website within twenty (20) days of the completion of the event using the template provided. In addition, approved providers must keep copies of all course materials for a minimum of six (6) years. In jointly sponsored programs the responsibility for attendance records, ensuring the criteria are met, and retention of course materials rests with the organization issuing the professional development hours.*

8.1 Does your organization agree to maintain complete attendance records for registered courses with confirmations available to participants on request for a minimum of six (6) years, and to submit records to LA CES within twenty (20) business days?

- Yes       No

8.2 Describe your organization's recordkeeping system for participant records:

8.3 Does your organization have an internal review process currently in operation that ensures the LA CES criteria are met for each program? (An internal review process should indicate the roles and responsibilities of individuals who are knowledgeable of the LA CES criteria and review each program for compliance with the criteria.)

- Yes       No

8.4 If you answered "yes" to question 8.3, please insert any written policy or describe your organization's criteria review process below:

8.5 If you answered "no" to question 8.3, does your organization agree to develop an internal review process?

- Yes       No

8.6 Does your organization agree to keep all course materials for a minimum of six (6) years? (Copies of these materials may be requested by the LA CES Monitoring Committee or state licensure boards.)

- Yes       No

## LA CES™ Approved Provider Agreement

As an applicant our organization agrees to:



1. Provide accurate and truthful information to LA CES in all transactions to the best of our knowledge.
2. Conduct our operations and programs in an ethical manner that respects the rights and worth of the professionals we serve.
3. Provide full and accurate disclosure of information about our programs, services, and fees in our promotional materials.
4. Use only the LA CES approved statement of provider recognition on our promotional and educational materials, with the understanding that participation in the LA CES program does not automatically qualify courses as meeting any state continuing education regulations as this decision rests with the state.
5. Only identify courses registered with LA CES as being recognized by LA CES.
6. Report to LA CES any major organizational or program changes within thirty (30) days that impact the operation of the administrative unit on which provider qualifications are based.
7. Accept LA CES monitoring of any programs we provide for purposes of compliance with the criteria.
8. Furnish requested information, work cooperatively with LA CES, and pay fees on a timely basis.
9. Operate within the LA CES criteria and the terms of this agreement or relinquish our approval status after due process.
10. On notification from LA CES, abide by any revisions of the criteria or inform LA CES of our intention to withdraw.

Name of organization: \_\_\_\_\_

agrees to abide by all of the foregoing terms and conditions and affirms that the information contained in this application is true to the best of my knowledge.

Primary Contact:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_  
 : \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_



## Determining Public Health, Safety, and Welfare (HSW) Classification

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### Appendix A

Professional development takes the form of a wide range of subjects that relate directly and indirectly to the practice of landscape architecture. In some jurisdictions, licensees must obtain continuing education that pertains to public health, safety, and welfare (HSW).

This system requires providers to classify HSW courses as those in which at least seventy-five (75) percent of the subject matter applies the principles of mathematical, physical, and social sciences in consultation, evaluation, planning, design (including, but not limited to the preparation and filing of plans, drawings, specifications, and other contract documents), and administration of contracts relative to projects principally directed at the functional and aesthetic use and preservation of land. These subjects may include, but are not limited to:

- Building codes
- Code of ethics
- Codes, acts, laws, and regulations governing the practice of landscape architecture
- Construction administration, including construction contracts
- Construction documents
- Design of environmental systems
- Environmental process and analysis
- Erosion control methods
- Grading
- Horticulture
- Irrigation methods
- Land planning and land use analysis
- Landscape preservation, landscape restoration and adaptive reuse
- Lateral forces
- Natural hazards – impact of earthquake, hurricane, fire, or flood related to site design
- Pedestrian and vehicular circulation
- Planting design
- Resource conservation and management
- Roadway design principles
- Site accessibility, including Americans with Disabilities Act standards for accessible site design
- Site and soils analysis
- Site design and engineering, including materials, methods, technologies, and applications
- Site security and safety
- Storm water management, surface and subsoil drainage
- Structural systems considerations
- Surveying methods and techniques as they affect landscape architecture
- Sustainable design, including techniques related to energy efficiency



- Use of site materials and methods of site construction
- Vegetative management
- Wetlands
- Zoning as it relates to the improvement and/or protection of the public health, safety, and welfare
- Other matters of law and ethics that contribute to the health, safety, and welfare of the public

The following subjects should not be designated as HSW:

- Accounting/financial planning
- Basic AutoCAD
- Expanding a design professional's business
- General office management
- Insurance
- Laws related to arbitration, mediation, liens (unless they relate to safeguarding the health, safety, and welfare of the public), real estate, real estate development
- Limiting the design professional's liability
- Marketing and public relations
- Personal development
- Project management related to profitability and maximizing fees
- Risk management
- Succession planning



## Calculating Professional Development Hours

### Appendix B

Professional development hours (PDH) is the term that LA CES uses to measure how much credit a course carries. The American Institute of Architects uses learning units. Other organizations use the term continuing education unit (CEU).

All courses must be at least one PDH in length. One (1) professional development hour is a contact hour of at least fifty (50) minutes of instruction. Additional measures are in fifteen (15) minute increments; therefore, a ninety (90) minute course is one-and-a-half (1.5) professional development hours.

If courses are longer than one (1) hour in duration, time spent on breaks and meals will not count toward the number of hours. Travel time for courses with a travel component is also not counted unless directed learning is taking place on the trip.

### Site Tours

One professional development hour (PDH) requires at least 50 minutes of instruction. Additional time is measured in 15-minute increments. Only instructional time is eligible for PDH credit.

PDH credit is not eligible for the following:

- Non-instructional activities or breaks (i.e. bathroom breaks);
- Meal breaks unless facilitated instruction takes place;
- Travel time to stops unless facilitated instruction takes place. Facilitated discussion during travel can count toward PDH if it takes place in a controlled environment (e.g. charter bus) and not on public transportation;
- Time for participants to move between session stops or disembark a bus.

For example, a session that takes place from 9am – 5pm with one hour for lunch, two 15-minute breaks and one hour of total travel time would be eligible for 5.5 PDH. See the chart below for the PDH breakdown.

Session Hours	9am – 5pm	8 hours
Time not eligible for PDH	Lunch	- 1 hour
	Two Breaks	- .5 hour
	Travel to Session	- .5 hour
	Travel from Session	- .5 hour
<b>PDH Credit</b>		<b>5.5 hours</b>

### Distance Education

Distance education is offered whenever the instructor and student are not located in the same place; therefore, distance education includes correspondence, web-based courses, videos, etc. Since the instructor is not present, distance education programs must include a testing component to verify that the participant has successfully



completed the program. Courses can be either *real-time* (where the instructor and learners are engaging in the learning activity at the same time) or *asynchronous* (where instructor and learners are separated by time and are not engaging in the learning activity simultaneously).

To determine the appropriate number of professional development hours for asynchronous distance education courses without specific time frames, the LA CES program requires signed affidavits from a sample population. These affidavits must include the names and contact information from at least five (5) individuals stating the length of time it took them to complete the course. Keep in mind that breaks away from the learning activity or time not directly related to the educational process do not qualify (e.g., breaks, lunch, etc.). No more than one (1) of the participants can be employed by the LA CES approved provider submitting the course.

The affidavits must:

- State the name and contact information of the individual sampling the course
- State the length of time it took him or her to complete the course (excluding breaks, lunch, etc.)
- Include the individual's relationship to the company
- Include professional credentials that qualify him or her to sample the course
- Be submitted to the provider with the individual's signature—electronic signatures will be accepted

After the approved provider submits all completed and signed affidavits to LA CES Administrators, the total number of professional development hours is calculated by averaging the total time of the pilot student group.

**Learn more** about distance education in Appendix C: Distance Education Requirements.

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LA CES education programs may qualify toward state continuing education licensing requirements in landscape architecture where mandated. **Learn more** about states that have mandatory continuing education requirements.





## Distance Education Requirements

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### Appendix C

LA CES approved providers may offer distance education courses after the approved provider has submitted additional information to demonstrate compliance with the LA CES distance education requirements.

Distance education is a useful and convenient method for landscape architects to engage in professional development and earn continuing education credit. Distance education is a viable alternative to traditional, classroom style programs. It is a practical way to provide landscape architects ready access for ongoing, state-of-the-art, and up-to-date continuing education and it may be a substitute or supplement for traditional continuing education programs such as workshops, conferences, or seminars.

Distance education is defined as: A method of instruction where there is a separation of place and/or time between the instructor and learner, between fellow learners, and/or the learners and the learning resources. These courses may use several delivery methods, used alone or in combination. Courses can be either *real-time* (where the instructor and learners are engaging in the learning activity at the same time) or *asynchronous* (where instructor and learners are separated by time and are not engaging in the learning activity simultaneously).

Distance education courses can be offered through various delivery methods. The course may use a single medium (e.g., Zoom, Teams, webinar recording, etc.), or a combination of sources (e.g., self-paced learning, hybrid).

As with any learning activity, priority should be given to the subject content and desired outcome. The method of delivery should be based on the course's learning objectives and the preferred effect.

### Proof of Competency Required

Since the instructor is not present, distance education programs must include a testing component to verify that the participant has successfully completed the program.

All LA CES distance education programs require a test or proof of competency. For the first hour of credit a test must have a minimum of ten (10) questions with a pass/fail rate of seventy-five (75) percent. A minimum of two (2) additional questions are required for each additional hour.

### Process

An approved provider must submit a sample distance education program for pre-approval. After the sample program is approved, additional distance education programs do not need to be pre-approved if the provider follows the same development procedures. The monitoring process will be used to confirm that distance education programs conform to LA CES requirements.



Providers may submit for distance education approval using [this form](#).

1. Approved providers must submit a complete copy of the program and support materials (i.e., a complete set of what would be sent to the learner, such as the learning materials, instructions, required test, worksheets, websites, etc).
2. For asynchronous distance education courses, providers must also submit affidavits to support the number of professional development hours assigned to the course.

All distance education courses must be strictly educational in nature and applicable to the landscape architecture profession. If the course is offered on the same venue as a marketing product, the “for credit” portion must be clearly indicated, marked, and separate from any product, brand, or service promotion. Misuse of distance educational programs for self-promotion may result in termination of LA CES approved provider status.

Courses are rated on an approved or denied basis. Status of the program is provided to the primary LA CES approved provider within thirty (30) days.

Courses that are approved:

- May be distributed and advertised as offering LA CES professional development hours.
- May use the LA CES logo in promotional materials.

Courses that are denied:

- May not offer LA CES professional development hours.
- May not be included in any list (or database) of LA CES programs.
- May not use the LA CES logo in any advertisements related to the course.
- May not use any reference to LA CES.
- May be resubmitted for review with necessary corrections.

Any violation of the above list may jeopardize approved provider status with LA CES.

When the course of study is completed, the participant must report completion of distance education course directly to the provider (via email, mail, phone, etc). Information that must be collected for proper reporting purposes include: name, and email address. The provider must send a certificate of completion to the participant.

Providers must be sensitive to course “shelf life.” Courses should be evaluated periodically to ensure that professional development hours are being awarded for up-to-date educational activities with appropriate and applicable information. All LA CES approved provider courses must be evaluated and re-registered, at minimum, every two (2) years.



### **Calculating Professional Development Hours for Distance Education Programs**

To determine the appropriate number of professional development hours for asynchronous distance education courses without specific time frames, the LA CES program requires signed affidavits from a sample population. These affidavits must include the names and contact information from at least five (5) individuals stating the length of time it took them to complete the course. Keep in mind that breaks away from the learning activity or time not directly related to the educational process do not qualify (e.g. breaks, lunch, etc). No more than one (1) of the participants can be employed by the LA CES approved provider submitting the course.

The affidavits must:

- State the name and contact information of the individual sampling the course
- State the length of time it took him or her to complete the course (excluding breaks, lunch, etc.)
- Include the individual's relationship to the company
- Include professional credentials that qualify him or her to sample the course
- Be submitted to the provider with the individual's signature—electronic signatures will be accepted

After the approved provider submits all completed affidavits to LA CES Administrators, the total number of professional development hours is calculated by averaging the total time of the pilot student group.



## Model Evaluation Form

### Appendix D

**Provider Name**  
**Address**  
**Phone/Fax/Email**  
**Provider Logo**



[Insert provider name] wants to make our professional development sessions as meaningful as possible. We would appreciate receiving an evaluation of this program from you. Please drop off before you leave or fax or mail to: [insert fax number; email address; mailing address]

**Session Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_ **Location** \_\_\_\_\_  
: \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_

**Circle one (1) number per question:** Poor Excellent

1. Overall Satisfaction with this session	1	2	3	4
2. Satisfaction with the format	1	2	3	4
3. Met overall personal objectives for attending	1	2	3	4
4. Overall quality of training aids (handouts, a/v, etc.)	1	2	3	4
5. Quality of session content	1	2	3	4
6. Overall knowledge and presentation of speakers	1	2	3	4
7. Applicability/value of knowledge, ideas, or information	1	2	3	4

**How could this session be improved:**

**What other topics would interest you:**

**Additional comments** (please use reverse side for comments if needed):

Thank you for your help in evaluating this program.



## Course Equivalency Standards

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### Appendix F

LA CES approved providers may offer continuing education credit for activities that meet LA CES course equivalency standards. Course equivalency is defined as activities that consist of learning experiences that enhance and expand the skills, knowledge, and abilities of practicing landscape architects to remain current and render competent professional service to clients and the public. These standards do not apply to activities that are covered by LA CES standards for in-person and distance courses.

Examples of course equivalency activities include: presenting/teaching a course; training course instructors; professional exam grading, professional exam writing; training reviewers to evaluate and determine if health, safety, and welfare requirements for landscape architecture are achieved; professional service to the public that draws on the licensee's professional expertise on boards and commissions such as serving on planning commissions, building code advisory boards, urban renewal boards, or code study committees; publishing or reading papers, articles, or books; or actively participating in a technical profession society or organization as an officer or member of a committee.

### Documentation

Activities registered as course equivalency must meet all LA CES requirements, including having learning outcomes and assessing participant attainment of the learning objectives/outcomes. Course equivalency programs must be identified as course equivalency when registered with LA CES.

### Determining Number of Hours

Course equivalency hours are calculated just like professional development hours (PDH) but are identified as course equivalent hours.

One (1) professional development hour is a contact hour of at least fifty (50) minutes of instruction. Additional measures are in fifteen (15) minute increments; therefore, a ninety (90) minute course is one-and-a-half (1.5) professional development hours. If courses are longer than one (1) hour in duration, time spent on breaks and meals will not count toward the number of hours. Travel time for courses with a travel component is also not counted unless directed learning is taking place on the trip.