

## Distance Education Requirements

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### Appendix C

LA CES **approved providers** may offer distance education courses when 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.*

Distance education courses can be offered through various delivery methods. The course may use a single medium (e.g., Internet or CD-ROM), or a combination of sources (e.g., audiocassette with a workbook and Internet support).

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.

Distance education program delivery methods or any combination include:

- Audio tape • Internet
- Cable TV • Publication/articles
- CD-ROM/software • Satellite broadcasting
- Computer-based training (CBT) • Teleconference/Audio conference
- Correspondence (written) courses • Videotapes
- Email • Web cast
- Fax transmissions • Workbooks

The policies and procedures detailed herein provide a basic standard by which the LA CES evaluates distance education programs. The policies and procedures were modified from and reflect those published by the American Institute of Architects Continuing Education System (AIA/CES), International Association for Continuing Education and Training (IACET), and the Distance Education Training Council (DETC). These policies and procedures are necessary to maintain high quality standards and to ensure a smooth process for providers and learners.

### Proof of Competency Required

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.

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, web links, etc).
2. 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 architectural industry. If the course is offered on the same venue as a marketing product (e.g., CD-ROM, Internet Website), 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 will be rated on an *approved* or *denied* basis. Status of the program will be provided within 30 days by email to the authorized primary LA CES provider point of contact.

Courses that are *approved*:

- May be distributed and advertised that they offer LA CES professional development hours.
- May use the LA CES logo in their 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 this 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, fax, postal service, voice mail, Internet, etc). Information that must be collected for proper reporting purposes include: name; phone number; and email address (if applicable). 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 updated and re-registered, at minimum, every four (4) years. Approved LA CES educational magazine articles are valid for two (2) years.

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

Courses offered that do not have a specific time frame such as home-study correspondence, Internet, magazine, or CD ROM programs are difficult to quantify. The LA CES policy for determining the number of professional development hours for this type of program requires signed affidavits from a sample population. These affidavits need to include the names and contact information from at least 5 (five) individuals stating the length of the time it took them to complete the program. Also the affidavits need to be completed on their own company letterhead. No more than 1 (one) of the participants can be employed by the LA CES **approved provider** submitting the course. Professional development hours awarded are then calculated by averaging the total time of the pilot study group. Keep in mind; breaks away from the learning activity or time not directly related to the educational process do not qualify (i.e. breaks, lunch, etc).