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About NCARB

The National Council of Architectural Registration Boards' membership is made up of the architectural licensing boards of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. NCARB, in collaboration with these boards, facilitates the licensure and credentialing of architects to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public.

To achieve these goals, NCARB works with its Member Boards and volunteers to develop and facilitate standards for licensure, including the national examination and experience program. NCARB also recommends regulatory guidelines for licensing boards and helps architects expand their professional reach through the NCARB Certificate.

Registration (Licensure)

Before an individual can officially be called an architect, they have to earn a license. Once they do, they'll verify to their firm and community that they're able to protect the health, safety, and welfare of those who live and work in the built environment. Each licensing board has its own set of requirements, but navigating them doesn't have to be complicated. NCARB has developed a number of tools and resources to help candidates succeed in meeting their jurisdiction's licensure requirements in education, experience, examination, and continuing education.

NCARB Mission

NCARB, in collaboration with licensing boards, facilitates the licensure and credentialing of architects to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public.

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What is Continuing Education?

NCARB Legislative Guidelines and Model Law/Model Regulations defines continuing education (CE) as:

Continuing Education (CE)

Continuing education is post-licensure learning that enables a registered architect to increase or update knowledge of and competence in technical and professional subjects related to the practice of architecture to safeguard the public's health, safety, and welfare.

The continuing development of professional competence involves a program of lifelong educational activities. Health, Safety, and Welfare Continuing Education (HSW CE) is the term used in this document to describe the educational subjects and topics that assist architects in achieving and maintaining quality in professional services protecting the public's health, safety, and welfare in the built environment.

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Who Should Use This Document?

Member Boards that require architects to complete continuing education as a condition of license renewal. This document identifies:

- Subject areas that qualify as Health, Safety, and Welfare (HSW)

- Acceptable types of continuing education programs

- Evaluation of programs for HSW content compliance in CE audits

This guide may assist Member Boards in their evaluation of CE documentation provided by architects in support of an audit. Member Boards may also use this document to identify topics the board may deliver to its licensees as a provider.

Architects who are required to complete CE as a condition of licensure renewal. This document will help the architect:

- Understand the national standards for continuing education programs

- Understand HSW subjects that are deemed acceptable by jurisdictional licensing boards

This document may assist architects in their selection of CE course subjects that meet the requirements of most licensing boards and many professional organizations.

CE providers developing courses for architects that are likely to be deemed acceptable by licensing boards as health, safety, and welfare topics. This document will help the provider:

- Understand the national standards for continuing education programs

- Understand jurisdictional licensing boards' standards for HSW continuing education-qualified programs

CE accreditors reviewing courses for architects proposed by providers seeking acceptance by licensing boards as health, safety, and welfare topics. This document will help the accreditor:

- Understand the national standards for continuing education programs

- Understand jurisdictional licensing boards' standards for HSW continuing education-qualified programs

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Why Do We Have Continuing Education?

Continuing education programs focused on health, safety, and welfare are an integral part of the lifelong learning required to provide competent service to the public. HSW CE courses enable architects to maintain their professional competence.

The Practice Analysis of Architecture is conducted periodically with architects, supervisors, mentors, licensure candidates, and educators to define the knowledge and skills they must possess and the tasks they must be able to perform competently to protect the public's health, safety, and welfare. The results of the survey are used by NCARB to establish the requirements of the Architectural Experience Program® (AXP™), develop the Architect Registration Examination® (ARE®), and inform the continuing education needs of practitioners.

The profession of architecture is characterized by constant expansion of relevant knowledge, ongoing changes, and increasing complexity. Advancing technology, globalization of commerce, increasing specialization, proliferation of regulations, and the complex nature of business transactions have created a dynamic environment that requires architects to maintain and enhance their professional competence continuously.

Acknowledgements

NCARB acknowledges that the *American Institute of Architects' (AIA) Standards for Continuing Education Programs* served as a model for this document.

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Health, Safety, and Welfare Continuing Education (HSW CE)

Health, Safety, and Welfare (HSW) Defined

The *AIA Standards for Continuing Education Programs* (September 2018) defines Health, Safety, and Welfare (HSW). AIA Standard 23 states:

Licensed architects and affiliated design professionals have, in their professional practice, a positive duty to protect the public's health, safety, and welfare. Learning programs must address knowledge intended to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the occupants of the built environment, as defined below:

Health: Those aspects of professional practice that improve the physical, emotional, and social well-being of occupants, users, and any others affected by buildings and sites.

Safety: Those aspects of professional practice that protect occupants, users, and any others affected by buildings or sites from harm.

Welfare: Those aspects of professional practice that enable equitable access, elevate the human experience, encourage social interaction, and benefit the environment.

HSW Subject Areas

NCARB Legislative Guidelines and Model Law/Model Regulations define Health, Safety, and Welfare subjects as:

"Health, Safety, and Welfare Subjects

Technical and professional subjects related to the practice of architecture that the Board deems appropriate to safeguard the public and that are within the following continuing education subject areas necessary for the proper evaluation, design, construction, and utilization of buildings and the built environment."

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HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELFARE CONTINUING EDUCATION (HSW CE)

Health, Safety, and Welfare Subjects

Learning programs must address one or more of the following subjects/topics that meet the definition of HSW on page six to be considered HSW CE:

PRACTICE MANAGEMENT: This category focuses on areas related to the management of architectural practice and the details of running a business.

Acceptable topics include, but are not limited to:

Applicable Laws and Regulations

Ethics

Insurance to Protect Owner and Public

Business Management

Risk Management

Information Management

Design for Community Needs

Supervisor Training

For additional information on knowledge, skills, and tasks related to Practice Management, please refer to:

AXP Guidelines: Practice Management

ARE Guidelines: Practice Management

PROJECT MANAGEMENT: This category focuses on areas related to the management of architectural projects through execution.

Acceptable topics include, but are not limited to:

Project Delivery Methods

Contract Negotiation

Pre-Design Services

Site and Soils Analysis

Consultant Management

Project Scheduling

Quality Control (QA/QC)

Economic Assessment

Value Engineering

For additional information on knowledge, skills, and tasks related to Project Management, please refer to:

AXP Guidelines: Project Management

ARE Guidelines: Project Management

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HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELFARE CONTINUING EDUCATION (HSW CE)
Health, Safety, and Welfare Subjects (Cont.)

Learning programs must address one or more of the following subjects/topics to be considered HSW CE:

PROGRAMMING & ANALYSIS: This category focuses on areas related to the evaluation of project requirements, constraints, and opportunities.

Acceptable topics include, but are not limited to:

Land-Use Analysis

Programming

Site Selection

Historic Preservation

Adaptive Reuse

Codes, Regulations, and Standards

Natural Resources

Environmental Impact and Ecosystem Risk Assessment

Hazardous Materials

Resilience to Natural and Human Impacts

Life Safety

Feasibility Studies

PROJECT PLANNING & DESIGN: This category focuses on areas related to the preliminary design of sites and buildings.

Acceptable topics include, but are not limited to:

Building Systems

Urban Planning

Master Planning

Building Design

Site Design

Safety and Security Measures

Impacts, Adaptation and Mitigation of a Changing Climate

Energy Efficiency and Positive Energy Design

Sustainability

Indoor Air Quality

Ergonomics

Lighting

Acoustics

Accessibility

Construction Systems

Budget Development

For additional information on knowledge, skills, and tasks related to Programming & Analysis, please refer to:

AXP Guidelines: Programming & Analysis

ARE Guidelines: Programming & Analysis

For additional information on knowledge, skills, and tasks related to Project Planning & Design, please refer to:

AXP Guidelines: Project Planning & Design

ARE Guidelines: Project Planning & Design

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HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELFARE CONTINUING EDUCATION (HSW CE)
Health, Safety, and Welfare Subjects (Cont.)

Learning programs must address one or more of the following subjects/topics to be considered HSW CE:

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT & DOCUMENTATION: This category focuses on areas related to the integration and documentation of building systems, material selection, and material assemblies into a project.

Acceptable topics include, but are not limited to:

Construction Documents

Materials and Assemblies

Fixtures, Furnishings, & Equipment

For additional information on knowledge, skills, and tasks related to Project Development & Documentation, please refer to:

AXP Guidelines: Project Development & Documentation

ARE Guidelines: Project Development & Documentation

CONSTRUCTION & EVALUATION: This category focuses on areas related to construction contract administration and post-occupancy evaluation of projects.

Acceptable topics include, but are not limited to:

Construction Contract Administration

Bidding and Negotiation

Post Occupancy Evaluation (POE)

Building Commissioning

For additional information on knowledge, skills, and tasks related to Construction & Evaluation, please refer to:

AXP Guidelines: Construction & Evaluation

ARE Guidelines: Construction & Evaluation

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Learning Programs

HSW CE learning programs should be developed by individuals or teams having demonstrated a verifiable expertise in the subject matter. Expertise may be demonstrated through practical experience and/or education. An architect holding an active license should be consulted in the development of HSW CE learning programs.

Learning program content should be unbiased, evidence-based, and focused on increasing knowledge. Learning programs are not sales or marketing events and should not promote or market products or services. Learning programs should only contain material relevant to the program learning objectives and desired outcomes during the instructional portion of the program.

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Types of Learning Programs

Learning programs should be developed according to accepted and sound adult learning theory. Architects gain knowledge and skills through many venues and resources. Acceptable types of programs include:

Live in-person program

Group participation in live learning with real-time interaction of an instructor or subject matter expert and built-in processes for attendance and interactivity. Learners are together in one or more groups with an instructor or subject-matter expert instructor.

Live online program

Live learning with real-time, two-way interaction between an instructor or subject-matter expert and learners that provides the required elements of attendance monitoring and engagement where learners are in a solitary rather than group environment.

On-demand e-learning program

An educational program completed at any time or in any place that best suits the learner online or via another device individually without the assistance or interaction of a real-time instructor.

On-demand print/other program

An educational program completed individually by reading materials in print or online and completing a summative assessment.

Nano learning program

A tutorial program designed to permit a participant to learn a given subject in a 15-minute or 30-minute time frame using electronic media (including technology applications and processes and computer-based or web-based technology) or in person. A nano learning program differs from a longer program in that it is typically focused on a single learning objective. Nano learning is not a substitute for comprehensive programs addressing complex issues but is typically highly targeted and needs-based. Nano learning programs are excellent for just-in-time tutorials.

Blended learning program

An educational program incorporating multiple learning formats.

All learning programs should employ instructional methods that clearly define learning objectives and outcomes, guide the architect through a program of learning, and include learner engagement opportunities within the program delivery.

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Learning Objectives and Outcomes

All learning programs should be based on relevant, well-formed learning objectives and outcomes that clearly articulate the professional competence that should be achieved by learners. Learning programs for architects should specify knowledge level, content, and learning objectives so that potential participants can determine if the learning outcomes are appropriate to their professional development needs. Knowledge levels consist of introductory, intermediate, advanced, and update.

ASSESSMENT

There are many methods or tools that are used to evaluate, measure, and document the academic readiness, learning progress, skill acquisition, or educational needs of learning program participants. The most commonly recognized assessments include:

Formative assessment: Methods used to conduct in-process evaluations of learner comprehension, learning needs, and academic progress during a lesson, unit, course, or learning program. Formative assessments help instructors and learners identify concepts they are struggling to understand, skills they are having difficulty acquiring, or learning standards they have not yet achieved so that adjustments can be made to lessons, instructional techniques, and academic support. Review questions are a formative assessment tool.

Pre-program assessment: A method of measuring prior knowledge that is given before the learner has access to the course content of the program. Pre-program assessments may be used to tailor content more appropriately to a learner's needs and gaps.

Summative assessment: Test, portfolio, or other tools used to evaluate participant learning, skill acquisition, and achievement after a learning program. Outcomes of summative assessments are used to determine successful completion of a learning program.

The type of learning program determines the type of assessment. The most common form of assessment used in CE programs is summative. Summative assessments are typically required in the following learning programs:

- On-demand e-learning programs

- On-demand print/other learning activities

- Nano learning programs

- Blended programs where the primary component is on-demand learning activity

Live learning programs typically employ methods of formative assessment.

For details on how to develop learning programs, please refer to the accrediting organization's provider guidelines.

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Continuing Education Compliance

An architect's field of employment does not limit the need for continuing education. All architects should participate in HSW CE programs that maintain and/or improve their professional competence.

Selection of HSW CE programs should be a thoughtful, reflective process addressing the architect's current and future professional plans, current knowledge and skill level, and desired or needed additional competence to meet future opportunities and professional responsibilities.

While most jurisdictions have set mandatory continuing education hour (CEH) requirements, the objective of continuing education should be maintenance and enhancement of professional competence, not attainment of hours.

Continuing Education Hour

NCARB Legislative Guidelines and Model Law/Model Regulations define:

Continuing Education Hour (CEH)

One continuous instructional hour (50 to 60 minutes of contact) spent in Structured Educational Activities intended to increase or update the architect's knowledge and competence in Health, Safety, and Welfare Subjects. If the provider of the Structured Educational Activities prescribes a customary time for completion of such an Activity, then such prescribed time shall, unless the Board finds the prescribed time to be unreasonable, be accepted as the architect's time for Continuing Education Hour purposes irrespective of actual time spent on the activity.

Structured Educational Activities

Educational activities in which at least 75 percent of an activity' s content and instructional time must be devoted to Health, Safety, and Welfare Subjects related to the practice of architecture, including courses of study or other activities under the areas identified as Health, Safety and Welfare Subjects and provided by qualified individuals or organizations, whether delivered by direct contact or distance learning methods.

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Licensure Renewal

Each Member Board establishes their requirements for licensure renewal. Most boards require completion of continuing education as a condition for licensure renewal.

NCARB Legislative Guidelines and Model Law/Model Regulations include the following model requirement:

100.703 Renewal

[The Board may require that each registered architect demonstrate continuing education by including the following provisions.]

Continuing Education Requirements. In addition to all other requirements for registration renewal, an architect must complete a minimum of 12 Continuing Education Hours each calendar year or be exempt from these continuing education requirements as provided below. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in non-renewal of the architect's registration.

(A) Continuing Education Hours. 12 Continuing Education Hours must be completed in Health, Safety, and Welfare Subjects acquired in Structured Educational Activities. Continuing Education Hours may be acquired at any location. Excess Continuing Education Hours may not be credited to a future calendar year.

(B) Reporting and Record keeping. An architect shall complete and submit forms as required by the Board certifying that the architect has completed the required Continuing Education Hours. Forms may be audited by the Board for verification of compliance with these requirements. Documentation of reported Continuing Education Hours shall be maintained by the architect for six years from the date of award. If the Board disallows any Continuing Education Hours the architect shall have 60 days from notice of such disallowance either to provide further evidence of having completed the Continuing Education Hours disallowed or to remedy the disallowance by completing the required number of Continuing Education Hours (but such Continuing Education Hours shall not again be used for the next calendar year). If the Board finds, after proper notice and hearing, that the architect willfully disregarded these requirements or falsified documentation of required Continuing Education Hours, the architect may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Board regulations.

Architects are responsible for compliance with all applicable state licensing bodies' continuing education requirements, as well as requirements, rules, and regulations of other government entities, membership associations, and other professional organizations or bodies.

Some licensing jurisdictions require specific types of continuing education (i.e.: accessibility, sustainable design, state building codes, ethics, etc.). Architects should contact each appropriate entity to which they report to determine its specific requirements or any exceptions that body may have to this document.

For jurisdiction-specific continuing education requirements, please refer to NCARB's Licensing Requirements Tool.

Continuing Education Audits

Many architect licensing board rules require audits of licensees' compliance with continuing education requirements. The frequency and type of audit is determined by the licensing board. If selected for an audit, an architect may be required to provide evidence of completion of learning programs deemed acceptable to the architect licensing board. Types of documentation may include:

- A certificate or other verification supplied by the learning program provider

- AIA CES transcript

- For a college or university course that is successfully completed for credit, a record or transcript of the grade the learner received

- For college or university non-credit courses, a certificate of attendance issued by a representative of the university or college

Generally, a printed program agenda, program marketing materials, or an event program are considered insufficient evidence of participation in that program.