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1.0 Continuing Education for OALA Members

1.1 Introduction
The Mandatory Continuing Education (MCE) Program was adopted by the OALA Membership at the 2012 AGM. While the program became mandatory in 2012, the first three years will be a phase-in period of program development and refinement. The beginning of 2015 marks the first year of a full 3 year reporting term when Members (of applicable membership categories) will need to achieve and report the full minimum credit requirements. The first full reporting period will culminate with reporting at time of dues collection (end of year) in 2017 for the years 2015, 2016 and 2017.

Every three years thereafter, Members will be required to report on all completed, relevant continuing education activity prior to the time of dues collection for the preceding three year period. Relevant educational activities completed by Members within each three year period must meet the minimum requirements of the program as outlined within this document.

1.2 Intent of the Program
The OALA’s mission is to promote, improve and advance the profession of landscape architecture and maintain standards of professional practice and conduct consistent with the need to serve and to protect the public interest.

One objective of the Association is to establish and maintain standards of knowledge and skill among its Members. The Mandatory Continuing Education program strives to achieve this objective and to further establish overall credibility of the profession.

It is the intent of the program that every activity reported by Members for credit gain will be either directly relevant to landscape architecture, or contribute to an increased ability for the Member to practice as a Landscape Architect, including for specialized and non-traditional focus-areas of the profession.

2.0 General Program Requirements

2.1 Who Does the Program Apply to?
The Mandatory Continuing Education (MCE) program will apply to all OALA Full Members (both with certificate and seal and those with certificate only) and to Associate Members of 7 years or more.

2.1.1 Newly Accepted Members
As new Members gain Full Membership status or enter the 7 Year + Associate status, those Members will be required to obtain a pro-rated number of CE credits for remaining year(s) of the current reporting period.
New Full Members and 7 year + Associate Members are eligible to claim CE credits in accordance with the MCE credit category descriptions and limits for educational activities that were completed within the 3 years prior to entering a Membership status for which the MCE program applies.

2.2 Number of Credits and Reporting Cycle
Members are required to obtain a minimum of 30 credits per 3 year reporting period. Credits may be obtained at any point over the three year period (potentially all 30 credits could be obtained in year one of a reporting period). Additional credits earned beyond 30 credits may not be carried forward to the next reporting period, as the 30 credits have been established as the minimum requirement.

2.3 Reporting
The MCE Program and associated credit reporting is managed by the OALA Registrar and will be completed through an online reporting mechanism.

A Member may complete credit reporting at any time throughout the duration of the three year period. Credit accumulation and reporting will culminate at the end of each designated three year cycle in conjunction with dues collection timing.

Members will have the option to automatically upload supporting documentation from completed continuing education activities to the OALA within the reporting area or alternatively, to complete the reporting process only and submit documentation to the OALA upon request if audited. In both instances it is the responsibility of the Member to maintain supporting documentation of having completed each reported CE activity for a minimum of 3 years following the end of the reporting period to which those activities were claimed for credit.

Unless otherwise stated within the specific category description, acceptable documentation is to include a record of attendance at the activity prepared by the activity provider or facilitator, including the time spent participating directly in the educational activity and activity description.

Cross-accounting is permitted, where activities that have been claimed for credits under another professional continuing education program may also be claimed for credit under the OALA MCE Program, provided that the activity meets MCE Program criteria for acceptable activities.

2.4 Exemption Option
Only in certain exceptional circumstances may Members have the requirements waived by Council. These include Members with certain Membership status or within certain Membership categories, as designated by Council (including but not limited to Student, Affiliate, Honorary, Waiver/Emeritus, Associate and Leave of Absence—are currently exempt from the requirements of the program).

Members who are admitted as new OALA full members, or who transfer in from another association partway through a reporting period are exempt from the requirements for a 12 month period of time, but must meet program requirements at a prorated number of credits for remaining time within that reporting period.
Example: For September 2015 start date:
- January – September (9 months) – 7.5 credits not required
- September 2015 – August 2016 (1 year) – 10 credits exempt
- 30 required credits – 17.5 credits = 12.5 credits required for the remaining time from September 2016 - December 2017

Members who apply for, and are granted written exemptions based on special circumstances are exempt from the requirements for a 12 month period of time. Such exemptions may include compassionate, parental and medical leave, and other similar extraordinary circumstances, reviewed on an individual basis by the Examining Board who will in turn make a recommendation to Council. Requests for exemptions must be made in writing to the Registrar, in advance of the reporting deadline for the applicable reporting period.

Example: For September 2015 start date:
- January – September (9 months) – still apply towards the total credits
- September 2015 – August 2016 (1 year) – 10 credits exempt
- 30 required credits – 10 credits = 20 credits required for the cycle from January 2015 - December 2017

3.0 Program Management

3.1 Auditing
In addition to OALA Staff following up with Members who have not reported the required number and allocation of CE credits, the MCE program quality and rate of participation will be monitored through a random auditing process managed by the Association during the 3 years following the completion of each 3 year reporting period. Auditing will be completed by OALA Staff members at a rate of 10% of the Membership to whom the MCE Program applies per 3 year reporting period.

If a Member is audited, the Member will be responsible to provide the OALA with documentation of each reported activity completed. If a Member is found through the audit process not to have properly met the requirements of the program, the Member will be provided one year to complete the requirements for the previous reporting period which will not detract from the requirement for the Member to achieve the 30 CE credit minimum for the subsequent three year cycle.

3.2 Non-compliance Penalties
If a Member does not meet the minimum requirements of the MCE program, the Member will be provided, with warning, an opportunity in the form of a designated amount of time (decided by the Association) to remedy their standing in the MCE program. This designated extension to meet the program requirements will not detract from the requirement for the Member to achieve the 30 CE credit minimum for the subsequent three (3) year cycle.
Failing to meet the requirements of the program after the warning period will result in listing of the Member’s name in a publication of the Association’s choice, as having not met the minimum requirements of the Continuing Education program and as such have not met minimum requirements of criteria for Membership in Good Standing.

4.0 Earning Credits

4.1 Credit Weighting
Continuing education activities are eligible for 1 credit per 1 hour (minimum 50 minutes) of direct participation time a relevant activity unless otherwise noted within a category description. Credits may be claimed to the nearest 0.5 credit or half hour of direct contact in an activity. Certain activities outlined within the section 4.3 category descriptions have been designated as accepted exception activities and assigned a set, attainable credit amount per activity.

4.2 Requirement for Diversity of Learning
Members are required to complete activities from a minimum of two of the eight available ways to earn CE credits categories during each three year reporting period. The maximum attainable number of credits in any one of the 8 categories is 75% or 22.5 of the required total 30 credits.
4.3 The 8 ways to earn CE credits - Categories

Continuing education (CE) credits can be earned within a minimum of 2 of any of the following 8 categories to a maximum of 22.5 credits per category:

1) Landscape Architecture Educational Programs
2) Relevant Educational Programs
3) Self-Directed Study
4) College and University Courses
5) Certificates, Licenses and Credentials
6) Committee and Volunteer
7) Authorship
8) Technical Skills Development

4.4 Credit Categories Defined

Category 1: Landscape Architecture Educational Programs
Educational programs approved by the OALA, CSLA, ASLA (or any chapter of either the CSLA or ASLA), IFLA or recognized by the Landscape Architecture Continuing Education System (LACES) program.

Exception activities for Category 1:

- Attendance at OALA run social activities where the primary purpose of the activity is social networking or recreation are eligible for 1 credit per activity, regardless of activity duration.
  
  - Where an OALA run social activity has a clear but undefined educational component associated with it, Members may claim educational credits at the standard rate of 1 credit per 1 hour of time involved in the educational portion of the activity under Category 3, Self-Directed Study.

Category 2: Relevant Educational Programs
Educational programs not approved by the above noted organizations, must be either directly relevant to landscape architecture, or contribute to an increased ability for the Member to practice as a Landscape Architect, including specialized and non-traditional focus-areas of the profession.

Example Activities: GIS course provided by the OPPI, tree identification course provided by ISA.

Category 3: Self-Directed Study
Activities must be either directly relevant to landscape architecture, or contributing to an increased ability for the Member to practice as a Landscape Architect, including for specialized and non-traditional focus-areas of the profession.

Example Activities: Reading a book on designing for microclimatic conditions, touring the Royal Botanical Gardens, a field wildflower identification walk with a native shrub identification guide book,
original informally published writing such as a blog article directly related to landscape architecture, research on a particular subject for the purposes of future publication.

Members are required to complete and maintain a record of having completed each Category 3 activity in the form of clearly stated learning objectives and study notes or comparable alternative for a minimum of three years following the end of the three year cycle that the activity is reported in. The Member may be required to submit these records to the OALA office for review during an audit review.

**Category 4: College and University Courses**
College and university courses with an academic institution either accredited with the Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC) or the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) (or a national equivalent). Courses must be either directly relevant to landscape architecture, or contributing to an increased ability for the Member to practice as a landscape architect, including for specialized and non-traditional focus-areas of the profession.

**Category 5: Certificates, Licenses and Credentials**
Certificate, license and credential earning, including for the initial completion of a certificate, license or credential relevant to the practice of landscape architecture, or which will contribute to an increase in ability for the Member to practice as a landscape architect.

Examples: Sitting of the Certified Arborist exam, resulting in the Certified Arborist designation with ISA Ontario. Sitting of the 4th LARE exam resulting in acquired professional seal to accompany already acquired certificate. Successful completion of a LARE exam (see section 2.1.1 Newly Accepted Members).

**Category 6: Committee and Volunteer**
Committee and volunteer work including service on the OALA Council, service on OALA committees and task forces, and non-OALA volunteer work which contributes to the overall betterment of the Landscape Architecture profession.

Examples: OALA task force participant, attendance at the OALA AGM, participation as a judge on a community design panel, conference or guest speaker, volunteered design of a community garden (pro-bono and also outside of work hours).

Exception activities for Category 6:

- **Long-term commitment volunteerism** is eligible to be claimed at a rate of 1 credit per 1 hour of time volunteered, to a maximum of 1 credit per engagement to the category maximum. Examples of a single engagement include: in-person meetings, conference calls, presentations and attendance at related events. Ex: half hour committee conference call (0.5 credits) vs. 3 hour committee conference call (max. 1.0 credits).
- **Single volunteer events** that are unrelated to a long-term volunteerism commitment are eligible for credit earning at a rate of 1 credit per 1 hour of time volunteered, to a maximum of 2 credits per individual event/activity. Ex: Helping to facilitate an OALA full-day social event (2.0 Credits), 1 hour design critique at a University program (1.0 Credits).

**Category 7: Authorship**
Authorship of published work related to landscape architecture.

- Magazine Article or Online Formally Published Article (3 Credits each)
- Published (professional) Journal Article (10 Credits each)
- Peer-Reviewed Publication (22.5 Credits/Category Maximum each)
- Published Book or Chapter in a Published Book (22.5 Credits/Category Maximum)

Note: It is acceptable to claim credit for background research work related to authorship within Category 3, Self-Directed Study if appropriate documentation has been maintained.

**Category 8: Technical Skills Development**
Examples: software program training, business management and growth course, public participation facilitation training course, worksite safety training, permeable paver installation and specification seminar, concrete industry tour, lighting industry tour and seminar.
OALA Continuing Education Activity
Record of Participation/Attendance

To be completed by the OALA Member and signed by the OALA Activity Facilitator

Date of OALA Continuing Education Activity:

________________________________________________________

Time duration directly involved (to ½ hour increment):

________________________________________________________

Title of activity:

________________________________________________________

Short description of activity (location & purpose):

________________________________________________________

Member Name (print):

________________________________________________________

OALA Activity Facilitator Name (print):

________________________________________________________

Member Signature:

________________________________________________________

OALA Activity Facilitator Signature:

________________________________________________________

Phone Number:

________________________________________________________

Phone Number:

________________________________________________________

Email Address:

________________________________________________________

Email Address:

________________________________________________________

Date:

________________________________________________________

Date:

________________________________________________________

Note: The purpose of this participation form is to provide a record of attendance at OALA run events, where attendance is not otherwise recorded by the OALA.

It is the responsibility of the Member to maintain supporting documentation of having completed each reported CE activity for a minimum of 3 years following the end of the reporting period to which those activities were claimed for credit.

Please keep a careful record of this form in your files in case of audit by the MCE Program.