

AOC CE Guidelines

New! AOC CE Guidelines for 2021 (Updated September 2020)

[CLICK HERE](#) for updated information about continuing education guidelines. (PDF document)

For all orthoptists, and in particular those who are worried about not having enough CE hours to renew their certification in November, 2020 and 2021. The Council is sensitive to the difficulties many are facing in earning CE during this time of COVID 19 We recognize that many planned to attend meetings which were cancelled, postponed or held virtually. Examples to name a few: AAPOS, IOA, AACO regional and national meetings. The good news is that there have been many webinars and zoom conferences and lectures locally, nationally and internationally, most of which can be viewed [attended] live or even after the fact and still more planned for the future. Some are free and others have a small registration fee Please review the updated CE information and make note of which webinars can be included as core meeting attendance hours.

AOC CE Guidelines & Requirements 2019

The Council recognizes and approves non-core CE hours, however, the majority of required CE for orthoptists must be in CORE topics:

- At least 30 of the required 45 credits must be earned in CORE topics
- At least 10 credits from attendance at meetings must be in CORE topic area
- CE credit is NOT awarded for CPR or exam review courses

Courses approved by JCAHPO are not all in core topic areas and should not be automatically assumed to be core topics.

- Check the guidelines to assess core and non-core courses.
- Individual questions can always be directed to the Council for clarification.

CORE TOPICS include the following:

- Ocular anatomy and neuroanatomy (and principles of visual fields)
- Sensory and Motor physiology

- Pharmacology
- Optics including: Refractometry and diagnostic/therapeutic use of prisms
- Assessment of visual acuity/visual function and fixation
- Detection and treatment of amblyopia
- Nystagmus
- Eye movement disorders: Evaluation & measurement [including saccadic velocities]
- Diagnostic evaluation, testing, measurement and treatment of:
 - Congenital/acquired, paretic/non-paretic
 - Special forms to include: Brown Syndrome, Duane Syndrome, Moebius Syndrome, Congenital Fibrosis, Floor fractures & Strabismus associated with systemic disease
 - Orthoptic management/treatment
 - Principles of strabismus surgery

The Council recognizes the benefit of education in all aspects of ophthalmology. Topics outside of the CORE areas which are most strongly recommended are related to the following topics:

NON-CORE topics include ophthalmology sponsored/approved courses in:

- Child Development
- Coding related to ophthalmology upon approval from the CE Committee
- Low vision; assessment and aids
- Electrophysiology principles and techniques; VER, VEP, ERG, EOG
- Contact lenses
- Tonometry
- Ophthalmic photography
- Ophthalmic Operating room techniques
- Visual Field Testing and Principals

CE credits may be earned in the following ways:

Meetings / Courses

At least 10/45 hours of CE must be from attendance at meetings and MUST be in CORE topics.

- 1:1 credit for attendance at AACO, AOC, AAPOS, ophthalmology section of AAP, NANOS, or JCAHPO symposia, meetings and/or courses.

- 1:1 credit will be given to attendance at foreign meetings if sponsored/approved by recognized orthoptic or ophthalmology groups, eg: IOC, CLADE, PAAO, ISA, ESA, WCPOS.

Informal Orthoptist Group Symposia/Case discussions

Maximum of 10 hours per renewal period

- 2:1 Core CE for orthoptist informal group symposia:
 - Approval requires post facto submission of meeting agenda and topics covered; include titles of articles discussed or diagnoses of patients discussed
 - include list of attendees

- Does NOT fulfill 10 CE hour requirement of attendance at formal meeting in Core topics

Publications/Presentations/Posters

- 1:1 credit for instruction course presentation (2 hr course = 2 credits)

- 10 credits for publication of a paper in a refereed journal

- 5 credits for a talk at an AOC approved meeting (core or non-core topic)

- 5 credits to author or presenter of AOC approved instructional video
- 5 credits per author for a poster at an AOC recognized meeting

Note:

- *if a presentation or poster follows the publication it may earn 2 not 5 credits.*
 - *In combination the same material may earn 12 hours of CE*
- *If the publication follows the presentation or poster the same work will receive 7 not 10 credits.*

Self Study

- 15 core credits per volume for AAO Basic Science Course Sections V and VI
- 15 non-core credit for other sections of AAO Basic Science Course
- 5 core credits for successful completion of AACO self assessment quiz
- 5 core credits per AOJ quiz successfully completed

- Refinements monograph and other JCAHPO approved quizzes

AOC approved Basic Science DVDs [formerly video tapes]: allowed for credit only once every other renewal cycle. Purchase available from AOC Home Office

- 1:1 core credit for viewing AOC approved video tapes.
- Quizzes from the videos available for self-study; complete set = 7 hours of CE

Other self-study opportunities: not to exceed 5 credits per year

- 1:4 credit (1 credit per 4 hours of contact) for “hands-on workshops”, viewing poster sessions, and other lectures and meetings which didn’t apply for AOC approval.
 - reading texts/journals, listening to audio cassettes or viewing videos, etc.

Study guides /review: The *Syllabus of Orthoptic Instruction* and the newly approved document, **Core Competency; essential skills for Orthoptists**, both contain material required of Orthoptists and form the basis of the didactic and clinical aspects of all AOC accredited Orthoptic Fellowship Programs as well as the basis of the written and oral/practical certifying examinations. Both are available for purchase from the AOC Home Office.

Individual questions regarding continuing education credit hours should be directed to:

AMERICAN ORTHOPTIC COUNCIL

3914 Nakoma Road, Madison, WI 53711
Telephone: 608 233-5383

aoc.beckie@yahoo.com or lwfrance@gmail.com

INTERNATIONAL ORTHOPTISTS

[1986 ruling; revised 2014]

An international orthoptist applying for certification by the AOC:

1. Must be an active, certified orthoptist in his/her country

1. Must study under a chief orthoptist in an AOC accredited program for a minimum of 6 months or until judged ready for stipulation III.

1. Must be recommended by the chief orthoptist to be eligible to sit for the AOC certifying exams; written and oral/practical

1. If English is not the primary language, the applicant must take the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). Waivers are considered on an individual basis.

Minimum scores:

1. Paper-based exam = 500
2. Internet-based exam (iBT) = 75
3. Computer-based exam = 173

EXCEPTIONS to guidelines I - IV:

1. Orthoptists with Canadian certification have reciprocity without further examination

2. Orthoptists with British or Australian certification may sit for the exams without requirements II and III; however, it is strongly recommended that time be spent in an orthoptic teaching program so as to familiarize oneself with terminology and current examination techniques.

3. Orthoptists certified in countries other than Canada, England or Australia may request individual consideration based on training and work experience.

Variations will be evaluated on an individual, case-by-case, basis.

Examples of appeal might include requests to:

1. Waive the TOEFL exam
2. Reduce the required training period and obtain “advanced standing” status
3. Allow time with an individual orthoptist outside of an approved program in a geographic location where no program exists or for other unusual circumstances

QUESTIONS and APPEALS should be directed to the Council Home Office

□□□□□□ Appeals will be sent to the appropriate committees or persons for review and action