

INFORMATION FOR APPROVED SPONSORS

April 2026

IS IT MANDATORY FOR DENTISTS TO PARTICIPATE IN CONTINUING EDUCATION?

Yes. The [Quality Assurance Regulation under the Dentistry Act](#) states that all dentists must participate in continuing education (CE) activities.

They must earn at least 90 CE points over each three-year cycle, beginning the year they first registered with the College, and every three years thereafter. To satisfy the requirements, they must:

- earn at least 15 points in Category 1, 45 points in Category 2 and up to 30 points from Category 3.
- enter all activities into their e-Portfolio.
- upload verification documents or maintain them in their records.
- attest to the accuracy of their e-Portfolio entry.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY “CATEGORY 1, 2 AND 3”?

CATEGORY 1	CATEGORY 2	CATEGORY 3
• Clinical courses approved by RCDSO’s Quality Assurance Committee and offered through an approved sponsor • Click here to view the list of approved Category 1 courses	• Courses on a clinical dental topic offered by an approved sponsor • Teaching at a university faculty of dentistry • Teaching dental hygiene or level II dental assisting at an approved institution • Lecturing on clinical dental topics for approved sponsors • Self-study activity/e-learning program with assessment on clinical dental topics offered through approved sponsors • Grand rounds • Publishing articles in peer-reviewed dental journals or dental textbook chapters • Providing mentoring, coaching or teaching to enhance access to care	• Courses on non-clinical topics or delivered by non-approved sponsors • Dental society or study club business meetings • Recorded webinars • Reading peer-reviewed dental journals or recent dental textbooks • Lecturing on non-clinical topics, or for non-approved sponsors • Receive mentoring, coaching or teaching to enhance access to care

WHAT INFORMATION MUST BE INCLUDED IN A CERTIFICATE OF ATTENDANCE?

Certificates of attendance are required for the dentist to claim their CE points. The certificate must include the following:

- Name of the dentist
 - Title of the activity (for Category 1 courses, this must be exactly as the title that was approved)
 - Course number (Category 1 only, provided with the confirmation letter)
 - Presenter's name (required for Category 1, recommended for Category 2 or 3)
 - Competency (required for Category 1, recommended for Category 2 or 3)
 - Completion date
 - Number of CE points awarded (for Category 1 courses, this must be exactly as the number that was approved)
 - CE category (1, 2 or 3)
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WHAT IS A "CREDIT HOUR"?

A credit hour refers to instructional time. It does not include breaks, meal periods, registration or social/networking activities.

Please note that the number of CE points awarded is based on 1 credit hour = 1 point (for Category 1 courses, this must be exactly as the number that was approved).

WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY "CLINICAL DENTAL TOPIC"?

Any activity that focuses on one of the following competencies is considered a clinical dental topic:

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| • Access to care | • Informed Consent | • Prosthodontics |
| • Caries & prevention | • Jurisprudence & ethics | • Radiology |
| • Communication / Conflict Resolution | • Life-support certification (e.g., BCLS, ACLS, PALS, PEARS) | • RCDSO Standard - Dental CT Scanners |
| • Dental anesthesia | • Local anesthesia | • RCDSO Standard - Other (e.g., Dental Recordkeeping) |
| • Dental public health | • Medical emergencies | • RCDSO Standard - Use of Sedation and General Anesthesia in Dental Practice |
| • Endodontics | • Operative (restorative) dentistry | |
| • Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) | • Oral medicine & pathology | |
| • General dentistry | • Oral surgery | |
| • General medicine | • Orthodontics | |
| • Implants | • Pediatric dentistry | |
| • Infection Prevention & Control (IPAC) | • Periodontics | |
| | • Pharmacology | |
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WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY “NON-CLINICAL TOPIC”?

Courses on topics such as practice management, tax management and financial planning are considered non-clinical. These courses are eligible for points in Category 3.

WHAT INFORMATION DO I NEED TO INCLUDE ON PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS?

We recommend that you include the:

- Course description
- Learning objectives
- Presenter name and bio
- Duration (credit hours) and points (where 1 hour = 1 point)
- Category (1, 2 or 3)



IMPORTANT

Since the College does not approve courses or CE activities eligible in Category 2 or Category 3, wording must not be used in promotional materials, or included in attendance certificates, that in any way suggests that approval has been given by the College. The RCDSO logo may not be used unless specific permission has been given.

WHAT APPROACHES TO TRACK ATTENDANCE ARE MOST EFFECTIVE?

One of the sponsor’s responsibilities is to record attendance and maintain attendance records. With live sessions offered in person and virtually (e.g., via Zoom), there are several methods available for tracking participation. The sponsor has the discretion to choose the approach that best fits the session, and the method selected often depends on factors such as session size and the mode of delivery (in person or virtual).

Common options are listed on page 4. Other variations may also be acceptable; please contact us if you would like to explore an alternative or innovative approach.

We recognize that attendance does not guarantee full engagement. A participant at an in person session may be distracted on their phone, while someone joining a Zoom meeting may log in but step away from their computer. Professionalism is always expected. Engagement tools—such as Zoom or Slido polls or requiring cameras to be on during virtual sessions—can help, but may not be feasible in all circumstances, particularly for large audiences.

DELIVERY	OPTIONS	COMMENTS
Live, in person	- Paper-based sign-in and sign-out sheets - Electronic badge scanning for sign-in and sign-out - Sign-in, plus completion of an end of session quiz	- Paper-based records can be time-consuming, especially at large events - Electronic badge scanning may require specific technology and dedicated staff to support - Submitting a quiz at the end of a session can be used to confirm that participants remain until the conclusion. While this is an available option, it is not a requirement from the RCDSO's perspective. Some presenters may still choose to use a quiz to reinforce key points and support knowledge translation.
Live, virtual	Zoom attendance logs	- Provides the added benefit of tracking both arrival and departure times, which is particularly useful for determining eligibility for shorter sessions (60–90 minutes) - Requires data to be “cleaned” to identify situations where a participant has a dropped call and logs back in. - Requires reminders for participants to register with their full name rather than a nickname or initials. Email errors (e.g., typing @gmail.con instead of @gmail.com) create “bouncebacks” that need to be resolved.
e-learning	Registration record for the course including completion	For e-learning courses, there must be a mechanism to identify who has started and completed the course. The platform used must prevent the user from advancing to the end of the program without viewing and must be able to confirm the date the course was completed.

Please note that the quiz described above is different from a scored knowledge assessment required for select courses. These courses require participants to achieve a minimum score to be eligible for any points, and this requirement has been submitted to the Quality Assurance Committee as a specific element of the course. While a quiz is not required by the RCDSO, presenters may choose to include one as an engagement tool or method to reinforce key points.

WHO IS ENTITLED TO RECEIVE A CERTIFICATE?

We recognize the importance of offering breaks and acknowledge that there may be times when a participant needs to step out briefly, arrives later than expected, or needs to leave a few minutes early.

Participants must attend the majority of the scheduled delivery time to be eligible for a Category 1 certificate. Likewise, a session approved for a particular duration must run for at least the minimum required time. If a presenter finds that their session ends a few minutes early, answering a question or two is usually enough to fulfill the time requirement.

It is the responsibility of the approved sponsor hosting the course to inform presenters and participants of these requirements, monitor attendance, and ensure that certificates are issued only when the minimum attendance requirements have been met.

SESSION DURATION	APPROVED POINTS IN CATEGORY 1	MINIMUM ATTENDANCE TIME
50-60 minutes	1	40 minutes
90 minutes (1.5 hours)	2	75 minutes
120 minutes (2 hours)	2	100 minutes
150 minutes (2.5 hours)	3	120 minutes
180 minutes (3 hours)	3	150 minutes
Greater than 3 hours	Based on time	No more than 30 minutes missed

The following questions and answers provide additional guidance for specific scenarios.

Q:	The session was approved for 2 points and scheduled for 2 hours. The presenter finished at 1 h 20 minutes. Can the sponsor still provide a certificate for 2 points?
A:	No. The presenter must deliver at least 100 minutes of the session for participants to be eligible for their points.
Q:	The session was approved for 2 points and was scheduled for 2 hours. The presenter finished at 1 h 20 minutes. Can the sponsor provide a certificate for 1 point in Category 1?
A:	No. The session was approved for 2 points. Partial points cannot be awarded. Please contact the RCDSO to discuss opportunities for versions of the course with different durations.

Q: Can partial points be given in Category 2 instead? For example, if a session is scheduled for 2 hours and the participant arrives one hour late, can the sponsor provide a certificate for 1 point in Category 2?

A: The RCDSO leaves this to the discretion of the sponsor, as issuing partial points in a different category can be time-consuming.

While it is technically acceptable for a sponsor to offer 1 point in Category 2 for the session described, they must assign a different session name to avoid confusion when participants report their points. While this may be possible for smaller sessions, it can be unwieldy for large conferences.

Q: The course was approved for 2 points and scheduled for 2 hours. The session ended early, after 90 minutes. Can I still miss 20 minutes and be eligible for the points?

A: No. If the session was approved for 2 hours, ended early at 90 minutes, and you missed an additional 20 minutes, you would have attended only 70 of the scheduled 120 minutes. This does not meet the minimum attendance requirement to obtain 2 points.

Q: Does this mean the sponsor needs to time every presentation to the minute and track every participant to the minute?

A: No. These guidelines are designed to support sponsors in making consistent decisions about participant eligibility, and to help navigate situations where a participant is not eligible for a certificate.

The times listed in the table on page 5 are particularly useful when determining eligibility for the certificate in short, large, virtual sessions since staff can simply filter Zoom login data.

HOW LONG DOES AN APPROVED SPONSOR NEED TO KEEP ATTENDANCE RECORDS?

Approved sponsors are required to maintain their attendance records for eight years and to reissue a certificate if requested by the dentist.

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO TO SUBMIT A COURSE FOR CATEGORY 1 CONSIDERATION?

We have created a [Continuing Education Category 1 \(core\) Course Submission Checklist](#) to help you gather the necessary information for a course to be considered for Category 1.

We encourage you to contact us at ce@rcdso.org for guidance, especially the first few times you are preparing a submission.



Please contact us at ce@rcdso.org if you have questions about continuing education requirements or the role of the approved sponsor.

CONTINUING EDUCATION COURSES: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

APPROVED SPONSOR

- Approved sponsors are defined in [O. Reg. 27/10: QUALITY ASSURANCE](#).
- Approved sponsors are permitted to host continuing education activities in all categories. Only Category 1 (core) courses are submitted to the QA Committee for review, however.
- Approved sponsors coordinate the submission of courses for Category 1 (core) consideration and host the first delivery of a new course.
- The approved sponsor is responsible for overseeing the administrative aspects of course delivery, including attendance, attention, assessment of knowledge, and maintenance of participation records. They are responsible for providing a certificate of completion that includes the information required by the RCDSO.

PRESENTER(S)

- Course content is usually the intellectual property of the presenter, and therefore the presenter is responsible for ensuring that they have exercised reasonable care and caution to meet the requirements defined by the Quality Assurance Committee in this checklist. In cases where an organization owns the intellectual property, the organization carries this responsibility.
- The presenter must demonstrate that they have expertise specific to this topic and complete the attestations.
- All courses assessed by the QA Committee and assigned points in Category 1 (core) must be presented as submitted. Minor adjustments may be made by the presenter to reflect updates in evidence.
- Courses must be presented in conjunction with an approved sponsor to be eligible for points in Category 1 (core).

ONGOING PRESENTATION OF CATEGORY 1 (CORE) COURSES

- Following the initial presentation, the presenter may deliver the course with any approved sponsor. The roles and responsibilities for presenting a Category 1 (core) course continue to apply.
- The approved sponsor at the time of the course delivery carries the responsibility for overseeing administrative aspects, including attendance, attention, assessment of knowledge and participation records.
- If the presenter delivers the course with an unapproved sponsor, the course qualifies for points in Category 3. In this case, the title of the course must be different to avoid confusion with the approved Category 1 (core) course.