

## Architecture Continuing Education: Frequently Asked Questions

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### Continuing Education

With the renewal of the architectural licenses in April 2010, the requirements for completion of continuing education come into effect. The District of Columbia requires completion of 24 Professional Development Units for each two year renewal period. All of the PDUs are in the Health, Safety and Welfare category. 16 of these need to be obtained in structured educational activities and the remaining 8 may be in obtained in structured educational activities OR in individually planned educational activities. These requirements were published in the revised Municipal Regulations published in May 2008 and adopted by the Board after the required public comment period. No individual or organization submitted any comments.

As the time for renewal approaches in April 2010, the Board has received many inquires related to the number of PDUs required, the type of PDUs required, and the difference between “structured” educational activities and “individually planned educational activities.” Here are answers to the most frequently asked questions:

#### **Q: How many PDUs are required?**

A: The requirement is for 12 PDUs per year or a total of 24 PDUs per each two year renewal period. This offered the Architects the opportunity to start obtaining their requirements in 2008 for this renewal cycle, and should have very few, if any, PDUs yet to obtain.

#### **Q: Do all the PDUs need to be in HSW?**

A: Yes. All PDUs need to be in HSW. The Board’s mandate is the protection of the Health, Safety and Welfare of the public, therefore there are no exceptions, and the Board will accept no other type of PDUs regardless of whether they are accepted by professional organizations or not.

#### **Q: What is a “structured” educational activity?**

A: We had defined a structured educational activity, as an activity requiring face to face interaction with the education provider. This required attendance to seminars, conferences, or presentations designed by others which provide the opportunity for interaction and direct communication between provider and attendee. This is clearly stated and there is no ambiguity as to what the statement means.

However, while this type of structured activity is easily available to architects in our jurisdictional area, some of our non-resident architects have reported they do not have reasonable access to this type of structured activity without incurring major expense. It is not the intent of the Regulation to create undue hardship, and since the Municipal Regulations did not include the definition of “structured” educational activity, we have agreed to adopt the NCARB definition of “structured” activity to ease requirements in this first renewal period. It states:

**“Structured Educational Activities**

Educational activities in which the teaching methodology consists primarily of the systematic presentation of Health, Safety, and Welfare Subjects by qualified individuals or organizations, including monographs, courses of study taught in person or by correspondence, organized lectures, presentations or workshops and other means through which identifiable technical and professional subjects are presented in a planned manner.”

**Q: What is an “Individually Planned Educational Activity”?**

A: By NCARB’s definition:

**“Individually Planned Educational Activities**

Educational activities in which the teaching methodology primarily consists of the architect himself/herself addressing Health, Safety, and Welfare Subjects, which are not systematically presented by others, including reading or writing articles on such Subjects; studying or researching building types, designs or building systems; rendering services to the public, advancing the profession’s and the public’s understanding of the practice of architecture; and the like.”

The Board does not approve individual courses or activities. All courses/activities must be approved by either the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB), such as the NCARB Monographs, or by the American Institute of Architects (AIA). Be prepared to submit documentation in the form of either an AIA transcript, or certificates from the course providers.

A certain percentage of the reporting will be audited by the Board. For this first reporting period, a grace period of sixty days (60) will be granted after which disciplinary action or suspension of the license may follow.

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