

Review and Approval of Online Trainings in Vermont

Brief prepared by Becky Millard, September 2021

Northern Lights at CCV oversees the process for review and approval of **Online Anytime** trainings in Vermont. Online Anytime trainings are online modules completed independently and have been created and published by an Online Training Organization. There are currently three ways for Online Anytime trainings to receive approval in Vermont:

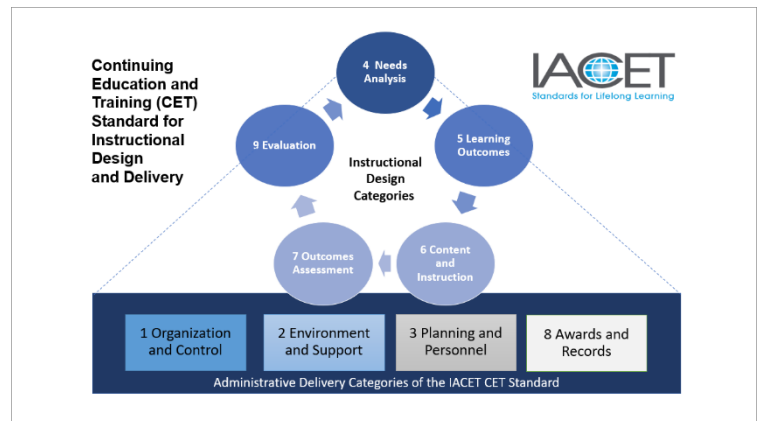
1. Training is offered by an appropriately accredited Institution of Higher Education; or
2. Online Training Organization is IACET Accredited; or
3. Online Training Organization completes an application process and Northern Lights reviews and verifies the organization meets Vermont's criteria.

International Accreditors for Continuing Education and Training (IACET)'s mission¹ is to improve the quality of continuing education and training worldwide through accreditation. IACET developed the original Continuing Education Unit (CEU) and follows the ANSI/IACET 2018-1 Standard for Continuing Education and Training through a rigorous accreditation process. Of note: The term "CEU" is in the public domain and is used by many organizations for their continuing education or professional training hours. However, these are not true IACET CEUs.

The ANSI/IACET Standard for Continuing Education and Training is a universal model for learning process excellence. It defines a proven model for developing effective and valuable continuing education and training (CE/T) programs by measuring a CE/T provider's training program from procedure to process to result. Because the ANSI/IACET Standard focuses on how continuing education and training programs are developed, not *what* they cover, it provides a certifiable framework of researched and proven best practices that can be applied across disciplines and industries.

The ANSI/IACET Standard measures all aspects of a CE/T provider's program development across nine internationally recognized categories:

1. Organization, Responsibility and Control
2. Learning Environment and Support Systems
3. Planning and Instructional Personnel
4. Needs Analysis
5. Learning Outcomes
6. Content and Instructional Requirements
7. Assessment of Learning Outcomes
8. Awarding the IACET CEU and Maintaining Learner Records
9. Evaluation of Learning Events



A systematic approach to identifying and analyzing learning needs, the ANSI/IACET Standard helps CE/T providers:

- Establish an appropriate responsibility and control system
- Encourage an analytic approach to identifying and analyzing learning needs
- Design, plan and execute a quality learning event
- Establish appropriate assessment criteria based on the learning outcomes
- Monitor and improve the learning process in order to achieve its objectives

¹ <https://www.iacet.org/>

If an Online Training Organization is not an institution of higher education and is not IACET-accredited, Northern Lights follows a process to assess whether their trainings can meet Vermont's criteria. The process for review and approval is:

1. Organization completes and submits an online Request for Approval and provides access to complete one or more online anytime trainings at no cost
2. Northern Lights staff review the Request for Approval and (where needed) identify a training review team with appropriate subject-matter expertise
3. Training review team members review training and complete rubric to determine how well the training meets the online training criteria
4. If the organization and training meet the criteria, the organization will be approved and listed on the Northern Lights website.

Criteria for Approval of Online Non-Credit Training

1. Training content relates to one or more of the core knowledge areas for early childhood or afterschool professionals;
2. Training is relevant for early childhood and/or afterschool professionals (relates to the appropriate age range of children);
3. Training content is grounded in research and follows developmentally appropriate practices;
4. Training has clear, measurable learning objectives that define the content and evaluation of the participant's experience;
5. Training provides documentation to each participant that includes the four criteria required for verification: Name and logo of the organization; training title and description of training content; date, time, and total training hours; and name of participant.
6. Training incorporates adult learning principles: the learning engages the student, is individualized, requires reflection by the learner, and is interactive.
7. The participant's learning is evaluated and the organization provides clear and specific evidence of successful completion of the training;
8. ~~For instructor led trainings (with an instructor directly teaching the participants), the organization must provide information about the qualifications of the online instructor. This criterion does not apply to online, instructor led trainings offered through appropriately accredited institutions of higher education;~~²
9. Online training that provides Continuing Education Units approved by IACET and online training offered by an accredited institution of higher education are automatically approved by Northern Lights at CCV, if they meet the other criteria listed above.

Northern Lights at CCV staff and review team members review the training materials provided and complete a rubric to evaluate how well the online training organization meets the criteria listed above. Based on these rubrics, Northern Lights will make a determination about whether or not the online training organization meets the criteria and can be listed on the Northern Lights website.

² In 2020, Vermont approved new Online Real-Time training criteria for trainings delivered in real-time by a qualified instructor. See the Northern Lights website for Online Real-Time training criteria.

Online Real-Time Training Criteria in Vermont

Beginning in 2020, Vermont now has separate criteria for online trainings offered by an instructor in real-time. The vast majority of these trainings are offered by approved sponsors but other entities in Vermont are also able to offer Online Real-Time trainings as described below:

Criteria:

1. The training must be offered by an approved sponsor (with a signed agreement on file with Northern Lights at CCV), the Vermont Agency of Education, the Vermont Agency of Human Services, or a Vermont public school or supervisory union.
2. Online Real-Time trainings must be offered using technology that allows participants to engage in the training using BOTH video and audio (e.g. Zoom, GoToMeeting, etc.). Approved training entities are strongly encouraged to consider technology that allows for participation using a smartphone app as well as participation from a computer with webcam and microphone.
3. Every effort should be made by the approved training entity to support training participants' engagement in the training using both video and audio. If the technology tools available to the participant do not allow for both video and audio participation, participants will still be able to obtain training hours for audio-only participation in the training.
4. Approved training entities must continue to complete all requirements of the reporting system provided by Northern Lights at CCV including submitting trainings to Northern Lights for entry into BFIS, documenting and submitting attendance, and using appropriately credentialed instructors.
5. Approved training entities are responsible for ensuring that all participants listed on the attendance submitted to Northern Lights successfully participated in the online training. For the purposes of documenting training attendance, successful participation is defined as attending all or most of the scheduled duration of the training.
6. Approved training entities must establish a way to verify successful participation in online real-time trainings. Recommended verification strategies include a sponsor or sponsor representative attending the training to track and verify attendance, or utilizing monitoring tools embedded in the technology tool to track participant attendance in the training.



Quality Criteria

High quality training content
Designed by qualified professional
Led by qualified trainer
Uses current research and no plagiarism



Verification Criteria

Includes ways to check learning
Attendance is verified
Participation is verified

Vermont requires that trainings meet an array of criteria that can be loosely grouped into two types – quality criteria and verification criteria. The vast majority of in person and online real-time trainings delivered in Vermont are provided by approved sponsors who are responsible for both quality and verification criteria. For online anytime trainings, we have a system for review and approval where Northern Lights is responsible for reviewing quality and verification criteria. For in person trainings offered by non-sponsors, Northern Lights is also responsible for reviewing quality and verification criteria through training certificates and verification cover sheets.

Challenges:

1. NAEYC offers many high quality professional development opportunities but NAEYC does not verify attendance or participation. Anyone who purchases the training is provided with a certificate of completion.
 - a. What system or structure can we put in place to verify attendance and participation in the purchased training?
 - b. Northern Lights proposal: Sponsor Verification process (see page 5)
2. Some national and international organizations offer online trainings that are reportedly of high quality but they do not respond to requests from Northern Lights seeking access for review. These organizations are not – to the best of our knowledge – accredited IHEs nor are they accredited by IACET so we need their engagement in order to complete the review process. For some organizations we receive regular requests from the field for review, but don't currently have a mechanism for publicizing the organizations who choose not to engage in Vermont's review process.
 - a. Is it appropriate to make public a list of organizations that have either not responded to our requests or have opted not to complete a review process?
 - b. If so, what information should we make available to the field in these instances?
3. The Online Real-Time training criteria is very clear for Vermont training organizations and sponsors but does not allow for national or international partners to offer Online Real-Time trainings unless they partner with a Vermont sponsor.
 - a. Should we allow online real-time trainings from IACET accredited training organizations and appropriately accredited Institutions of Higher Education to count in Vermont?
 - b. Should we allow online real-time trainings from other national and international organizations to count in Vermont? If so, what system or structure can we put in place to verify quality and verification criteria?
 - c. Northern Lights Proposal: Automatic approval of online real-time trainings from IACET accredited training organizations or IHEs. Sponsor Verification Process for others (see pg 5).

Possible Sponsor Verification for NAEYC trainings and out-of-state Online Real-Time trainings

Special Process for NAEYC online anytime training opportunities and online real-time trainings offered by out-of-state training organizations:

1. Participant obtains training certificate after completion of the training.
2. Participant consults with an approved sponsor who will review training certificate and responses from the participant about content and learning, then will verify and sign off on their participation in the identified training.
3. Participant submits the training certificate AND sponsor sign off form AND verification cover sheet to Northern Lights for review and entry into BFIS Quality and Credential accounts.

Sponsor Verification Form

Please check the type of training:

- NAEYC Online Anytime training
- Online Real-Time training from an out-of-state or national training organization
Name of training organization _____

Participant Name:

BFIS QC #:

Phone and Email:

Training Title:

Training Date:

Please describe in your own words what this training was about:

Please describe what you learned from this training:

I verify that I participated in the training named above and that all detail included here is accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Participant Signature: _____

Sponsor Name:

Sponsor Organization (if applicable):

Phone and Email:

I have reviewed the information above and the accompanying training certificate and I verify that the individual named above participated in the identified training.

Sponsor Signature: