

ICSI (Continuous Professional Education) Guidelines, 2019

(As approved by the Council in its 263rd (Special) Meeting held on 23rd September, 2019 at New Delhi and amended by the Council in its 266th, 275th, 295th and 305th meetings held on 9th January, 2020, 26-27th March, 2021, 24th March, 2023 and 26-28th December, 2023 respectively.)

In exercise of the powers conferred by Clause (1) of Part II of the Second Schedule to the Company Secretaries Act, 1980 (56 of 1980), as amended by the Company Secretaries (Amendment) Act, 2006, the Council of the Institute of Company Secretaries of India hereby issues the following guidelines:-

1. SHORT TITLE AND COMMENCEMENT

These Guidelines shall be called the ICSI (Continuous Professional Education) Guidelines, 2019 or 'ICSI (CPE) Guidelines, 2019' in short. The revised Guidelines shall come into force, w.e.f. 18th January, 2024.

2. OBJECTIVE AND INTRODUCTION

The Company Secretaries Act, 1980 was enacted to make provisions for the regulation and development of the profession of Company Secretaries. The Institute of Company Secretaries of India set-up under the said Act has been conducting examinations and prescribing standards for adherence by its members.

A profession cannot maintain its cutting edge competencies unless its members regularly update their knowledge. Attendance and participation in Professional Development Programs, Certificate Programs, and other similar training and professional development programs organized by the ICSI and its offices and other recognized bodies enable members to –

- (i) Constantly upgrade professional competence and skills.
- (ii) Sensitize them to new and emerging opportunities for professional services.
- (iii) Assure users of professional services that they possess adequate skills commensurate with their professional responsibilities.
- (iv) Improve their level of confidence to meet ever-changing demands on the profession.

The objective of these guidelines is to facilitate the members in keeping them abreast of latest developments, widening their knowledge base and improving their skills to maintain the cutting edge by providing training and expertise in critical areas of professional interest and to assist members achieve constant upgrading of competence by acquiring adequate skills commensurate with their professional responsibilities.

For the removal of doubts, it is clarified that all issues relating to the implementation and interpretation of terms used in these guidelines shall be the responsibility of the Professional Development Committee constituted by the Council. The Committee may discharge its duties in this regard (including issue of clarifications and advisories from time to time) for implementation within the limits of its authority as specified or prescribed by the Council.

3. APPLICABILITY OF THE GUIDELINES

These guidelines shall be mandatory for all the members irrespective of whether they are in practice or otherwise, except those specified in para 6.1.1.

4. KEY DEFINITIONS

4.1 Approved Learning Program shall mean any programme of academic nature (viz., Professional Development Program, Continuing Professional Education Program, Certificate Course / Program, Refresher Course of the ICSI, Crash Courses, Self-Assessment examinations, Seminar or study circle meeting) organised by the HQ, RO, CCGRT, Chapter or Study Circle of the Institute, and programmes organised jointly with regulatory bodies, professional bodies, partner institutions or Chambers of Commerce.

Provided that the Professional Development Committee under exceptional circumstances (such as complete lockdown, social disturbance, communal riots, curfew, government order prohibiting large gatherings etc.) which render it impossible to conduct any programme in the physical mode may on case to case basis allow the ROs, CCGRTs, or Chapters also to conduct any learning programme through electronic/distance mode subject to reasonable restrictions.

Provided further that the Professional Development Committee shall be empowered to add/approve any other activity as approved learning programme on case to case basis.

4.2 Continuing Professional Education (CPE) – The process of members' continuous learning.

4.3 Structured CPE Credits – The CPE Credits awarded to the members for attendance at approved learning programmes.

4.4 Unstructured CPE Credits – The CPE Credits awarded to the members for undertaking any of the learning activities stated in para 8 of these guidelines.

4.5 Year for the purposes of these guidelines shall mean the period of 12 months commencing from 1st day of April and ending on 31st day of March following year. Further, the Council or President, ICSI if authorised by the Council may extend the year upto 15 months for the purpose of relaxation of requirement of CPE Credits in any such year.

5. AWARD OF CPE CREDITS

5.1 It is mandatory for all members of the Institute, except those specified in para 6.1.1 to secure **20 CPE Credits** in a year through structured and unstructured learning program(s). However, no carry forward for excess CPE Credits from one year to another year will be allowed.

5.2 The basis of calculation of CPE Credits will be as under:

| No. of hours of Learning Program attended by the member | CPE Credit(s) |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Beyond 1 hour and upto 2 hours | 1 |
| Beyond 2 hours and upto 4 hours in a single day | 2 |
| Beyond 4 hours in a single day | 4 |
| Program spanning 1½days | 6 |
| Program spanning 2 days | 8 |
| Program spanning 2½ days and above/ National Convention | 10 |

- 5.3** The member shall be required to mark his / her attendance in the attendance register or through biometric or any other electronic mode both at the time of start of the learning event and at the end thereof.
- 5.4** No CPE Credits will be awarded for any program whose duration is less than 1 hour.
- 5.5** If the Programme Director / Programme Co-ordinator / Programme Facilitator / Course Coordinator attends the full program, full credit of the CPE Credits allotted for the program will be given.
- 5.6** Where the Chief Guest/ Guest of Honour is a member of the Institute in any programme organized by the HQ/RCs/CCGRTs/ Chapters/ Study Circles, full credit of the CPE Credits allotted for the program will be given.
- 5.7** Members acting as Faculty in any of the program organised by the HQ /RCs/CCGRTs/ Chapters/ Study Circles, shall be entitled to CPE Credits as per the duration of the session or CPE Credits announced for the programme, whichever is less. Further, no CPE Credit shall be given to a member for acting as a faculty in Oral Tuition Classes or any other student training programs.
- 5.8** Award of CPE Credits and other modalities for the PMQ Courses, Certificate Courses and Short Term Online Crash Courses etc. shall be as per the ICSI (Specialised and Advanced Courses and Examination) Guidelines, 2020.
- 5.9** No CPE credit will be given to a participant who attends the programme partially.
- 5.10** Members of the age of 60 years or above will be required to obtain 50% of the CPE Credits required to be obtained by the members, if he is in employment relating to CS profession or holding the certificate of practice. This shall be applicable from the year succeeding the Year in which the member attains the age of 60 years.

5.11 CPE Credits for joint programmes shall only be awarded where Institute is acting as an Associate Partner, Knowledge Partner, Academic Partner, Institutional Partner, Support Partner, Logo Partner, Domestic Partner or the like.

6.1 EXEMPTIONS

6.1.1 The requirements of CPE Credit shall not apply to:

- (a) A member who attains the age of 60 years during a particular year and who is neither in employment relating to CS profession nor holding Certificate of practice.
- (b) A member, for the year during which he attains membership of the Institute.
- (c) Member of Parliament;
- (d) Member of Legislative Assembly or Legislative Council;
- (e) Member of Judiciary;
- (f) Members of any of the Central Civil Services;
- (g) Members of any of the State Civil Services;
- (h) Employees of regulatory bodies, government organizations (not being corporate entities), and statutory bodies;
- (i) Members of Armed Forces and Paramilitary Forces;
- (j) A member or class of members to whom the Professional Development Committee of the Council grants full/partial exemption, on case to case basis, either by granting specific /general exemption, on account of facts and circumstances in the following situations:
 - (i) Maternity;
 - (ii) Accident/Medical Emergencies;
 - (iii) Partial/Total Disablement;
 - (iv) Such other case(s), as may be deemed appropriate by Professional Development Committee of the Council.

6.1.2 Member whose professional address is beyond 100 Kms. from the nearest Regional Council/ Chapter(s)/ Study Circle(s) and attends a program at any place, they shall be awarded double the CPE Credits for which the concerned Program is entitled. However, this will not apply to attendance at the National Convention/ National Conference of Practising Company Secretaries/National Conference of Corporate CS or any other National Programme organized by the Institute and programs conducted through virtual mode, webinars.

6.1.3 Where the member in practice who has practice set up beyond 100 Kms. from the nearest Regional Council/Chapter is not able to attend the professional development programmes, they may write to the Institute for approving a topic on which they can prepare research paper to get the exemption from securing CPE Credits or may resort to unstructured learning activities as per para 8 of these Guidelines.

The Research paper include:

- (i) A concept paper on emerging areas of practice for Company

- Secretaries.
- (ii) A Referencer/ backgrounder on contemporary topics relevant to Company Secretaries.
 - (iii) A booklet on any topic relating to the areas of practice for Company Secretaries.
 - (iv) A monograph on any contemporary topic relevant to the Company Secretaries.
 - (v) An empirical study of practical relevance to the Company Secretaries.

Member whose research paper is approved by the Professional Development Committee of the Council, will be exempted from the requirement of securing CPE Credits for the year during which the research paper is approved.

Provided also that the member falling in any of the above exempted categories shall submit a declaration along with documentary evidence at the time of renewal of membership on annual basis or anytime at the time of claiming exemptions.

6.2.1 Multiple Qualifications - A member holding membership of more than one sister professional institution i.e. ICAI and ICoAI including ICSI IIP, ICSI RVO, ICSI Institute of Social Auditors, ICSI International ADR Centre or other such bodies of ICSI wherein he / she is also required to meet CPE Credit requirements in order to continue the membership, such member shall be granted corresponding number of CPE Credits according to ICSI (CPE) Guidelines, 2019 against the learning activities undertaken under the banner of the other professional body (ies).

Explanation:

- 1. Member is required to submit a self-declaration along with proof while requesting ICSI for updation of CPE Credits.*
- 2. An undertaking to be given by the respective member at the time of renewal of membership stating that they have complied with the requirements of the other professional body.*

6.2.1(a) Members Residing Overseas

- a) in case of members residing overseas, the programmes of the professional interest organized by Regulatory bodies/ Institutes/ Chambers/ Business Associations/ recognized Universities/any other similar body in the country of residence, shall also be considered as approved learning program.

A member shall provide yearly declaration stating details of the programme viz. duration, attendance, CPE credits awarded (if any) for claiming corresponding number of CPE Credits against the programmes attended during the year under the banner of other body (ies).

- b) the members residing overseas can avail 100% CPE Credits through e-Mode

7. CPE CREDIT FOR STRUCTURED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

7.1 A member whose reply to prize queries is published in the Chartered Secretary will be entitled to 4 CPE Credits.

7.2 A member whose article is published in the Chartered Secretary or any UGC approved Journal will be entitled to 4 CPE Credits.

7.3 In respect of joint authorship of the article in the Chartered Secretary or any UGC approved Journal, 2 CPE Credits be awarded to each member who has authored the article. However, the joint authorship should be limited to two authors only.

7.4 The article published in the Souvenir of National Convention/ National Conference of Practicing Company Secretaries /National Conference of Corporate CS or any other National Programme organized by the Institute shall be treated at par with the article published in the Chartered Secretary for the purposes of grant of CPE Credits.

7.5 A member who publishes book(s) will be entitled to 4 CPE Credits. CPE Credits shall be awarded to maximum two publications per year with 4 CPE Credits each. However, joint authorship, if any, should be limited to two authors only with award of 2 CPE Credits each.

8. CPE CREDIT FOR UNSTRUCTURED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

The members shall be granted CPE Credits under these Guidelines for undertaking any of the following unstructured learning activities subject to a maximum of 12 CPE Credits in each year:

| <i>S. No.</i> | <i>Learning Activity</i> | <i>CPE Credits per activity</i> | <i>Maximum CPE in a year</i> |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. | Web based learning including e-learning, webinar, subject to declaration of CPE Credits by the ICSI | As announced by the ICSI | 8 |
| 2. | Viewing video recording of the learning programmes organized by the Institute subject to submission of self-declaration by the member along with gist of topic viewed | 2 | 2 |
| 3. | Revision of Published Book | 6 | 6 |
| 4. | Acting as Guide/Supervisor for a M.Phil./ LL.M./ Ph.D. student registered with a UGC approved University subject to submission of proof in this regards | 4 | 4 |
| 5. | Submitting suggestions on Questionnaires/Consultative Papers/ Exposure Draft, etc. sought by the Institute subject to acceptance by the | 2 | 4 |

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|-----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|
| | Institute. | | |
| 6. | Reviewing of Articles / Guideline Answers/ Study Material and other Publications of the Institute | 2 | 4 |
| 7. | Publication of articles of professional interest in national dailies registered with the Registrar of Newspapers for India | 2 | 4 |
| 8. | Acting as Faculty in any of the program organised by the various Universities/ Management Institutions | 2 | 4 |
| 9. | Reading articles published in the Chartered Secretary Journal or any other UGC approved journal (subject to submission of self-declaration by the member along with gist of article(s) read) | 1 | 2 |
| 10. | Acting as a panelist at a programme organized by the press and media | 2 | 4 |
| 11. | Participation at meetings of the research groups / task forces / core groups/ Board(s), as may be Constituted by the Council | 2 | 6 |
| 12. | Publication of articles in the Newsletters published by Regional Councils | 1 | 4 |

9. CONSEQUENCE OF NON-COMPLIANCE

A member who fails to obtain the mandatory CPE Credits during the stipulated period may be liable to disciplinary action for non-compliance under the provisions of the Company Secretaries Act, 1980, Company Secretaries Regulations, 1982 and the Code of Conduct, as amended from time to time.

10. REMOVAL OF DIFFICULTIES

If any difficulty arises with respect to the observance / interpretation of these Guidelines, or some unforeseeable circumstances occur which have not expressly been provided for in these Guidelines, then the Secretary, ICSI shall decide the matter in consultation with President, ICSI and pass such orders as may appear necessary or expedient for carrying out the objectives of these Guidelines.