



## **PROCESS FOR REVIEWING APPLICATIONS FOR SUBSTANTIVE EQUIVALENCY OF CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT/ CONTINUING MEDICAL EDUCATION (CPD/CME) ACCREDITATION SYSTEMS**

The [Standards for Substantive Equivalency between Continuing Professional Development/ Continuing Medical Education \(CPD/CME\) Accreditation Systems](#) (the Standards) were developed by the [International Academy for Continuing Professional Development Accreditation](#) (the IACPDA). The IACPDA is a network of colleagues dedicated to assisting and supporting the development, implementation, enhancement, and evolution of CPD/CME accreditation systems around the world. Established in 2013, the IACPDA serves as a platform that facilitates peer-to-peer support for leaders of CPD/CME accreditation systems and encourages networking, mentoring, and interactions about common issues.

The process to determine Substantive Equivalency is based upon principles of inclusivity, peer review, mentoring, and quality improvement with the goal of elevating the global CPD/CME enterprise.

The IACPDA conducts all business in English and uses virtual meeting formats when possible and appropriate.

The Committee on Substantive Equivalency (the Committee), working on behalf of the IACPDA, would be charged with reviewing applications to assess compliance with the Standards, and ensuring that the IACPDA's decisions are based on substantial evidence provided by the applicants in accordance with IACPDA's standards and procedures. The Committee would also review annual reports.

The inaugural Committee, in place for IACPDA's first two decision cycles, would be comprised of:

- ✓ one representative of the accreditation unit from each of the following six accrediting bodies that have been determining substantive equivalency between and among each other for years and have experience with such determinations:
  - Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (U.S.)
  - Accreditation Section of the Department of Healthcare Professions of the Qatar Ministry of Public Health
  - European Board for Accreditation of Continuing Education for Health Professionals
  - Federation of the German Chambers of Physicians/German Medical Association
  - Oman Medical Specialty Board
  - Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada
- ✓ one representative of the accreditation unit of any organization newly granted Substantive Equivalency. A deadline will be established by which the organization must submit the name of the representative to serve on the Committee.

Committee members:

- would serve staggered terms not to exceed four years, and
- would not receive compensation.

There will be an annual call for observers, and the observer pool would include all interested IACPDA members with relevant CPD accreditation background who have satisfactorily completed IACPDA's surveyor training and shadowing process.

Each survey team:

- would be composed of three individuals who are not from the same system/country as the applicant,
- would include:
  - ✓ two Committee members (one of whom would serve as the primary reviewer), and
  - ✓ one non-Committee member who is a non-voting observer
- would:
  - ✓ review the application and activity/provider files,
  - ✓ conduct the survey interview, and
  - ✓ come to consensus on its recommendations for Committee action
- would:
  - ✓ review annual reports; and
  - ✓ deem them as either complete or incomplete, followed by a description of any shortcomings.

Only full Committee members are empowered to act on the survey team's final report and recommendations, which will include a determination of compliance or noncompliance with each Standard. A finding of noncompliance will include a description of shortcomings. Recommendations for Committee actions will be:

- Substantive Equivalency
- Substantive Equivalency with an improvement plan that explicitly identifies the shortcomings to be resolved by a specified deadline
- Not Substantively Equivalent
- Deferral of decision due to absent information

A list of accreditors determined to be Substantively Equivalent will be publicly available on the IACPDA website.

An IACPDA staff member would be responsible for:

- maintaining all documentation in accordance with IACPDA policy,
- administering the application process,
  - ✓ reviewing applications for completeness
  - ✓ following up with applicants for the requisite activity/provider files as well as additional or clarifying information as needed
- coordinating reviews of the application and survey interviews, and
- coordinating the timely completion of reports and recommendations by the survey team and the Committee.

Committee actions will require a two-thirds majority vote, with recusal required of any members effected by the vote.

IACPDA members will be informed when a decision of Substantive Equivalency is rendered so that they may then decide if they wish to:

- recognize IACPDA's determination of Substantive Equivalency; and
- bestow whatever rights and privileges are typically afforded within that IACPDA member's own system of accreditation.

The application fee for Substantive Equivalency would be \$1000 USD (fee to cover the cost of IACPDA staff time and expenses; fee may change over time).

There would be one decision cycle per year to review applications for Substantive Equivalency:

Applications due	February 28
Surveys conducted by	July 30
Recommendations submitted to Committee by	August 15
Committee action	At IACPDA annual meeting*
Four-year term begins	October 1

*\*This schedule is dependent upon the timing of the IACPDA annual meeting.*

Terms of Substantive Equivalency would be four years and would require the submission of an annual report by June 30 of each year that would detail:

- the accreditation activity of the preceding 12 months,
- any material changes that relate to the Standards, and
- any other information/data that may be requested by the IACPDA.