

# Substantial Equivalency

The Substantial Equivalency Program of the ABCE (Accrediting Body Continuous Education) makes it easier to recognize other CE accreditation systems as substantially equivalent to the ABCE's continuing healthcare education accreditation system. The evaluation is based on how well the other system meets the expectations of the Consensus on Basic Values and Responsibilities Underlying the Substantial Equivalence of CE and CPD Systems. In Substantial Equivalence, while a substantial degree of similarity is anticipated, it is also expected and acknowledged that there would be some deviations.

The accreditation agency is considered to be substantially the same if, as the basis for accreditation activities,

1. There is an explicit set of performance requirements that require providers to:
  - a. Use educational needs data as the basis for educational planning;
  - b. Measure the effectiveness of their CE activities;
  - c. Ensure that the content of their CE activities meets accepted standards of scientific integrity and is in line with common or local practice; and
  - d. Ensure that activities are free of commercial bias and beyond the control of persons or organizations with commercial interests.
1. Accreditation decisions are based on facts and information relevant to the specific performance requirements (as in 1a-d).
2. A mechanism is in place which allows for the collection, storage, and retrieval of the data and information necessary for the administration and evaluation of the accreditation process.

## Consensus on Values and Duties Underlying the Substantial Equivalency of the CE Systems.

### VALUES

CE systems should be based on the following enduring values

1. Continuing education and lifelong learning help healthcare professionals do their jobs better and, in turn, improve the whole population's health.
2. Continuing healthcare education and lifelong learning are based on data about what doctors need to learn to do their jobs better and improve health.

## RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE SYSTEM

### Responsibilities of Accrediting Bodies for CE/CPD

1. Accreditation agencies must be fair, legitimate, creative, honest, and consistent.
2. The bodies accredit CE/CPD providers, and organizers must show that they have fair standards and criteria.
3. Accrediting bodies must be responsible, responsive, and in charge.
4. Organizations that give accreditation must show that the process of giving accreditation includes checking that providers and organizations do what they are supposed to do.
5. Accrediting bodies must show that they support improving the quality of the accrediting process and the education systems it serves.
6. Accrediting organizations must work together and form partnerships with other accrediting organizations and the organizations they are accrediting.

### Responsibilities of the learner.

1. The learner's responsibility is to participate in CE/CPD designed to meet their specific needs.
2. It is the responsibility of the learners to make sure that their needs are relevant to their professional practice and growth to improve patient care and health.
3. Learners are responsible for determining how well their needs have been met after their knowledge, skills, or performance has changed.
4. It is up to the learners to ensure that there are systems to stop commercial bias in educational activities.

### Responsibilities of the CE Provider.

1. The activity planner, presenters, and facilitators must tell the provider/organizer, the participants, and the certifying authorities about all commercial sponsorships and interests they have in the activity.
2. Any support, sponsorship, or funding from for-profit healthcare organizations can't change the structure or content of the educational activity, and participants and accrediting bodies need to know about it.

3. The provider or organizer must be able to confirm participation regularly and in a way that meets regulatory requirements.
4. The provider or organizer must ensure that the learning goals are clearly stated regarding knowledge, skills, or performance.
5. It is up to the provider or organizer to ensure that the teaching methods used to align with the learning goals.
6. The provider or organizer must show that they looked at the quality of past educational activities and made any necessary changes.