



**UNION EUROPÉENNE DES MÉDECINS SPÉCIALISTES
EUROPEAN UNION OF MEDICAL SPECIALISTS**

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**European Accreditation Council for Continuing
Medical Education**

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONTINUING MEDICAL EDUCATION PROVIDERS

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INTRODUCTION

The principal responsibility of UEMS-EACCME is assuring the quality of international Continuing Medical Education (CME) and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) in Europe, as well as facilitating and stimulating participation of individual physicians in CME activities. UEMS-EACCME policies, procedures and standard documents and texts are adjusted to international and European standards in CME accreditation.

Physicians have different Continuing Medical Education (CME) and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) needs and interests, individual learning patterns/styles, as well as clinical practice environments. The availability of given diagnostic procedures and treatment depends significantly on the nature of the medical specialty, the national healthcare system regulations, the country's economy, cultural patterns and many other factors.

UEMS-EACCME therefore encourages CME/CPD providers to consider the CME needs and learning habits of physicians while preparing the CME activity. Definitions of learning objectives, targeting the audience, and assuring objectively presented scientific content are among the key features that will be considered by UEMS-EACCME when accrediting a programme.

Providers are invited to read all other regulatory documents, including:

▪ **GUIDELINES FOR COMMERCIAL SUPPORT OF CME/CPD EVENTS**

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- **THE AVOIDANCE OF BIAS IN EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES**
- **MISSION AND OBJECTIVES**
- **USE OF UEMS-EACCME LOGO AND NAME**

1. UEMS-EACCME

1.1. What is UEMS-EACCME ?

The European Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education, a body of the European Union of Medical Specialists (UEMS) is responsible for accreditation of international CME programmes for Medical Specialists within the European medical community.

UEMS-EACCME works in conjunction with the Specialty Sections of UEMS and the European Specialty Accreditation Boards, for technical appraisal, and with the National Accreditation Authorities, for official recognition. UEMS-EACCME has a mutual recognition agreement with American Medical Association (AMA)

UEMS-EACCME only provides accreditation for international educational programmes, ie those that are designed for an international audience who may expect recognition of CME credits in their home countries. National initiatives are managed solely by National accreditation bodies, but the credits will not be recognised elsewhere.

1.2. UEMS-EACCME mission and activities

The mission of UEMS-EACCME is the assurance of quality of international CME and CPD programmes for Medical Specialties in Europe. Accreditation, which means the approval of the scientific and didactic value of the programme, is awarded to those activities that comply with the quality requirements stipulated by UEMS-EACCME. Every CME programme submitted to UEMS-EACCME for accreditation is reviewed and assessed separately.

1.3. Independence and transparency

UEMS-EACCME is an independent entity and its decisions are not influenced by any specific medical, scientific or professional institution or society. UEMS-EACCME does not depend on sponsorship from the health industry.

1.4. The Internet – UEMS-EACCME's main communication tool

The UEMS-EACCME website offers all the necessary information on UEMS-EACCME and its activities. This is the access point for UEMS-EACCME accreditation services.

UEMS-EACCME has an open-door communication policy. All comments, suggestions, and criticisms are welcome. They should be addressed via the website or e-mail to the UEMS-EACCME office.

2. UEMS-EACCME ACCREDITATION

2.1. What is accreditation?

Accreditation means the decision by UEMS-EACCME that a CME activity, event or programme has fulfilled the UEMS-EACCME quality requirements. A CME activity will be accredited by UEMS-EACCME if it has high quality scientific content, if it is free of commercial bias (see UEMS-EACCME Guidelines for Commercial support of CME events) and has an appropriate educational approach.

2.2. Accreditation as a service to the medical community

At present, a large number of scientific programmes, symposia and conferences are organised in the medical field. UEMS-EACCME accreditation is intended to indicate to doctors those programmes with both high quality scientific content, unbiased approach and didactic value.

2.3. Advantages of UEMS-EACCME accreditation

There are several reasons for applying for UEMS-EACCME accreditation.

The two main ones are that:

- More and more European countries are running CME or CPD systems for physicians, some being mandatory. Doctors therefore prefer to attend accredited meetings earning CME/CPD credits that will be recognised by their National Accreditation Authorities;

- The accredited CME activity distinguishes itself from other potential educational activities by the fact that its quality has been evaluated by a group of impartial specialists in the relevant field.

2.4. Who can apply for UEMS-EACCME accreditation?

UEMS-EACCME will accredit meetings and distance learning programmes, provided by International and National Medical/ Scientific Societies, Universities and their associated working groups or affiliated societies. Accreditation of CME Programmes presented by professional health education organisations can be considered.

To be eligible for UEMS-EACCME accreditation, other organisers, individual doctors or groups of doctors, working in conjunction with commercial organisations, should work in cooperation with, or within the structure of those scientifically recognised organisms.

2.5. Recognition of UEMS-EACCME accreditation

The UEMS-EACCME accreditation system and procedures are based on the UEMS Charter on CME and other relevant documents. UEMS-EACCME is an institution of the UEMS, which formally represents European countries, and its credits will thus be recognised by National Accreditation Authorities. As UEMS-EACCME accreditation concerns only international CME programmes, it is not competitive, but rather complementary to the competence and activities of National Accreditation Authorities.

3. ACCREDITATION PROCEDURE

3.1. In brief

Applications to UEMS-EACCME accreditation are submitted online through the website of UEMS-EACCME or one of the cooperating European Speciality Accreditation Boards. The Provider has to register and complete an application form, proving relevant information on the scientific content of the programme, the faculty, the educational approach as well as information on commercial and other support to the programme.

The completed application form is reviewed by UEMS-EACCME and accreditation is granted, or rejected. After decision on accreditation and the number of CME credits awarded, the Provider receives the Accreditation Certificate, which is the formal basis on which Attendance Certificates, with the awarded number of CME credits, can be delivered to participants.

A fee is required for the accreditation service. Applications will be reviewed only after reception of the administrative fee. An invoice will be provided on request.

3.2. How to apply for UEMS-EACCME accreditation?

The application for UEMS-EACCME accreditation can be submitted on-line only (via the Internet). To apply please go to the section "CME Providers" on the UEMS-EACCME website homepage, and follow the instructions. A similar process is available at the website of the cooperating European Specialty Accreditation Boards (ESABs).

3.3. Registering as a CME Provider

It is necessary to register as a CME Provider in order to have full access to UEMS-EACCME accreditation services. Registration is completed in the "CME Provider" section of the UEMS-EACCME website and cooperating ESABs.

It is extremely important to complete all requested data, especially e-mails, telephone, and fax numbers carefully, and to update them regularly. The Internet is the main communication tool of UEMS-EACCME, so incorrect data might cause delay in the accreditation process.

3.4. The Application Form and Glossary

The application form is the main document on the basis of which the quality of the CME/CPD programme is assessed and accreditation awarded. The application form contains questions concerning the programme, scientific committee, faculty, language, didactic approach and commercial support.

In order to facilitate the task of completing the application form, a special glossary has been prepared that precisely defines the information UEMS-EACCME is asking for.

3.5. Application assessment

Once the completed application form is received it will be addressed to the relevant UEMS Specialty Section for scientific and educational assessment.

The National accreditation authority of the country where the CME/CPD activity is being held is also consulted regarding accreditation of the event and number of credits to be awarded.

Differences between these two bodies are resolved through XXX

Timings....

3.6. Number of Credits

Credits are awarded as European Continuing Medical Educations Credits (ECMECs) according to the following rules:

1. One ECMEC = One hours of Educational activity
2. Maximum of three ECMECs per half a day
3. Maximum of six ECMECs per full day
4. "Satellite" Symposia and other meetings can only be granted CME credits if
 - a. They reach the required quality criteria, and
 - b. Their financial support is totally unrestricted¹

3.7. Fees

The UEMS – EACCME asks a fee for the processing of the applications. This fee is based only on the estimated number of participants and is equally share by the participating partners: UEMS-EACCME , UEMS Section, National Accreditation Authority.

Number of attendees	Total fee (€)
≤ 250	300
251 - 500	600
501 - 1000	900

¹ Either there is no commercial support or an Unrestricted Grant is made to a provider who then has freedom to decide on the content and delivery method of the educational activity.

1001 - 2000	1200
2001 – 5000	1500
> 5000	3000

The fee scale of cooperating ESABs may differ from the above.

For non-European meetings, as there are no National Accreditation Authorities, the part of the NAA is waived.

4. UEMS-EACCME REQUIREMENTS TOWARDS THE PROVIDER OF THE ACCREDITED CME/CPD EVENT

UEMS-EACCME expects the Provider to:

4.1. Place on the promotional materials/brochures for the CME programme information on:

- a. The learning objectives of the programmes
- b. The targeted audience
- c. Possible/disclosed conflicts of interest (CME faculty or provider relationships with commercial supporters of the CME event should be disclosed to participants prior to educational activities and briefly indicated in course materials such as brochures, the syllabus, exhibits, poster-sessions and also in post-meeting publications). Conflict of interest occurs when an individual or organization has an interest that might compromise their reliability regarding that particular scientific subject. A conflict of interest even exists even if no improper act results from it, and can create appearance of impropriety and undermine confidence in the individual or organisation.
- d. Source(s) of commercial funding
- e. Information that commercially sponsored satellite symposia (if any) are excluded from UEMS-EACCME accreditation.

4.2. Prepare the event's programme in such a way that the possible accompanying satellite sessions and/or commercially sponsored social events would not interfere, nor compete with, the accredited CME/CPD activity.

4.3. Comply with UEMS-EACCME policy and recommendations regarding 1. Commercial Support of CME/CPD Activities and 2. Avoidance of Bias in Educational Activities (see dedicated documents)

4.4. Comply to the UEMS-EACCME disclosure policy

Every member of the Faculty and Scientific Committee must complete and sign the UEMS-EACCME disclosure form. Signature of this document discloses the existence of any financial interest or other relationship a person, or the provider has with the supporting company or any commercial products discussed during the CME course.

Additionally, potential relationships of faculty members or Provider with commercial supporters of the CME event should be disclosed to participants prior to educational activities and briefly indicated in course materials such as brochures, syllabi, exhibits, poster-sessions and also in post-meeting publications (see Disclosure Text).

In case of existing conflicts of interest, they should be indicated to the audience before the activity and/or in the above mentioned materials.

4.5. Seek evaluation of the CME/CPD activity by participants and report its results

At the end of every activity participants should complete evaluation forms. The use of the UEMS-EACCME standard evaluation form is recommended, as it is an easy-to-use one-page document, and its subsequent processing is simple. The results have to be transmitted to UEMS-EACCME in the report after the accredited CME activity (see below).

4.6. Comply with UEMS-EACCME rules regarding Attendance Certificates

- Attendance Certificates should contain the standard text proposed by UEMS-EACCME .

- Attendance Certificates should be delivered only at the end of the program to those participants who hand over to the secretariat the evaluation form.

4.7. Comply with UEMS-EACCME policy regarding the use of its logo and name

- The circumstances in which a CME/CPD Provider can use the UEMS-EACCME logos and names are defined in a separate document.

The Provider is allowed to use the “UEMS-EACCME Accredited” logo on his promotional materials only after accreditation has been granted and the Certificate of Accreditation issued.

4.8. Provide a written report to UEMS-EACCME after the event

UEMS-EACCME requires the Provider of the accredited CME/CPD activity to prepare and send to UEMS-EACCME a report concerning the activity.

The content of the report is pre-defined, and possible to download from the UEMS-EACCME website.

Failure to provide a suitable report will impact upon the accreditation of future events by the same provider.

5. ASSURING THE QUALITY OF ACCREDITED CME/CPD PROGRAMMES

5.1. UEMS-EACCME QUALITY POLICIES

The evaluation of the accredited event has four main parts:

- The planning, content, educational methods and strategies to avoid bias will be evaluated on the basis of the submitted application form;
- Participants evaluate the event by completing the Evaluation Form;
- The CME provider has to participate in this process also, completing and sending the Report to UEMS-EACCME after the event has taken place;
- UEMS-EACCME will randomly monitor, on site, some of the UEMS-EACCME accredited activities.

Careful planning, professional organization and subsequent evaluation are key features of a successfully conducted CME activity.

5.1.1. QUALITY OF THE EDUCATIONAL APPROACH

Selection of topics and speakers. Avoidance of Bias.

Selection of topics should be based on the assessment of the educational needs of the intended audience. Acritical adherence to fashionable topics should be avoided and all efforts should be made to prevent the influence of commercial interests and opportunities in the design of the scientific programme and in the content of presentations.

Speakers should be selected according to their scientific and educational merits.

Providers are request to read the UEMS-EACCME document: The Avoidance of Bias in Educational Activities.

The terms of financial support from commercial companies to CME/CPD activities is especially critical. UEMS-EACCME encourages providers to establish a form of cooperation that will enhance the quality and accessibility of a CME activity without permitting actual or potential commercial bias or conflict of interest.

UEMS-EACCME has defined in its Guidelines for Commercial Support of CME/CPD Events (see dedicated document) the rules that must be respected by both the CME provider and supporting company or institution.

In any case, the supporting company cannot influence nor control the scientific content of the CME/CPD programme, nor make any kind of pressure on the Provider.

An unrestricted educational grant is regarded as the recommended form of support.

Working language, course materials

For international programmes English is the working language that is recommended. However, for meetings with a different official working language, availability of the course materials in English is encouraged.

Interactivity and use of multimedia

For the scientifically valuable content of a course, the presentation is a very important factor. Its form and level of interactivity will have an influence on how the participants assimilate this new information.

In education, “multimedia” means the integrated use of digitised text, audio, graphics, animation, and video to present the educational activity content. A mixture of these technologies may be used to produce better results educationally than any single technology.

Teaching methods

The classical teaching model in medicine, mostly based on passive knowledge acquisition, are less effective than the more modern methods. Recent adult learning theories point to clinical practice and problem solving as key areas of interest. Therefore, incorporation in CME programmes of problem-based learning, interactivity and stimulating self-learning are highly recommended

5.2. MONITORING OF COMPLIANCE WITH UEMS-EACCME REQUIREMENTS

5.2.1. Professional honesty

The role of UEMS-EACCME is to stimulate, coordinate and evaluate international European CME. Its vocation is not to control. UEMS-EACCME does not wish to set up complex and cumbersome control mechanisms, and has trust in the good faith and professionalism of CME Providers. However, failure to comply with these expectations will strongly affect the future relationship between providers and UEMS-EACCME

5.2.2. Transparency and simplicity - the same rules for all

The requirements settled and described above are seen as the minimum requirement and must be fulfilled. All CME providers, regardless of the size and importance of their institution are submitted to the same rules, procedures, and have to comply with UEMS-EACCME Policies, Procedures and Requirements.

5.2.3. Monitoring

UEMS-EACCME reserves the right to audit compliance with its accreditation requirements.

This will include a variety of means, such as request for documentation, evaluation of reports, participants' evaluation forms and on-site monitoring.

Repeated or serious breaches of UEMS-EACCME regulations will result in the rejection of future applications by the offending provider.

End