



EORNA ACE Reference Guide to the Accreditation Process.

In order to facilitate and ease the processing of your request for European accreditation we would like to advise you to read carefully this Reference guide which should answer any queries you might have.

The guide is divided into 3 sections:

- i) The Application form - giving you more information.
- ii) A short description of the EORNA ACE, followed by a glossary.
- iii) A review of the essential documents related to an application for European Accreditation.

Application Form.

The title of the event has to be clearly stated (the aims of the event/activity must avoid all links to names of commercial companies or products) together with the proposed programme and key speakers (with details).

Society / Institution: the name of the scientific society or institution that is organizing the event/activity. The society/ Institution must agree to provide the EORNA ACE with a completed event report after the event/activity has taken place.

The organizers can, of course, be assisted by a Medical Education Communication Company (MECC) for the logistic support and practical organization of the event/activity but this MECC can not be the scientific organizer of the event or activity.

For the contact person responsible for the application, either the MECC can be designated or the scientific organizer of the event/activity.

This contact person will be the responsible for all the correspondence between the organizer and the EORNA ACE and will for instance be responsible for responding to requests for further information from either the EORNA ACE Executive Committee or the National Accreditation Authority.

It is important to provide full information regarding dates (start date and end date) and venues (city, state, country) of the event/activity.

The organizers must indicate the estimated number of active participants.

As the fee is based on a sliding scale according to the expected number of participants, this will be essential for determining the fee that the organizers will need to pay to EORNA ACE. It is appreciated that it is difficult to give a precise number of participants but a realistic approximation should be given. According to EORNA ACE Executive Committee, fees will be waived for events until it votes a revision of this point

The participant's registration fee for the event/activity is requested for internal information only.

The application must be accompanied by the full detailed program of the event/activity.

The maximum number of credits allocated to the event or activity will be based on the program, following the ECMEC system.

By the "educational objectives of the activity" or event, EORNA ACE needs to know what are the aims in organizing the event/activity and how these will be achieved.

It is also important to indicate the target audience of the event/activity as this will relate to the educational objectives.

The target audience is also important to determine the selection of the EORNA ACE executive Committee which will evaluate the event/activity.

Any commercial support for the organization of the event/activity must be clearly indicated (all contributors).

Whilst support of events/activities is recognised, EORNA ACE only allows this by unrestricted educational grants.

Please note the EORNA ACE does not recognize company sponsored symposia/satellite sessions for accreditation.

Lecturers must disclose any potential conflict of interest or support to the participants.

The activity/event may be organized in any European language and there may be no language restrictions. Simultaneous translation should be supported.

The event/activity will have a European/international character in order to be accepted for evaluation.

This European/international character must be clearly indicated either by the fact that the participants are coming from different EU Member States or the faculty is constituted by scientists coming from different countries.

Fee

The EORNA ACE asks a fee for the processing of the applications. This fee is based only on the number of participants and is a sliding scale. If we have an equal major partners in the European Accreditation such as a National Accreditation Authority, they also share their part of the fee. The sliding scale is presented below :

Number	EORNA ACE	NAA (if applicable)	Total
up till 250			
251 – 500			
501 – 1.000			
1.001 – 2.000			
2.001 – 5.000			
> 5.000			

For non-European meetings, or in countries where there is no National Accreditation Authority, this part of the fee is waived.

Appeal Procedure

Either partner in the evaluation of European Accreditation events, the EORNA ACE Executive Committee or the National Accreditation Authority if there is one involved, may reject a request on the evidence submitted. In the event that this happens, they must supply the reasons for the rejection thus providing the applicant the opportunity to react by submitting an amended application taking into account the comments made by the evaluating bodies.

This amended application will be immediately sent to the evaluating bodies for re-assessment according to the same time scales.

EORNA ACE Structure

EORNA ACE was founded in 2008 as a separate entity from EORNA even though the EORNA ACE Executive Committee was appointed by the EORNA Executive Board of Officers. EORNA ACE management would remain the same:

- The governing body is the EORNA ACE Executive Committee, which is comprised of representatives from EORNA member countries.
- The EORNA ACE Executive Committee may consult an Advisory Council which provides recommendations with regard to the management of European accreditation. This body is made up of representatives from:
 - o National professional CME authorities, including national CME Accrediting bodies;
 - o EORNA,
 - o Professional specialist organisations and societies.

This Advisory Council can provide a valuable exchange of expert-knowledge between the various partners involved in accreditation at European level. EORNA may convene a meeting of this advisory council in order to fulfil its commitment to the further evolution of EORNA ACE procedures.

From the start, national professional regulatory bodies have encouraged and supported this specialty-wide structure, namely EORNA ACE, which makes CME / CPD credits throughout Europe exchangeable. The only condition was that these bodies would remain in charge of events in their own country and would have a major input in the process of EORNA ACE. Moreover, it is expected that within a few years mandatory recertification will apply in several countries. CME / CPD credits would then become an even more important instrument for such assessments.

Practical operation

EORNA ACE will request its mandate from many national regulatory bodies following agreed policies:

- a) National authorities are not threatened. EORNA ACE does not become a supranational body, but is a link and clearing-house between national regulatory bodies.
- b) If the country where the activity takes place has a national regulatory body that grants accreditation then the final decision concerning accreditation of each activity remains the decision of that national regulatory body.
- c) Quality assurance and determination of the number of credits of separate CME / CPD activities is decentralised, EORNA ACE relying upon the expertise of professional bodies in each specialty such as the EORNA Board and members.
- d) There will be no accreditation of commercially biased activities.
- e) Internet and distance-learning activities are being developed with each activity being judged separately. There is no proposal for providers to be accredited for series of activities stretching over months or years.
- f) Administrative expenses of EORNA ACE are borne by the providers of activities applying for European accreditation. The recognition of EORNA ACE credits (ECMEC's) by national authorities is within the above framework. EORNA ACE also strictly complies and operates according to this procedure:

The accreditation process in Europe may involve two partners, on the one hand the National Accreditation Authority and on the other hand the EORNA ACE Executive Committee.

The responsible National Authorities are determined according to the place where the meeting is organized and the membership of the EORNA ACE Executive Committee is determined on the basis of the specialty that is most involved or to the target audience of the event.

The process in practice:

The organizer of an event sends the application form with all the relevant and required documents to the EORNA ACE either by completion of the web-based request form (preferable) or in hard copy.

The Application form will be distributed immediately to applicable partners :

- a) The relevant National Accreditation Authority if there is one.
- b) The EORNA ACE assesses the scientific value of the CME / CPD activity. This evaluation strictly follows EORNA ACE Quality criteria defined.

Both partners are requested to give, in a well determined time scale, an approval or a refusal for accreditation plus the suggested number of credits to be applied by EORNA ACE.

As the different National Accreditation Authorities apply different credit systems, the European CME Credits ("ECMEC") were introduced in order to harmonise the number of credits on the following basis:

- 1 ECMEC per hour;
- 3 ECMEC for half-day; and
- 6 ECMEC for a full-day event.

National authorities can then convert these credits into national units, following their own National rules.

When EORNA ACE and applicable partners agree on an approval, the organiser will receive a letter confirming the approval of European Accreditation by EORNA ACE.

This letter contains two sections:

- the first stating the approval and precisely which partners have been involved in the decision.
- The second section gives the number of ECMEC's granted to the event (and eventually the number of National Credits granted following the rules of the National Accreditation Authority of the country where the event takes place).

Evaluation of events.

It is very difficult (if not impossible) to fully evaluate an event before it is held based on documents that are provided by the organizer. Therefore it is extremely important to ensure that organizers have an evaluation of the event by the participants. This evaluation can be quite simple but with essential questions such as:

- was the event well organized.
- quality of the event (subject material and presentation).
- did the attendee learn something from the event.
- will what I learned from the event change my practice.
- was any bias perceived.

The evaluation can be graded from "fully agree" to "fully disagree" in five steps for instance.

The principal aim of this evaluation is to help in the evaluation of any further meeting of the same kind organized by the same people. EORNA ACE is mostly involved in the evaluation of many international events that are recurring events so this will help in the process.

Which added value?

As shown, the added value of EORNA ACE lies in its central link, encompassing all specialties, between the professional societies, the CME / CPD providers and the national regulatory bodies. Any change to this procedure would need the consensus of national regulatory bodies.

From the point of view of the organizers of events, the added value sits in the international dimension that would be given to an event. More participants from other countries and also from the USA would be interested in participating in their meetings.

The long term benefit is the link with the national regulatory bodies. These bodies are very keen to preserve their national authority in the awarding of credits to the nurses in their own countries.

The EORNA ACE offers an institution in which they participate and have authority. In this way the profession facilitates exchange of CME / CPD credits in Europe in a similar way as postgraduate diplomas are mutually recognised according to European law.

It has to be recognised that it is the National Accreditation Authorities, together with the National Licensing Authorities, that ultimately give nurses their license to practise and EORNA, through EORNA ACE, intends to assist in this process. The ultimate goal is to develop a system that makes life easier for our colleagues and to provide them with recognised quality CME / CPD with the guarantee that they can use their CME / CPD credits to meet national requirements.

Guidelines on Accreditation

Application.

The application form can be downloaded from the internet and must be filled in as completely as possible. Ideally all the information should be sent by e-mail to the EORNA ACE (eorna.ace@eorna.eu) in order to facilitate the distribution of the information to the relevant Authorities. Any missing document can influence the efficiency of the process.

Therefore it is of utmost importance to provide all the requested documents in due time.

Commercial support.

There can not be ANY interaction between the Organizing Committee and the Industry or other Institutions that may influence the content of the activity. On the other hand some support may be given in the form of fully independent educational grants.

Conflict of interest.

There must be a clear statement regarding any conflict of interest signed by the Organizers.

Content of a CME / CPD activity and event.

CPE/CPD events and activities must have a content that promotes knowledge, skills and improvements in patient care; is valid, reliable and accurate; and offers balanced presentations that are free of commercial and other bias for or against products or services.

The content must be driven by and based on the learner's needs, addressing learning objectives that are identified, provided and subsequently evaluated for its effectiveness in meeting the identified educational needs. This result of this evaluation must be provided after the event/activity by to organizers to the EORNA ACE.

Credits.

In order to try to harmonize the number of credits granted to activities the European CME / CPD Credits (ECMEC's) have been introduced. The "One Hour equals One Credit" applies with a maximum of 3 ECMEC's per half day and 6 ECMEC's per full day activity.

These ECMEC's may then be translated by the National Accreditation Authorities in Europe into their National Credits by applying their National rules.

Disclosure of interest.

A formal declaration on disclosure of interest must be signed by the Organizers / Providers and attached to the application.

European / International Activity.

Every activity will be considered European and/or International where other attendees are expected as well as Nationals. Purely National activities do not qualify for this procedure and have to be evaluated solely by the National Accreditation Authority.

If an activity is organized outside Europe, EORNA ACE can grant credits' providing it does not conflict with partners where a mutual agreement on recognition prevails.

Evaluating structures.

Events that have been sent to EORNA ACE for European Accreditation will be evaluated by two distinct structures: the National Accreditation Authority (if one exists) of the Country where the activity is taking place and the EORNA ACE Executive Committee.

Evaluation of an Activity.

It is obvious that it is very difficult, if not impossible to completely evaluate a meeting in advance.

Any evaluation can only be made on the program and on the experience of the speakers. The most important factor must be the evaluation done by the participants at the meeting. Whilst this evaluation cannot have an effect on the actual activity, it can affect future recognition of similar activities.

Event / Activity.

EORNA ACE covers every CME/CPD event/activity that is meant for nurses in Europe organized in Europe or Worldwide.

The activity or event needs to have an international character in order to be dealt by EORNA ACE.

This international character of an event or activity can be interpreted by the presence in the audience, and/or in the faculty, of participants from different European Member States.

Feedback by the participants concerning the Activity.

It is insisted on by EORNA ACE that the participants must have the opportunity to give an evaluation of the Activity Preferably by means of a Multiple Choice Questionnaire provided by the organizers. A synthesis of the results of this Questionnaire must be provided back to EORNA ACE.

EORNA ACE Executive Committee Membership.

The EORNA ACE Executive Committee members that will be considered responsible for the evaluation of an event/activity are selected for their expertise or experience relevant to the content and the target audience of the activity/event.

Language.

There are no formal language requirements, simultaneous translation is encouraged.

Events and activities may be organized in any European language provided it has an international character.

Mutual agreement.

Based on the mutual agreement between EORNA ACE and the different National Accreditation Authorities, the process is recognized throughout Europe. This agreement also indicates that activities/events will be evaluated by one National Accreditation Authority where this exists.

Organizer / Provider.

The Organization or Person that is primarily responsible for an activity and requests for it an European accreditation. A single pharmaceutical/device company cannot be considered as an unbiased provider of CME / CPD. A Medical Education Communication Company (MECC) can help in the logistic support and organization of the CME/CPD activity/event but the final responsible must be a scientific organization, a nurse professional or a faculty.

Program.

A detailed written statement outlining the content of the program and the expected outcome of the event and/or activity must be provided. Specifications of the practical organization of the CME / CPD activity must be given including the description of the premises and their accessibility, the hotel accommodation (if applicable), the travelling arrangements and the time spent on transfers. Information about the language and eventual interpretation is to be provided.

Purpose of CME/CPD events and activities.

The primary purpose of CME / CPD events and activities is to address the educational needs of nurses and other health care professionals in order to improve the healthcare of patients. Primarily promotional activities cannot not be considered for CME/CPD credits.

Relevant National Accreditation Authority.

The National Accreditation Authority that will be considered responsible for the activity/event is the National Accreditation Authority in the country where this event/activity is organized.

Responsibility.

CME/CPD organizers are responsible for ensuring the scientific validity, objectivity and completeness of the CME/CPD events/activities. The organizers must disclose to the participants at their CME/CPD events/activities any financial affiliations with manufacturers of products mentioned at the activities/events or with manufacturers of competing

products. The ultimate decision on funding arrangements for CME/CPD events/activities is the responsibility of the nurse-organizers.

Satellite Symposia.

As the number of ECMEC's for an activity is limited to 6 ECMEC' per full day, no additional credits can be granted to Satellite Symposia held during an activity. The independence of such organizers must be particularly scrutinized in order to guarantee unbiased education.

Terms.

The evaluations, done by the National Accreditation Authorities, should usually be performed in a period of 3 weeks. If no reaction has been received in that period of time, EORNA ACE will assume that the activity has been approved. A preliminary reminder will be sent in order to check the receipt of the application.

Target audience.

The target audience must clearly be defined by the Organizers.

Time requirements.

In order for the accreditation system to be efficient and effective, a realistic time-schedule has to be applied.

Firstly, the organizer needs to provide full data concerning the activity, accompanied by the application form and other necessary documentation at least three months before the date of the activity.

In order to improve the process it is advised to provide all documents in a digital (Word or PDF) format.

The documents will be forwarded immediately to the National Accreditation Authority and the Chairman of the EORNA ACE Executive Committee as soon as all required documents are available.

The National Accreditation Authorities are required to react within a period of three weeks. Non-reaction will be considered as an approval.

The decision concerning the approval or refusal will be communicated to the Organizer immediately.

In case of approval, an EORNA ACE Certificate, for distribution to the participants, will be sent to the Organizer / Provider.

Title of the event.

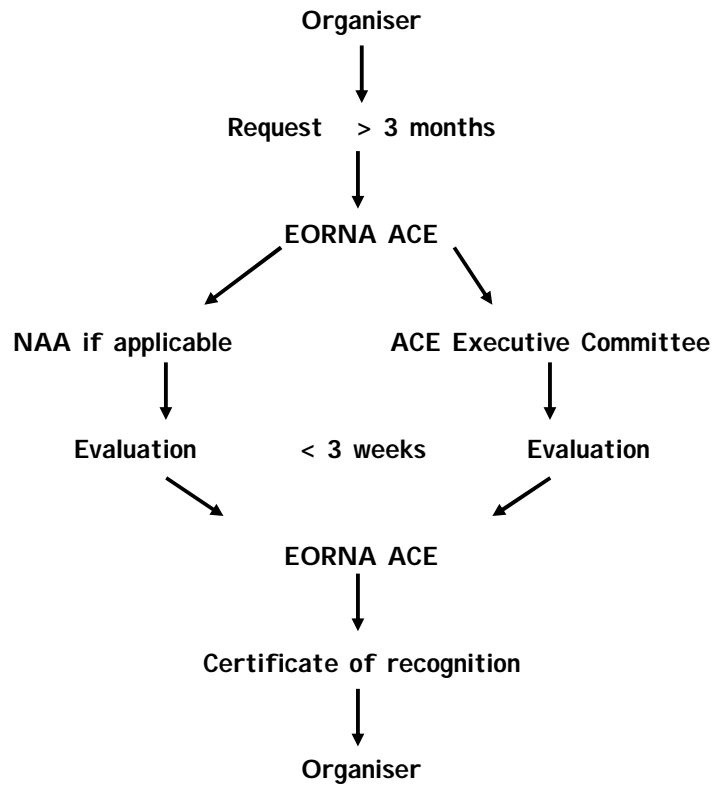
Names of pharmaceutical and/or other companies as well as names of products and/or drugs can not be used in the title of events applying for accreditation by EORNA ACE.

Unrestricted educational grants.

All funds from a commercial source should be in the form of an unrestricted educational grant, payable to the institution or organization that is organizing the CME / CPD event/and activity.

TO BE FINALIZED

Flowchart of the process of the EORNA ACE accreditation:



Relevant EORNA ACE documents regarding accreditation

EORNA ACE Policies and Guidelines

The following documents are provided on EORNA website (www.eorna.eu) as a guide to you in your application detailing EORNA ACE's position on quality and assessment.

EORNA ACE Criteria for accreditation 2008 v02

EORNA ACE 2008 v01

Disclosure of Commercial support / Satellite Sessions

Necessary Supporting Documents

The following documents will all need to be completed and submitted before your application can be completed by EORNA ACE

Course Director's Commitment

Proposed Programme Template

Proposed Speakers Template

EORNA ACE Declaration on Disclosure

Event Report Agreement

Document to be submitted within 4 weeks of the event / activity

EORNA ACE Event Report Template

Course Director's Commitment

As the scientific director of the CME/CPD programme "name of the programme" taking place in "city, country" on "date" I declare that:

- The scientific programme of the course was developed under my supervision and responsibility, that it is scientifically balanced and without bias;
- All faculty and other speakers at this scientific event are aware of, and have agreed, to sign the EORNA ACE disclosure form, and have disclosed any potential conflict of interest that they may have. This must be stated at the beginning of the presentation and in all printed material;
- I am aware of the source and form of any commercial funding received to develop this programme;
- My signature appears on each EORNA ACE Certificate distributed to all participants to this educational programme;
- I am aware of the type of evaluation form participants will have to complete at the end of the programme (EORNA ACE evaluation form or other) and agree to provide the necessary feed-back to EORNA ACE;
- All printed material related to the above-mentioned programme does bear the EORNA ACE logo (or EORNA Logo with mention "Approved by EORNA Accreditation Council for Education) and accreditation statement.
- I accept responsibility for the payment of all fees to EORNA ACE in connection with this application.

Printed title and name of the course director

Signature: (Electronic Signature)

Date:

The signed original should be sent to the EORNA ACE + address.

Add to Application

Proposed Programme Template

Title:

Venue:

Date:

Educational Aims of the Event:

Appropriate Participants:

Add to Application

Proposed Speakers Template

The following details should be completed separately for ALL key speakers:

Name:

Title:

Position:

Institution:

Areas of Expertise:

Title of Presentation:

Add to Application

EORNA ACE Declaration on Disclosure

In compliance with EORNA ACE guidelines, The Organizing Committee confirms that all speakers/chairpersons participating in this programme have disclosed any potential conflicts of interest or support that might cause a bias in their presentation.

The Organizing Committee accepts that it is responsible for ensuring that all potential conflicts of interest relevant to the presentation/event are declared to the audience prior to the CME / CPD activities.

Signed: (Electronic Signature)

Position: on behalf of the Organising Committee

Add to Application

Event Report Agreement

This report should contain the information listed below and must be sent to the EORNA ACE within 4 weeks after the programme has taken place.

Event title:

Reference number:

Actual number of participants:

Number of certificates issued:

Disclosure of conflict of interest:

Number of potential conflicts reported:

Number of potential conflicts reported by participants:

Summary of the Evaluation forms and comments from participants.
How many were collected and analysed:

Main conclusions (usefulness, educational value, quality of content and speakers)

I confirm that the above report will be submitted within 4 weeks of this event.

Printed title and name of the course director:

.....

Signature: (Electronic Signature)

Date:

Add to Application

Feed-back form for evaluation of CME / CPD events.

1. Have I learned something from this event?

Yes		Neutral		No
1	2	3	4	5

2. Will this event change my practice?

Yes		Neutral		No
1	2	3	4	5

3. Was the event well organised?

Yes		Neutral		No
1	2	3	4	5

4. The quality of the content was?

Good		Neutral		Bad
1	2	3	4	5

5. The quality of the speakers was?

Good		Neutral		Bad
1	2	3	4	5

6. Was the location (venue) appropriate for the event?

Yes		Neutral		No
1	2	3	4	5

7. Did I feel the event was biased?

Yes		Neutral		No
1	2	3	4	5

Disclosure of Commercial support / Satellite Sessions

Disclosure

Speakers have to disclose existing financial arrangements with any commercial company contributing to the CME /CPD event.

The disclosure form has to be signed by speakers and organizing/scientific committee members, be archived by the provider, and communicated to EORNA ACE (the form can be downloaded from the EORNA ACE website EORNA website (see EORNA ACE section).

There is an obligation on both the organizers (faculty) and speakers to openly declare any conflict of interest or support to participants. Whilst acknowledging concerns that have arisen with regard to bias in support of events by commercial companies, EORNA ACE believes that a balanced approach, based on support by an unrestricted educational grant and open declaration of any conflict of interest, can provide and promote mutual co-operation for the benefit of nurses and their patients.

Commercially organized satellite sessions

The accredited CME / CPD event/activity should be clearly distinguished from commercially organized sessions, known as "satellite sessions".

These and accompanying social events should not compete with, nor take precedence over, the accredited CME / CPD sessions.

Satellite symposia which form part of a congress which has already been approved for CME / CPD, can not obtain separate approval for extra CME / CPD credits by EORNA ACE. They are considered part of the whole meeting programme and are therefore covered by the congress CME / CPD. There is no specific allocation of hours or credits to them.