



## **CEU Policies**

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Fincert.org (“Fincert”) requires Certificants to stay current within the field of financial counseling and education. Certificants are required to take appropriate continuing education units (CEUs) which should contribute to their professional knowledge and ability.

## I. Continuing Education Unit Requirements

- A. **Continuing Education Requirements.** During the Certification Period, a Certificant must complete 16 hours of continuing education, of which 2 hours shall be in Ethics. The continuing education requirement is effective immediately upon certification or renewal.
- B. **CEUs Cannot Carry Over.** Certificants may not carry over or apply CEUs earned (even in excess) from one certification period to the next. Fincert will not track or record CEUs earned in excess of the requirement. A Certificant may only receive CEU credit for a program once per Certification Period.
- C. **CEUs are Non-divisible.** Certificants seeking to obtain a Reinstatement or Late Renewal may not divide multiple CEUs earned from a single CEU program between the certification period in which they are earned and the certification period for which they are seeking Reinstatement or Late Renewal.
- D. **No Prior CEU Credit.** Certificants will not be given credit for CEUs earned prior to their Certification date, after their certification has been surrendered, or if their certification has been expired for more than ninety (90) days.
- E. **Pre-Approval of CEUs.** Certificants will need to seek approval for any CEU program not appearing on the CEU Pre-Approved List using the Continuing Education Approval Process below.
- F. **Reporting.** Certificants shall report all required CEU hours earned prior to applying for Renewal at the end of the Certification Period using the Certification Renewal Application form.
  - 1. Completion of CEUs must be reported within the Certification Renewal Application form at the time of renewal.
  - 2. CEUs in excess of the requirement should not be reported. Supporting documentation, including documentation confirming attendance, should not be sent to Fincert unless specifically requested by Fincert as part of the CEU Auditing Process.
- G. **Record Keeping.** Certificants must retain all documentation of CEU completion for a minimum of 2 years after the end of the Certification Period. Documentation confirming attendance should not be sent to Fincert unless specifically requested. Fincert will conduct random audits and may request these documents at any time up

to 2 years from the end of a Certification Period. If a Certificant is found to have violated the Fincert's Certification Policies and Standards and/or Certification Procedures, Fincert may take disciplinary action up to and including denial and/or revocation of certification status.

- H. **Multiple Certifications.** Certificants holding multiple certifications from the Center may use a single CEU program to meet the CEU requirements of multiple certifications, so long as the CEU program was completed during the Certification Period for each certification and is reported for each certification held.

## II. Continuing Education Program Approval Process

- A. **Complete the CEU Approval Request Form.** Certificants or CEU Providers must complete the CEU Approval Request Form in its entirety. Incomplete forms will not be processed. Fincert reserves the right to conduct random audits and verify the accuracy of all information presented in the form. If a Certificant is found to have violated the Fincert's Certification Policies and Standards and/or Certification Procedures, Fincert may take disciplinary action up to and including revocation of certification status.
- B. **Provide Supporting Documentation.** Certificants or CEU Providers must submit supporting documentation along with the CEU Approval Request Form. The supporting documentation should be sufficient to allow Fincert to make a determination of the appropriateness and proper number of CEU credits to assign. Fincert reserves the right to request complete materials for a CEU program seeking approval. Materials submitted to Fincert for approval will not be returned, regardless of whether CEU credit is granted.
- C. **Pay CEU Approval Request Fee.** Certificants or CEU Providers seeking approval of a program not on the CEU Pre-Approved List must pay a CEU Approval Request Fee when submitting the CEU Approval Request Form. Failure to submit the fee will prevent the processing of the CEU Approval Request Form. Before seeking approval, Certificants should confirm the program has not already been approved by checking the approved list on Fincert's website. All fees are non-refundable.
- D. **Submission of the CEU Approval Request Form.** Requesting Parties may submit the CEU Approval Request Form with supporting documentation and fees at any time prior to completing a program, but must submit no later than 30 days after completion. Failure to do so will result in no CEUs being granted.

## III. Standards For Continuing Education Programs

- A. **CEU Format.** CEU Programs are training opportunities and may be done in a variety of ways including webinars, self study courses, teleseminars, professional conferences, classroom instruction and certain other professional activities.

**B. CEU Completion Supporting Documentation.** Self study CEU programs must utilize a learning assessment, quiz, test, or evaluation tool acceptable to the Fincert and graded by the CEU Provider with a passing score of 70 percent or higher to validate completion of the program.

1. Regardless of the delivery method, the CEU Provider must generate documentation, such as a certificate of attendance or completion, which includes the name of the CEU program, the name of the CEU Provider, the name of the Certificant, and the date the program was completed.
2. The program must be completed during the CEU Program's Period of Approval in order for the Certificant to receive credit, but may be reported to the Center after the Period of Approval.

**C. CEU Content.** CEU programs must pertain to personal finance subject matter, including but not limited to money management, budgeting, credit, credit reports/score, debt management, risk management, insurance, investing, retirement planning, tax, housing, estate planning, counseling theory, counseling skills, educational theory, educator skills or regulation of thereof.

1. Programs not clearly within the personal finance, financial counseling and financial literacy education areas should not be submitted for CEU credit.
2. Ethics CEU credit will only be given for programs or portions of programs which unambiguously address professional ethics, preferably within a financial services context.

**D. Consumer Oriented and Employment Related Programs Not Acceptable.**

Programs specific to the operations of a single organization or that fall within a Certificant's job description will not be approved. Financial education programs that are designed to teach consumers basic personal finance or financial literacy skills will not be approved.

**E. Employers.** Organizations which employ Certificants may be approved to provide continuing education programs, so long as such programs meet all program requirements and are offered to all interested Certificants, regardless of whether they are employed by the organization, in the format in which the programs are approved. Such organizations may charge a reasonable fee for the continuing education programs to Certificants who are not employed by the organization.

**F. Period of Approval for CEU Programs**

1. Ongoing Programs. Approvals for CEU programs which are ongoing (e.g. self study, college courses, licenses and designations) shall expire on December 31 of the third calendar year following the year in which they are approved. For

example, an approval for an ongoing program granted in June of 2012 will expire on December 31, 2015.

2. One Time Programs. Approvals for CEU programs which occur only once, or a limited number of times (e.g. a seminar approved for live presentation which will be given only twice, authorship, lecture) shall expire on December 31 of the year in which they are approved. For example, an approval for a one time program granted in June of 2012 will expire on December 31, 2012.

## G. CEU Credit Computations

1. Live Presentations: Live Presentations are defined as professional conferences, seminars or courses completed with a live instructor, regardless of delivery method. CEU credit may be granted provided at least one CEU hour (minimum of 50 minutes constitutes one CEU hour) is completed. Presentation of less than 50 minutes will not be given CEU credit.
  - a) 50 minutes 1 class hour = 1 CEUs
  - b) 75 minutes 1.5 class hours = 1.5 CEUs
2. Self-study programs: Self-study programs are defined as courses completed without a live instructor using printed material, audio and/or video cassettes, electronic media or online media.
  - a) Satisfactory completion must utilize a learning assessment, quiz, test, or evaluation tool acceptable to the Fincert, which shall be graded by the CEU Provider, with a passing score of 70 percent or higher.
  - b) CEU credit is determined based on the recommended hours of completion time as determined by the CEU Provider, subject to Fincert discretion and approval.
3. College Courses: CEU credit may be granted as follows:
  - a) Semester credit = 15 CEU hours (3 semester credits = 45 CEU hours)
  - b) Quarter credit = 10 CEU hours (3 quarter credits = 30 CEU hours)
  - c) Both credit and non-credit courses will be accepted. For non-credit courses, each 50-minute class session may be counted as one CEU hour.
4. Lecturing: CEU credit may be given for lecturing and teaching at professional conferences on appropriate content, so long as the presentation is designed primarily for financial professionals.
  - a) CEU credit will only be given on the first presentation of the material during the Certification Period.

- b) The Certificant can take two CEU credits for each hour of class or presentation time to account for preparation. For example, a Certificant may claim four hours for teaching a two-hour class.
  - c) A maximum of 8 CEUs may be taken for Lecturing during a Certification Period.
  - d) Presentations designed primarily for the general public, presentations for marketing, television and radio talk shows, and participation in school programs will not be approved for CEU credit.
  - e) Presentations, including supporting materials, must be submitted to Fincert for review to allow Fincert to determine how many CEU credits will be granted. They should be submitted with the CEU Approval Request Form.
5. Authorship: CEU credit may be given for books and articles or scholarly works on appropriate content published in a professional or scholarly publication.
- a) A maximum of 8 CEUs may be taken for Authorship during a Certification Period.
  - b) Short newspaper articles, Q&As, company newsletter articles and material intended for consumers are not accepted for CEU credit.
  - c) Published articles and books (both print and electronic) must be submitted to Fincert for review to allow Fincert to determine how many CEU credits will be granted. They should be submitted with the CEU Approval Request Form.
6. Licenses & Designations: CEU credit may be granted if a Certificant successfully passes the examinations and initially obtains certain professional licenses or designations during their Certification Period.
- a) Renewal or Re-Certification of a professional license or designation shall not be awarded CEU credit.
  - b) A list of approved licenses and designations can be found on the CEU Pre-Approved List. If a license or designation is not pre-approved, a Certificant or licensing body may submit the program, along with all supporting materials, to Fincert for review to allow Fincert to determine how many CEU credits will be granted. They should be submitted with the CEU Approval Request Form.