

European Hematology Association CME System Manual

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Introduction

This manual will highlight the standards and guidelines for CME accreditation and the procedures for applying and earning CME credit points. It will also present a concise summary of the European Council for Accreditation in Hematology (ECAH) project, the structure of the European Hematology Association Continuing Medical Education (EHA CME) unit, and a description of an official EHA CME provider.

Driven by the rapid progress in medical science and the spectacular advances in information technology and bioengineering made over the last two decades, the specialization of hematology is a strong and rapidly evolving scientific and medical discipline. Educational issues, related to the harmonization of specialty training and to the accessibility of high quality CME for hematologists throughout the European Union and its associated states, are of primary importance for the future of European hematology. They impact on transfer of knowledge, mobility of specialists throughout Europe, and ultimately on patient care.

CME is now widely established to encourage the individual practitioners to maintain and develop professional knowledge and skills. Accreditation systems have been designed and implemented in several medical specialties. The European Hematology Association (EHA) strongly supports the organization of a system for the accreditation and quality control for CME activities for European hematology. This conviction led the Association along with over 20 other partner European hematology organizations to establish the European Council for Accreditation in Hematology (ECAH) project*.

**A complete overview of ECAH is available in the booklet: "European Council for Accreditation in Hematology", which can be downloaded from the EHA website www.ehaweb.org or be sent from the EHA Executive Office in Rotterdam.*

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THE EHA CME SYSTEM

The European Council for Accreditation in Hematology was developed in partnership with EHA, the European School of Haematology (ESH), the European Group for Blood and Marrow Transplantation (EBMT), and national hematology societies throughout Europe. It was established as a service for hematologists to help them to identify and access peer-reviewed educational activities, and to enhance their professional status.

The role of ECAH was to ensure quality control of accredited activities by developing guidelines for CME in hematology. It elicited and processed requests for accreditation of CME activities and designated credit points to those in keeping with its established standards & guidelines. It also liaised with other CME accreditation bodies and authorities at the national, European, and international levels.

In the first three years, ECAH was funded by a grant from the European Commission (EC). After the closure of the EC project phase and its funding, the continuity of the project was assured by the EHA. The name was changed to the EHA CME unit. The unit is responsible for the management and coordination of the CME system. Several affiliates from the ECAH project now serve the unit as chairs, co-chairs, and members of the review board.

Structure of the EHA CME Unit

The CME unit provides scientific peer-review for CME applications and informs and advises on all matters concerning CME accreditation in hematology at the national, European, and international levels.

In addition to accreditation of CME activities, the unit accredits enduring materials or self-learning tools. It is within this context that two self-learning tools were awarded EHA CME accreditation: the European Hematology Association Training On-line and the scientific journal *Haematologica*/The Hematology Journal. Users of these tools can earn CME points by responding to on-line questions related to peer-reviewed cases in hematology and published scientific articles.

EHA CME Providers

As of 2005, ECAH decentralized and delegated responsibilities to official providers of CME credit points. This status is offered to EHA, EBMT, ESH, and to national hematology societies in Europe as they became active users of the CME system.

European hematology organizations that have not yet applied for accreditation of their annual meeting may still do so. After one successful application, they will become eligible to apply for the status of official provider.

There are two types of providers; the first type is a national European hematology organization who successfully applied at least once for EHA CME accreditation for their annual congress. In the first three years as providers, these organizations may designate CME points to their national congress provided that they respect the standards and guidelines.

The second type of providers are European hematology organizations who were ECAH partners in the development of the EHA CME System: the European School of Haematology (ESH), the European Group for Blood and Marrow Transplantation (EBMT) and EHA. As providers, these organizations may designate CME points to all activities they organize for a period of three years.

During the first three years (2005 to 2008), the provider status will only be awarded to partners of the European Commission Grant and to national hematology societies who have been granted accreditation for one of their national meetings. Participation in a providers' workshop is a prerequisite to become a provider of CME credits. Providers must assign their own review board within their national society/organization. It is the providers' responsibility that the meeting will meet the standards and guidelines of the CME system.

The status of provider will be held for a 3-year period. It will be renewable provided that standards and guidelines have been respected. After this period, the status will be audited and extended, as appropriate, to other hematology organizations. This is intended to develop the system on a step-by-step basis and allow for quality control procedures to be carried out effectively.

EHA CME STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

Requirements for EHA CME Accreditation

This section deals with the principle accreditation requirements developed to ensure the scientific objectivity and educational value of accredited activities.

The EHA definition of CME is compatible with that of the American Medical Association. "CME consists of educational activities that serve to maintain, develop and increase the knowledge, skills, professional performance and relationships a physician uses to provide services for patients, the public, or the profession. CME represents the body of knowledge and skills generally recognized and accepted by the profession".

When applied to hematology, CME activities must reflect this definition and also:

- a) address a hematology audience
- b) conform to the system's guidelines regarding commercial support and ethical considerations
- c) provide speaker and chair disclosures
- d) address demonstrated educational needs
- e) employ learning methods adapted to the activity's content and format

In addition, once an event is accredited, the scientific organizer must announce the EHA CME accreditation at the accredited event, verify that all participants are registered and present on-site at the accredited meeting, and take responsibility for the general overview and quality control.

If the scientific organizer is also an EHA CME provider, in addition to the points noted above, he or she must assign a scientific representative responsible for the general overview and quality control. The representative should remain for the three year contract period and ensure that CME criteria are respected. The representative(s) will be responsible for the audit which will be carried out every three years.

Learning objectives:

Educational needs should guide the development of CME activities. The scientific program of the accredited meeting should be developed to fulfill specific learning objectives. These objectives should be clear to the participants.

Educational content:

Scientific organizers must ensure that the content of the educational activities, to which they designate CME credit points, is scientifically balanced, objectively presented and free of commercial bias. The educational needs of the participants should guide the activity and the development of its learning objectives.

Ethical considerations:

Scientific organizers are expected to present physicians with commercially unbiased and objective information. Therefore, speakers and chairs must meet disclosure requirements and standards for commercial support. The organizer must ensure that the educational program is not influenced or biased by commercial organizations and educational activities organized by the pharmaceutical industry must be clearly distinguished from CME activities under control of the provider.

CME activities may be supported by unrestricted educational grants provided by industrial partners. The providers of these grants must be acknowledged in writing by the organizer of the event in such a way that the event's participants are fully aware of this unrestricted support. Any potential conflict of interest must be communicated to the meeting's participants.

Assigning credits:

Sixty minutes of the hematologists participation in an accredited activity equals one EHA CME credit point. For sessions under one hour, decimal points are used to indicate one quarter (.25), one half (.50) and three quarters (.75).

The maximum number of CME points recommended by the EHA CME unit is 3 credits for half a day of educational activity, or 6 credits for a full day.

The following sessions **ARE NOT** eligible for CME credit points

1. Poster Sessions
2. Corporate Sponsored Symposia
3. Coffee, Lunch, Dinner Breaks
4. Recreational Activities/Social Program
5. Sessions organized by anyone other than the scientific organizer (i.e. sessions not reviewed by the scientific organizing committee of the event)

It is the view of EHA that CME must be presented in a scientifically objective and balanced manner. In order to guarantee unbiased CME as well as

to promote and enhance cooperation with the commercial industry, the following standards and guidelines were developed by ECAH and continue to be the foundation of the EHA CME system. They aim to ensure that the scientific objectivity and balance are maintained.

- The accredited activity should be clearly distinguished from commercially organized sessions, known as "satellite symposia".
- "Satellite symposia" and accompanying social events should not compete with, nor take priority over, the accredited CME sessions.
- Speakers are expected to disclose existing financial arrangements with the commercial company contributing to the CME event.

The guidelines aim to ensure that EHA accredited CME activities effectively contribute to maintain or increase the standard of knowledge of professionals working in the field of hematology in consequence they impact favorably on the quality of clinical care.

Participants are ethically obligated to only claim CME credit points for sessions which they have actually attended. Hematologists are encouraged to collect CME credit points from multiple sources. Individual CME meetings or events should not provide more than 40 CME credit points.

Summary of the Standards and Guidelines

Benefit: *CME activities must be designed to benefit hematologists and their patients, and not the organizing institution or the commercial partners involved.*

Scientific impartiality: *The CME activity must be objective with all views present in a balanced manner.*

Absence of commercial bias: *The CME activity must be free of commercial bias. Commercial products must be mentioned only if necessary. Generic names should be used rather than trade names. In case no generic name is available the trade name may be used (e.g. Thalidomide). Data relative to any unlicensed, investigational commercial product must be presented as such. Information must be of scientific peer-review journal standard.*

Scientific independence: *The organizer must develop the scientific content and materials of the CME activity independently, without input from the provider of the unrestricted educational grant. The selection of materials is the sole responsibility of the scientific organizer and must not be subjected*

to the review by the provider of the educational grant. The CME activity must not include logos, symbols, colors, etc. that refer explicitly or implicitly to the provider of the unrestricted educational grant or its commercial products.

Disclosures: Any affiliation or significant relation between a member of the faculty and the commercial sponsor, and any other eventual affiliation potentially able to introduce a bias must be disclosed to the participants.

Acknowledgements: Each time the support of the commercial partner is acknowledged in writing it must be prefixed by the phrase "supported by an unrestricted educational grant from..."

Promotional activities: The scientific organizer must develop the promotional materials of the CME activity independently, without input from the supplier of the unrestricted educational grant. The organizer will be held fully responsible for the content and presentation of all promotional materials. These materials may not include logos, symbols, colors, etc. that refer explicitly or implicitly to the supplier of the unrestricted educational grant or its commercial products. Any material promoting the CME activity distributed by the provider of the unrestricted educational grant must be previously reviewed by the scientific organizer and the EHA CME unit according to these guidelines. No promotional activities should be held in the CME meeting room. The only permitted promotion is the acknowledgment that the company has contributed to the educational program by way of an unrestricted grant.

Need(s): Application files must demonstrate that the CME activity corresponds to the needs of hematologists and their patients. CME events must correspond to an identified need or needs. Therefore the organizer must state what the needs are, how they were identified and how the proposed CME event meets them.

Scope: The organizer must present the scientific program, the names and profiles of the faculty members (including full contact details). The organizer must state:

- The objectives of the CME activity
- The profile of the participants to whom the activity is addressed
- A general outline of the activity and/or procedures involved

Methods: The organizer must:

- Describe any innovative educational methods
- Describe the methods used and how they are adapted to the declared objectives and to the potential participants identified under Scope and Needs

- Indicate that sufficient time has been allocated to general discussion and that there is opportunity for interaction between participants and speakers

Circulation of information: The organizer must inform potential participants about the number of designated CME credit points to be earned through participation in the accredited CME activity

Teaching documents: The organizer must distribute a document summarizing the activity's scientific content and providing references for further reading to the participants of the accredited activity (e.g. book of abstracts, educational booklet). The document must be kept on record for a period of five years and conveyed upon request to EHA.

Feedback: In order for the electronic CME system to generate an on-line evaluation form for the participants, the organizer must enter the titles of all the sessions for which he or she would like to receive accreditation. This on-line form is designed to allow the participants to share their appreciation of the activity's scientific content and organization. Furthermore, the results from this evaluation should be taken into consideration when planning future CME activities.

Sanctions: Organizers will be held fully responsible for the scientific quality of the CME activities they organize. Failure to respect the standards & guidelines of the EHA CME system will lead to ineligibility for accreditation of future meetings.

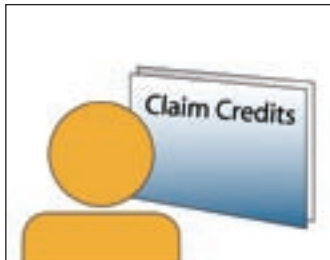
STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO THE ON-LINE CME SYSTEM

Individual Hematologists and **Scientific Organizers** of activities can respectively claim their CME points and apply for accreditation via www.ehaweb.org. They can also consult a full list of accredited activities, and view speaker and chair disclosures. The fully web-based CME system is accessible via the link “CME” in the top bar on the EHA website.

This link will direct the applicant to the [CME Home](#) page.

Users can link directly to [Claim Credits](#), [Apply for Accreditation](#), view [Accredited Activities](#), and complete their [Disclosures](#). For the above mentioned options, you may use the underlined links in the text or use the tabs on top of the page for navigation.

Individual Hematologists



CLAIM CREDITS

- 1 Go to www.ehaweb.org and select the CME link on top of the page.
- 2 From the CME home page, select the [Claim Credits](#) page at the top.
 - If you are an account holder: you may [login](#) on this page
 - If you do not have a CME account yet, you may open an account by using the link [register here](#) on this page.

Once you have logged in, the system will guide you through the various steps to claim your credits.

- 3 Click on Select meeting in the left menu or the button ‘next’ below your personal overview
- 4 Select a meeting for which you would like to claim credits.
- 5 Enter the **PERSONAL LOGIN CODE** given to you on-site at the accredited activity
- 6 Answer the general questions regarding the meeting you selected

- 7 Click -Next- at the bottom of the page to continue to Claim Credits › Select Sessions
- 8 Evaluate the sessions that you have attended on a scale of 1–10. (10 = the highest score).
- 9 Click -Next- at the bottom of the page to view your personal account. The system will automatically save your information after you have left the page.
- 10 The print button on the far right-hand side of the table allows you to print the CME Certificate

ACCREDITED ACTIVITIES

► Meetings

The page with Accredited Activities lists current, future, and previous meetings accredited by the EHA CME unit. Those listed under “current” are available for credit claims. By selecting a meeting, more detailed information can be obtained.

► Meetings Details

This link will provide you with more detailed information on the selected meeting.

Scientific Organizers



APPLY FOR ACCREDITATION

- 1 Go to www.ehaweb.org and select the CME link in the top bar
- 2 From the CME home page, select the Apply for Accreditation page at the top.
 - If you have a password: you may use the link [login](#)
 - If you are applying for the first time, you need to register by using the link [register here](#) on this page

Once you have logged in, the system will guide you through the various steps to complete your application.

3 ▶ Standards & Guidelines

Read this page carefully to make sure your meeting is eligible for accreditation. You must agree to the standards and guidelines at the bottom of the page to continue with the application. After you have agreed, click -Next-.

4 ▶ Qualification Checklist

This list will help you to determine if your activity is eligible for CME accreditation and which documents are needed for the review process. If your meeting is compatible to this checklist please click -Next-.

5 ▶ Meetings Details

Complete the full meeting details including a description on how this activity will comply with the EHA CME standards and guidelines. Please note that the red arrow: refers to a required field. After you have completed the application form, you may click on the -Next- button at the bottom of the page to continue.

6 ▶ Upload Documents

By using the -Browse- button, you may upload documents to your application. Please click -Upload- to save these documents with your application.

7 ▶ Meeting Sessions

Each session that you would like to send for peer-review must be submitted with the names of the chairs and speakers. This information will be stored in the disclosure database; therefore the names to be submitted must include their city and country. It is the organizers responsibility to inform the chairs and speakers to submit or update their disclosure at the EHA website. More detailed information on the disclosures is to be found by clicking on the *Disclosures tab*.

To add new sessions, please use the button -Add new session- at the bottom of the page. Once you have completed all sessions including chairs, speakers, date and time please click -Next- to continue to review the summary of your application.

8 ▶ Summary

This summary page presents an overview of the actions that you must undertake if your event is accredited. It also presents a full resume of your application.

9 ▶ Application Status

You may follow the review process. For more detailed information, you may also contact the EHA CME Unit Helpdesk.

All of the documents, including the application form will be sent for scientific peer-review; therefore please ensure that all submitted information is correct. If any of the information provided has changed during the review period, please contact the CME helpdesk.

The review process may take 4-6 weeks. You will be informed of the outcome by email.

If your CME activity has successfully passed the peer-review process, the evaluation test for your meeting participants will be made available under the CME claim credit section. It is the organizer's responsibility to inform (potential) users about the CME accreditation. However, an accreditation statement should be published at the accredited activity.

The scientific and educational content of the [title CME accredited activity] has been reviewed and approved for CME accreditation by the EHA CME unit. The EHA CME unit will approve this educational activity for a maximum number of CME credits. Each physician is morally obliged to only claim credits for the time that she/he actually spent in the educational activity.

CME credit point account holders can follow the accumulation of his/her CME credit points online. Each account holder will also automatically receive electronic periodic reports on the status of his/her account. EHA recommends that each hematologist should follow 250 hours of CME activity over a 5-year period (50 credit points per year).

The organizer can access statistics regarding the evaluation of their CME activity. They are encouraged to use this information to improve the quality and/or content of events that they organize in the future.

Individual Hematologists and Scientific Organizers

DISCLOSURES



► Overview

This page gives you instructions on the disclosure database and the purpose of this database.

► View Disclosures

Disclosures on this page are visible to all site visitors. The table on this page includes all disclosures submitted by chairs and speakers in alphabetical order. By selecting a speaker, their detailed disclosure will become visible.

Login

► My Disclosures

After you have logged in to the disclosure database you may either add or edit your disclosure. The fields marked with a red arrow will become visible to website visitors.

HELPDESK

The EHA CME helpdesk will be happy to be of assistance during the entire accreditation process. Please do not hesitate to contact us during office hours (M-F 09:00-17:00 CET), if you need help with your application.

Contact details:

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The Netherlands

Phone: +31 10 404 5621
Fax: +31 10 436 1817
Email: cme@ehaweb.org or
cme.provider@ehaweb.org
(if you are a provider)

www.ehaweb.org