



What does Diversity mean as an Approved Sponsor?

[Standard B, Criterion 5](#) states “Sponsors must both select instructors and develop program content that respects cultural, individual, and role differences, including those based on age, gender, gender identity, race, ethnicity, culture, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language, and socioeconomic status.”

At its core, respect for diversity centers around acceptance, respect, and the understanding that each person is a unique individual. Individual differences can include, but are not limited to, dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, age, ability/disability status, religious or spiritual beliefs, and political ideology. Sponsors are required to take diversity issues into consideration when selecting presenters and program content.

Addressing the CE Application question regarding diversity goes beyond a simple statement indicating a respect for diversity or indication that there is a policy statement regarding diversity in place. Considering the issue of diversity at a broader level allows sponsors to further improve CE programming and facilitate the overall process of learning. In evaluating applications for CE Sponsor Approval, the Continuing Education Committee (CEC) does not have a specific “correct” response to which all applicant responses are compared. The CEC instead evaluates whether applicants appear to understand the importance of selecting presenters from diverse backgrounds and that these presenters have the responsibility of structuring CE programming reflective of the potential differences in the populations included in the program content and the audience. Program content that is inclusive of diversity reflects the appreciation of a diverse population and focuses on the acknowledgement and respect of the richness of differences.

In linking diversity to the overall process of learning (emphasized throughout Standards C and D), acknowledging diversity among audiences, client groups, and educators promotes translational learning. The transfer of knowledge involves an integration of new information with an individual’s prior knowledge and experiences, and it involves an understanding of how this new information applies to the learner or to the population that the learner serves. In addition, understanding differences allows for a “safe” learning environment in which all individuals feel valued and respected.

Sponsors are encouraged to examine whether their CE programs are consistent with the APA Guidelines on [Multicultural Education, Training, Research, Practice, and Organizational Change for Psychologists \(2002\)](#), [Guidelines for Psychological Practice with Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Clients \(2012\)](#), [Guidelines for Psychological Practice with Transgender and Gender Nonconforming People \(2015\)](#), and the [Resolution on the Americans with Disabilities Act \(2008\)](#).



Sponsors are encouraged to select presenters and include programming that:

- a. Establishes an environment which encourages and respects diverse and divergent viewpoints
- b. Encourages learners to share their experiences and views, even if they are not fully consistent with those of the presenter
- c. Creates an atmosphere of inclusion and respect
- d. Facilitates interactions which reflect respect for differing viewpoints
- e. Includes program material and content which emphasize and include diversity in the populations served as well as in the learning group
- f. Ensures that the program is accessible for all participants
- g. Facilitates experiential learning which allows learners to process information and make connections that facilitate deep learning
- h. Includes a focus on different circumstances that may vary within and between groups



## References

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