



ACCREDITATION RENEWAL UPDATE

RENEWAL CEUs

A Primer on the Updated Accreditation Renewal Process Including Resources and Tools To Optimize Your Renewal Efforts

In this article:

- **APR Maintenance Program Now Known as Accreditation Renewal.**
- **Switch From Points to CEUs.**
- **Resources for CEUs Tied to Ethics.**

APRs are an elite group of highly respected practitioners for a reason — you worked hard to earn your Accreditation and continue to put in the time and effort to maintain your APR and demonstrate your public relations knowledge and professionalism to the world.

After many years of benchmark comparisons with other professional education measurement systems, the Universal Accreditation Board (UAB) moved to rename the program Accreditation Renewal, effective Jan. 1, 2019, and to adopt a more consistent Continuing Education Unit (CEU) tracking method, effective Jan. 1, 2020.

One of the goals for the program changes was to update the renewal system to ensure that both the high standards and rigorous training that it takes to achieve and maintain your APR status are instantly recognizable across industries.

The changes were designed to modernize the APR renewal process and add value for practitioners at all levels across the public relations, communications and marketing fields, whether you work within the ranks of a multi-national organization, educational institution or are running a solo practice.

APR maintenance credits were previously measured in points. The UAB's research found that many of our peers in other industries measure education units in CEUs. Transferring the unit of measurement from points to CEUs makes it easier to quantify your efforts when compared with other certificate and licensing programs across industries. The intention is to make it easier to negotiate for a raise, stand out from the competition and instantly establish credibility in an increasingly crowded marketplace.

The new system will help ensure that you get the credit you deserve for your commitment to staying on the forefront of the public relations industry. This way, you and your co-workers in different lines of work will have a more apples-to-apples comparison benchmark in terms of certifications.

One of the qualities that sets Accredited professionals apart is a commitment to ethics. For this reason, we increased the ethics requirement needed for renewal.

After reviewing years of APR maintenance data, we found that most practitioners were exceeding the number of points needed to maintain their APR, and we expect that most APRs will have no problem meeting the new renewal requirements.

Here's an overview of the program updates:

1. **A Switch to CEUs** – As Accredited professionals must renew their credential and chronicle their commitment to the sound and ethical practice of public relations every three years, the UAB has established the Continuing Education Unit (CEU) as the unit of Accreditation Renewal.
 - A CEU equals 10 hours of participation in approved training or other professional development activities. The CEUs will apply for APRs who start their renewal cycle Jan. 1, 2020, or later.
 - A minimum of 15 CEUs is required for renewal over the three-year period; at least seven CEUs must be in continuing education and professional development along with one CEU in ethics.
 - The ethics CEU is a new requirement in line with the professional code of conduct APRs espouse.
 - All other APRs will continue tracking with the previous points system until their next renewal period.
2. **Timeline for Changes**
 - APRs who need to renew June 30, 2020; Dec. 31, 2020; June 30, 2021; or Dec. 31, 2021, will use the Accreditation Renewal Application that is currently based on points.
 - APRs who need to renew in 2022 or later will use the new Accreditation Renewal Application based on CEUs.
3. **Questions? (We've had a few!)** – Check our FAQs at www.praccreditation.org/resources/documents/apr-renewal-faq-rev060920.pdf.

APRs, looking for CEUs tied to ethics? Check out the following resources:

“Leading With Ethics” – Sept. 8 Webinar (free to PRSA members). **APRs may earn .5 CEUs toward Renewal.**

The role of trusted adviser is a critical component for the public relations professional. Effectively positioning yourself in this crucial role is a catalyst for your career. Details at:

https://apps.prsa.org/Learning/Calendar/display/12199/Leading_with_Ethics#.XvObqZ5Kjwd

Other ethics resources:

- **Ethical Voices**, created by 2016 PRSA National Chair and longtime PR practitioner and volunteer Mark McClennan, APR, Fellow PRSA, is a weekly blog and podcast designed to share the real ethical challenges faced by real communications professionals. The goal is to educate, inform and inspire, and serve as a practical resource for the 200,000 communications professionals that serve as ethical stewards of their organizations each and every day. www.ethicalvoices.com/
- **Public Relations Ethics Training** – The Arthur W. Page Center – Learn about ethics issues facing public relations practitioners today. With the help of scholars from universities around the world, you will get insights and information on important topics in the field via interactive modules, videos, real-world case studies and timely research to build your knowledge and appreciation for ethics. At the end of each lesson, test your comprehension, and when you complete the two lessons you will receive a certificate for that module. <https://pagecentertraining.psu.edu/public-relations-ethics>

This infographic (on the right) sums up these key details.

ACCREDITATION RENEWAL UPDATE

RENEWAL CEUs

15 Continuing Education Units (CEUs).

Continuing Education and Professional Development: At least 7 CEUs
Ethics: 1 CEU

RENEWAL PERIOD: 3 Years
COST: \$75

TIMELINE

APRs who need to renew in 2020 and 2021 will use the Accreditation Renewal Application that is based on points.

APRs who need to renew in 2022, or later, will use the Accreditation Renewal Application based on CEUs.

1 CEU = 10 hours of participation in approved training or professional development activities

TO LEARN MORE, VISIT WWW.PRACCREDITATION.ORG/RENEW