

Vocational Rehabilitation Association of Canada
Continuing Education Credits Framework To Maintain Designations
RRP
RVP
RCSS

October 2022

VRA CANADA CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDITS FRAMEWORK

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VRA CANADA CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDITS FRAMEWORK

Overview

VRA Canada requires that members holding VRA Canada designations demonstrate that they are maintaining and enhancing their competence throughout their careers. This is essential for the protection of clients from unskilled or unethical practice and demonstrates a commitment to professional and personal development throughout one's career.

Competency goes beyond acquiring formal education and qualifications. It involves constantly and thoughtfully reflecting on our individual practices and seeking out new opportunities to grow as VR professionals.

The VRA Canada Code of Ethics states:

> ***3.4 Maintain Competence and Monitor Effectiveness/Ethical Consultation***
>
> *Vocational rehabilitation professionals engage in continuing education and training to maintain competence and skills, to remain current with generally accepted and applicable professional standards, and to explore new and emerging techniques. Vocational rehabilitation professionals develop collegial supports, and/or engage in peer supervision/mentorship, and engage in regular self-reflection to monitor and evaluate their efficacy. They consult with colleagues or related professionals when they have questions regarding their ethical obligations or professional practice.*

Why a New Continuing Education Unit (CEU) Framework?

VRA Canada members were asking for a more streamlined CEU process. At the same time, administration support staff were spending too much time uploading information into member profiles. It was determined by the Board that CEUs should reflect the needs of members' individual learning objectives and also give more autonomy to members to determine their own personal learning needs and goals.

In 2021 VRA Canada's Board of Directors struck an ad hoc committee to review and update its current structure for requirements for continuing education units (CEUs) to support the three designations it administers. The ad hoc committee consisted of volunteers from the VRA Board, Society members including CAVEWAS, and VRA members. The committee met to review best practices of similar organizations, discuss options, and create a new framework for the board's consideration.

The ad hoc committee considered the following:

- Number of CEUs required should be consistent between VRA and CVRP
- Tie the CEU renewal to the membership renewal so members do not need to remember two different dates
- Reduce the number of categories with minimum and maximum education units in each and create opportunities for individual learning

After several months of work, the committee developed the new framework for CEUs for those VRA members maintaining their VRA Canada designation(s). The outcomes of the committee's work are:

- CEUs can be earned in 4 distinct categories
- The program is on an honour system
- Members are encouraged to develop their own self-directed learning plan
- Audits will be completed randomly to ensure accuracy and integrity

After an extensive review and vetting process over the summer and fall of 2021, a new association management software/system was acquired and customized to suit the tracking and reporting requirements of this new CEU framework. By September of 2022, the new system was set up and ready for members to track and update their continuing education units.

Creating a Self-directed Learning Plan

VRA Canada strongly encourages members to create a self-directed learning plan that will suit their particular needs and help them develop a plan and a road map to meet the requirements to maintain their designation.

VRA Canada recognizes that most members already reflect on their practice and continuously involve themselves in activities that increase their professional competence. A self-directed learning plan will provide a structure to allow and facilitate members to document their professional learning journey.

To create your own self-directed learning plan, we suggest checking out these resources on the internet:

University of Waterloo: https://uwaterloo.ca/centre-for-teaching-excellence/teaching-resources/teaching-tips/tips-students/self-directed-learning/self-directed-learning-four-step-process

Harvard Business School: https://online.hbs.edu/blog/post/three-steps-to-creating-a-personal-learning-syllabus

You can also find templates for self-directed learning plans online.

CEU Framework for Each Designation

Here is a review of the four categories and what is included in each.

CATEGORY A

Professional Skill Development directly relating to the field of vocational/employment/career services & training (includes technology skills development, report writing and communication)

- Earned by attending conferences, webinars, seminars, online, courses from university and colleges etc.

CATEGORY B

Professional Ethics

- Earned by attending courses, seminars, webinars, conferences, online or in person relating to professional ethical conduct, ethical dilemmas/decision making, and the values and principals that guide the moral behavior of the vocational rehabilitation professional

CATEGORY C

Contribution to the Association/Society or the Vocational Rehabilitation Profession

- Earned through research, publishing, presentations, teaching, volunteer activities on an association committee or Board

CATEGORY D

Self Care/Personal Growth/Activities that meet personal health needs, as per our Code of Ethics thus allowing us to ultimately improve our ability to serve our clients.

- Earned by attending courses on such topics as meditation, time management, effective communication, personal fitness, etc.

VRA CANADA CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDITS FRAMEWORK

Requirements for CEUs by Designation Every 2 (two) years

Category	# Credit Hours RRP	# Credit Hours RVP	# Credit Hours RCSS
A – Professional Skills Development	**Minimum 20**	**Minimum 14**	**Minimum 14**
B – Professional Ethics	**Minimum 6**	**Minimum 3**	**Minimum 3**
C – Contribution to the Association/Profession	**Maximum 20**	**Maximum 6**	**Maximum 6**
D – Personal Growth	**Maximum 4**	**Maximum 2**	**Maximum 2**
TOTAL REQUIRED	**40**	**20**	**20**

Registered Rehabilitation Professional (RRP)

- Category A Minimum of 20 credit hours every 2 years
- Category B Minimum of 6 credit hours every 2 years
- Category C Maximum of 20 credit hours every 2 years
- Category D Maximum of 4 credit hours every 2 years

Registered Vocational Professional (RVP)

- Category A Minimum of 14 credit hours every 2 years
- Category B Minimum of 3 credit hours every 2 years
- Category C Maximum of 6 credit hours every 2 years
- Category D Maximum of 2 credit hours every 2 years

Registered Community Support Specialist (RCSS)

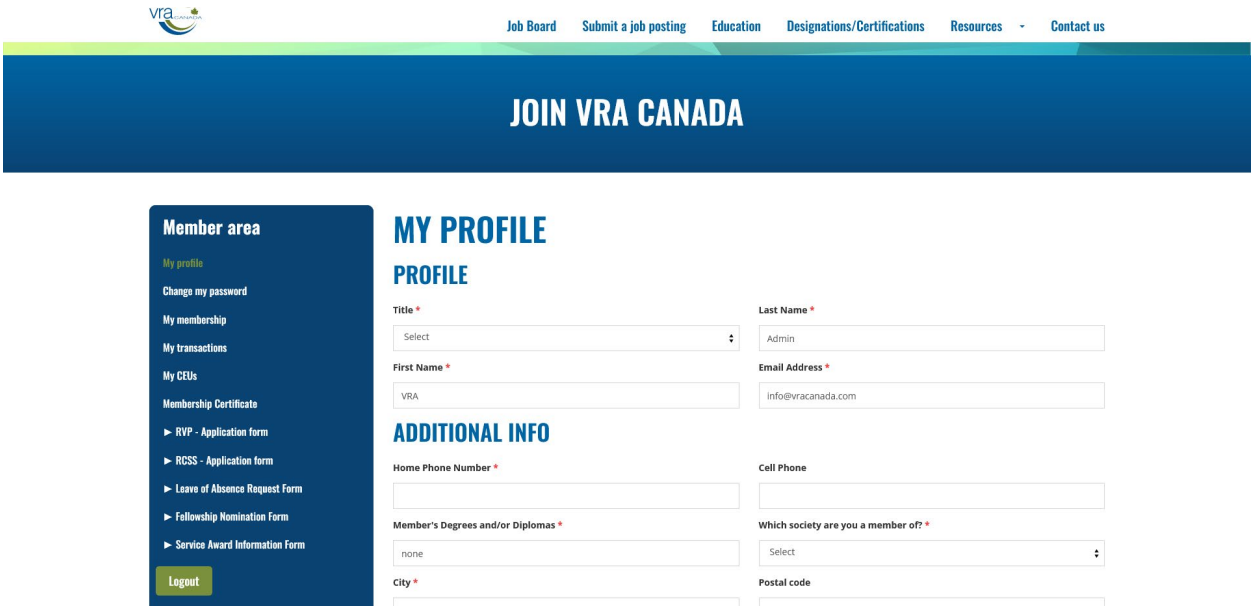
- Category A Minimum of 14 credit hours every 2 years
- Category B Minimum of 3 credit hours every 2 years
- Category C Maximum of 6 credit hours every 2 years
- Category D Maximum of 2 credit hours every 2 years

Reporting: How to Enter CEUs

VRA Canada members are expected to complete and meet their CEU requirements every 2 (two) years.

Members are not required to submit CEU supporting documentation at the time they enter it into the system, but you must have supporting documentation available in the event of an audit. It is recommended that you keep all supporting documentation for at least three to four years.

VRA Canada offers an online tool to track completed CEUs as part of your member profile in VRA Canada's member database. This online tracking tool must be used by those who are selected for audit to ensure their requirements are up to date. The online tool can be found in your member profile once you've logged into the member database. Click on **My CEUs** in the blue **Member area** box on the left-hand of your profile page to access information about CEU requirements and to enter CEU information into your personal member file.

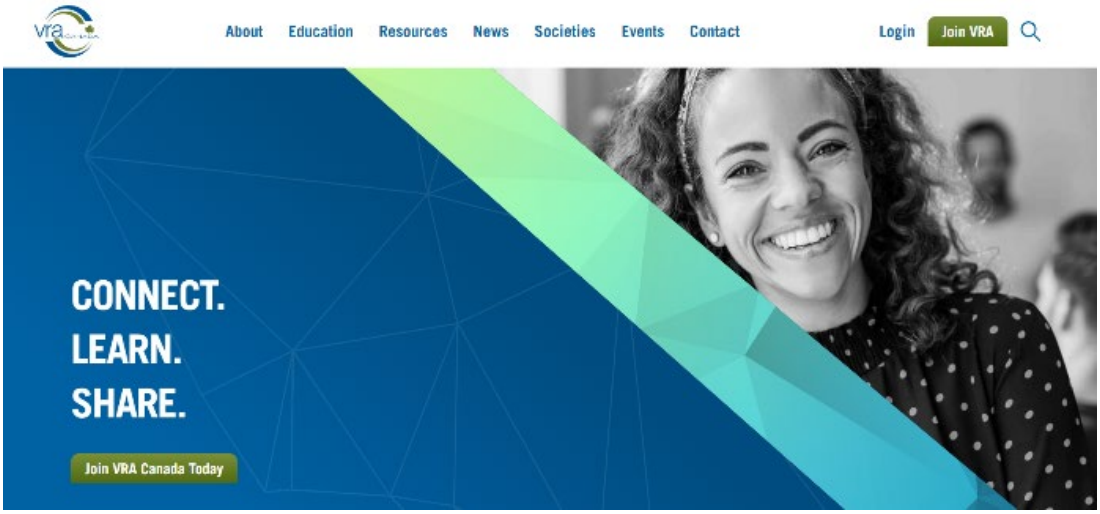


How to Enter CEUs

It's very easy to use the new member database to complete your CEU tracking. We have broken the process down into steps, but you will not find this process intimidating. There are a few mandatory fields. However, once you've completed one entry, you will find it can take less than a minute to enter and confirm your CEUs in the system. Just make sure you have the CEU details ready before you begin.

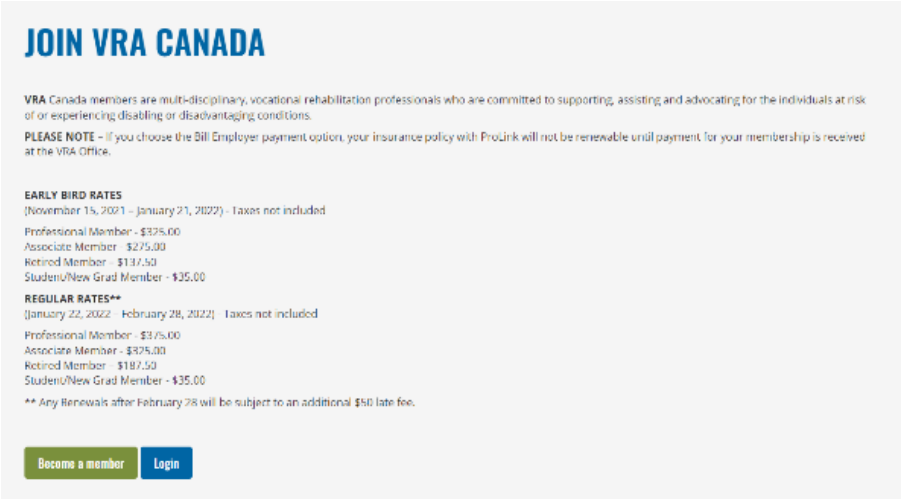
Step 1

Log into your account by clicking on the **Login** tab at the top of the VRA Canada website at https://www.vracanada.com/



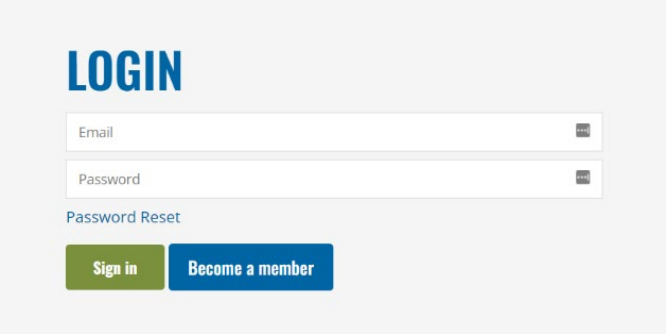
Step 2

Once you've clicked **Login**, you will be taken to the VRA Canada membership page. Scroll down and click on **Login** at the bottom.



Step 3

You will arrive at a page that looks like this:



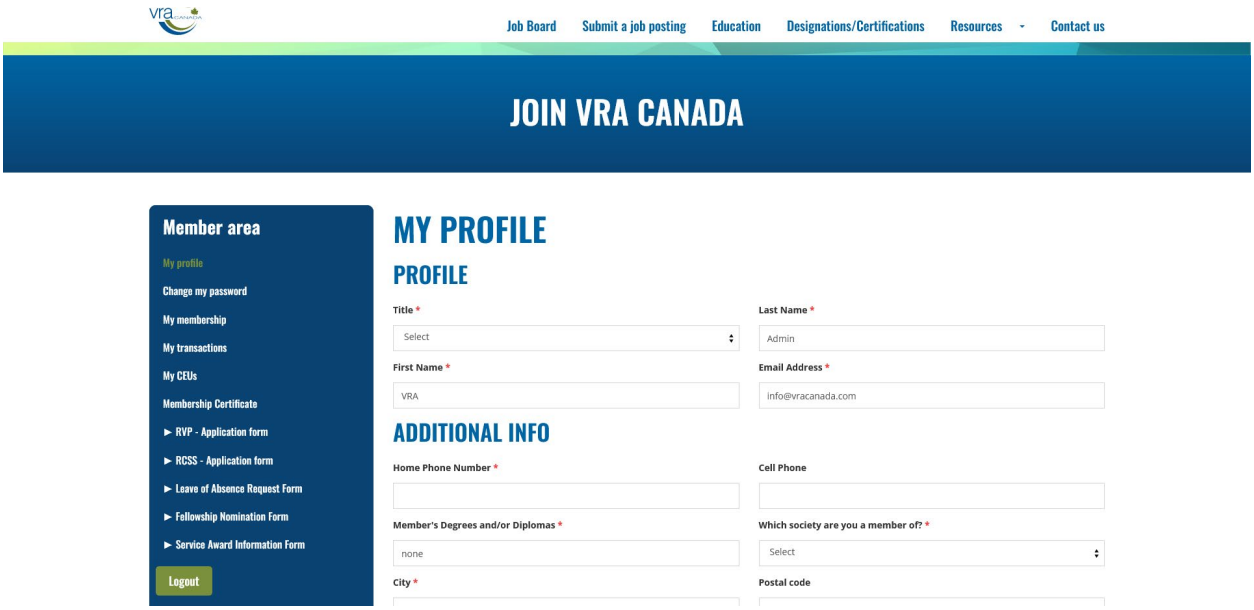
Enter your current login credentials.

If you need to change your password email info@vracanada.com for a reset.

Step 4

If you have a moment, please review your profile information and make sure it is up to date. This will ensure you receive the e-blast and other important information from VRA Canada.

Click on **My CEUs** in the blue menu bar on the left under **Member area**.



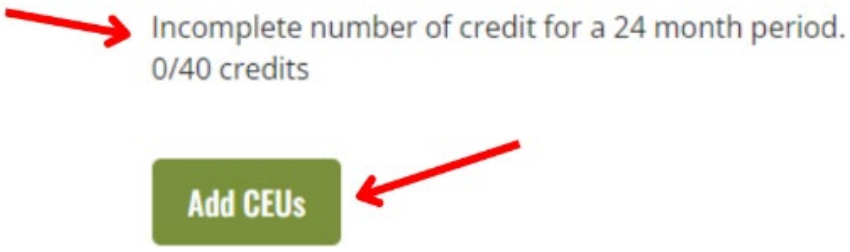
Step 5

When you click on **My CEUs** you will arrive at a page that looks like this. Take the time to review the requirements for, and categories under, your specific designation. Perhaps make a quick notation about which category the CEU you are entering satisfies so when you get to Step 9 you won't have to navigate back to this page for a reminder.



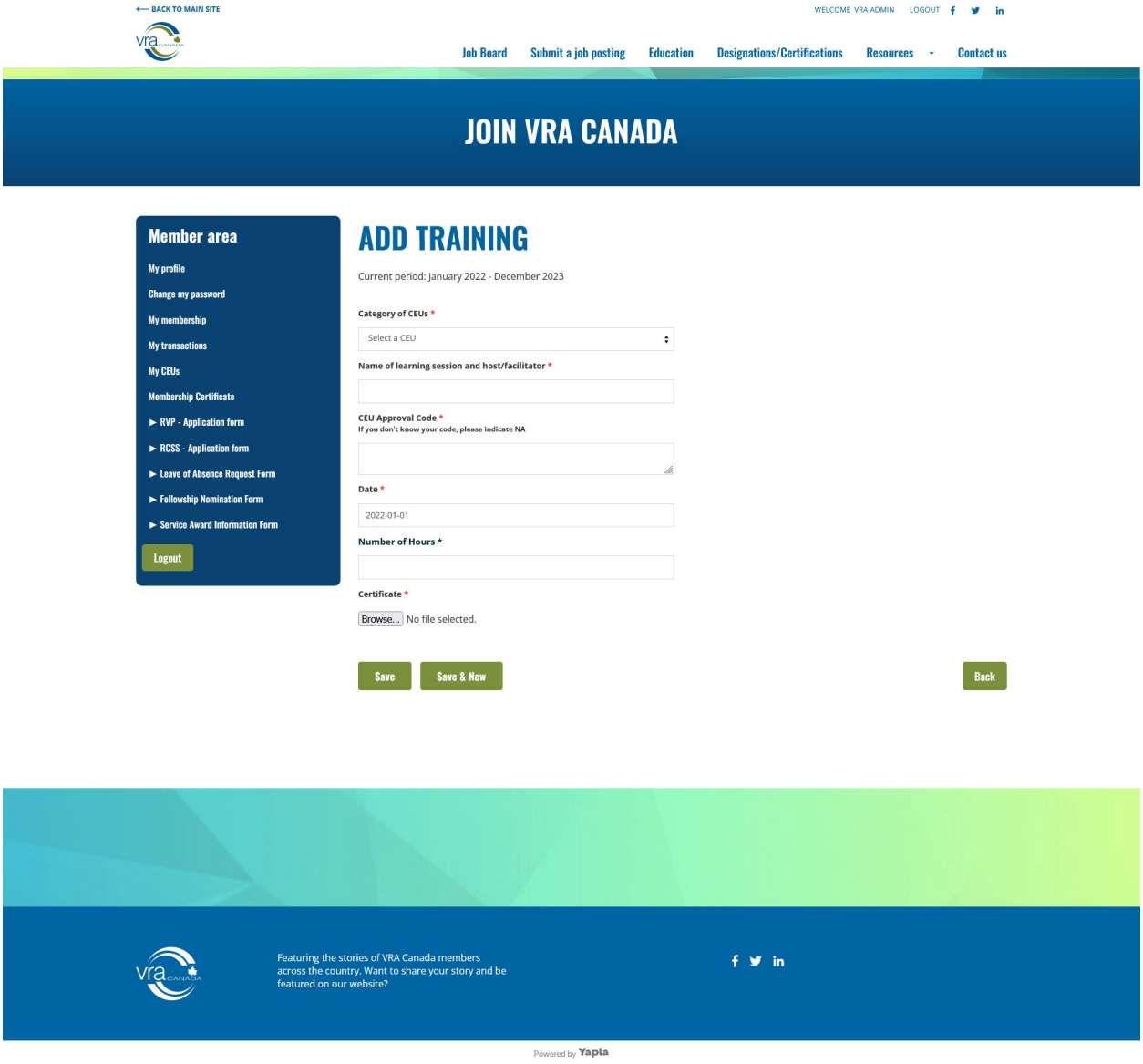
Step 6

When you scroll to the bottom of this page, you will find a green button that says **Add CEUs**. Click on that button. In addition, the system keeps track of your progress towards your requirements for the CEU period and you will see a message above the **Add CEUs** button that updates you on your progress.



Step 7

You will see this page. At the top, under **Add Training**, you will see the current period for which CEUs are being collected. We will now go through each section as an individual step.



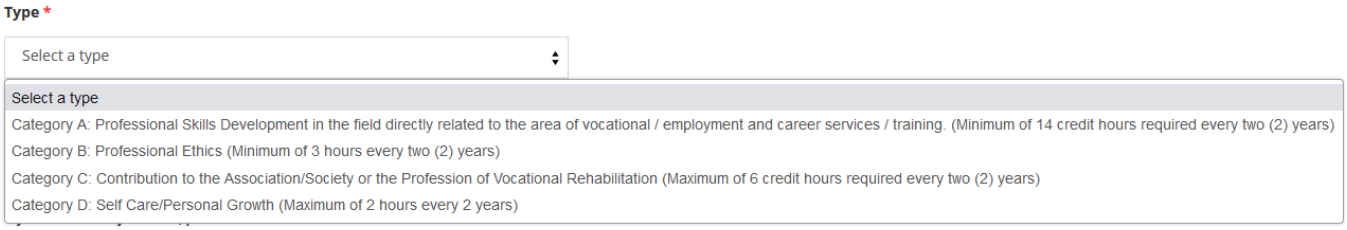
Step 8

Click on **Category of CEUs**. The red asterisk means it is mandatory to complete this field. Click on the designation to which the CEU you are entering applies.



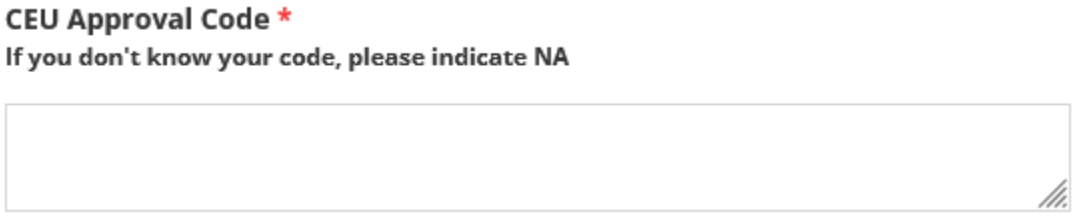
Step 9

Next, click **Type** to select the category. This field is also mandatory. Type corresponds to the category, from A to D, for which your CEU will fulfill requirements. If you need a refresher, click back to the previous page and read through the requirements for each category under your particular designation. Or print a copy of this document and keep it handy, as it reviewed the designations and categories on pages 4 to 5. You will note by the red asterisk that this field is also mandatory to answer before your CEU will be entered.



Step 10

For this field, it is mandatory to enter information, however, it is not mandatory to enter a code for your CEU. If you receive a certificate from VRA or another educational provider and there is a VRA or CVRP (for CVRP approval codes go to https://cvrp.net/continuing-education-programs/approved-ceus/), you can enter it here, but it is not required, especially if you are not a member of CVRP. Instead, as noted beside the Field Label, you can enter n/a then move to the next field.



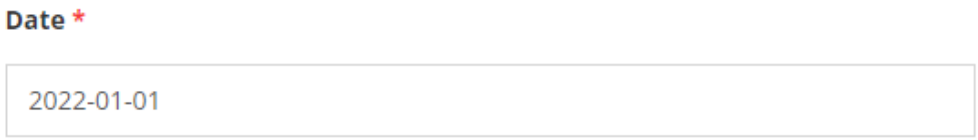
Step 11

Here is where you enter the name of the CEU session and the institution or organization that offered the course. For instance, if you attended a VRA Canada VRoom Café you would enter the name of that session and add VRA Canada as the host/facilitator.



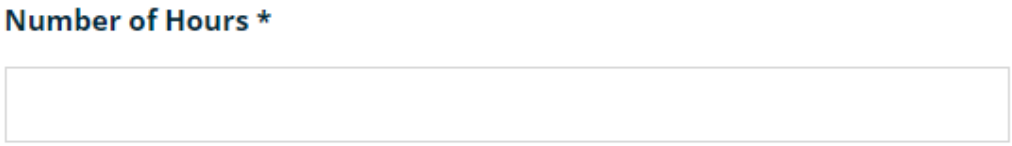
Step 12

It is also mandatory to enter the date the training took place in the field under **Date**.



Step 13

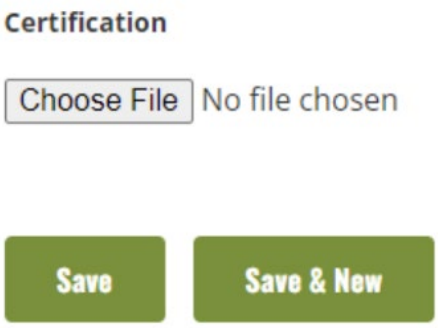
Since CEUs are typically tracked by the number of hours spent in training, you should add the length of the training course in hours in this field. This is a mandatory field as well.



Step 14

The system allows for you to confirm your Certificate by uploading a PDF document. To do so, click on **Choose File**. It is not mandatory to enter your training certificate into the system. However, you should always save a copy of your training certificates in the event you are audited. A folder on your computer, saved to a USB or in the cloud, even a print back-up copy or a combination of these, all make sense and ensure that you will always have back-up.

You may now click **Save** to complete the addition of this CEU or **Save & New** if you have more CEUs to enter in this session. Follow the same procedure for each new CEU you have attained.



Audit Requirements

To maintain the integrity of VRA Canada's designations, a percentage of members are selected randomly for CEU audit each year, beginning at the end of 2023. Up to 10 % of members will be audited every two years.

Individuals who are selected for audit will be requested to submit supporting documentation for their CEUs taken in the previous two calendar years.

Individuals who are found to have falsified their CEUs are in breach of the VRA Canada Code of Ethics. These cases are forwarded to VRA Canada's Board of Directors for further action.

VRA Canada reserves the right to audit any member at any time and for any reason.

Why Track and Audit CEUs?

Continuing education helps keep licensed professionals up to date in advances or changes in the field of vocational rehabilitation and reinforces/reviews important topics and domains of practice.

The Audit Process

If you're selected for an audit, you'll **receive a notification by email in November**, to coincide with VRA's membership renewal period, that will inform you that your CEUs are being audited. The email will ask you to review and ensure your CEU records in the membership database are accurate and up to date. You should always keep the originals of your CEU documents for at least three years.

You will have at least 60 days, or until the end of January, to update your CEU records in your profile before the audit team will review your records.

The documents you submit for the CEU audit will typically contain the following information:

- Your name
- The title of the educational course or activity
- Course code or number (if applicable but not mandatory)
- The program or course completion date
- The instructor's and/or training provider's name(s)
- The organization that approved the continuing education program (not mandatory)
- The number of hours or credits completed

VRA will continue to send members who attend VRA sessions Attendance Certificates that verify they completed the training. You can upload or keep a copy of the PDF you are sent. VRA is no longer requiring codes from members and is therefore not necessarily assigning codes to training.

If the course or program was completed for academic credit, you can submit an official college transcript showing your name, the school's name, the number of credits completed, and the attendance dates.

The audit team will review the documents, and if it all checks out, you are fine and will receive an email confirming you have met the CEU requirements.

Special Note for RRP: If you are identified in an audit, you will receive an email asking for your permission to release your name to CVRP and VRA Canada will coordinate with CVRP to confirm that you are a registrant in good standing during the audit period. You will not have to provide CEU records in this case if your records and status are maintained with the College. If you choose not to give permission to release your name, you will be required to complete your CEU tracking in your VRA Canada membership record.

Can I Fail a CEU Audit?

The short answer is yes. A continuing education audit is considered unsuccessful if you don't complete and/or provide adequate proof of current, acceptable CEUs within the timeframe allotted in your CEU audit notice. If you fail to comply with the requests of the Audit Committee, then you will lose your designation.

Where can I find CEUs?

VRA Canada also maintains this list on the member database website under the **Resources** tab at the top of the page. Go to your member profile to discover this and other great resources for members.

TIP: How to Ensure You're Always Prepared for an Audit

The CEU audit will choose members at random, up to 10 per cent of members each year. But that doesn't mean you shouldn't be prepared because an audit can happen to anyone. Here are three tips to help you always be prepared for a CEU audit:

1. Stay organized.

One of the best ways to be prepared for an audit is to be organized. File all of your certificates and CEU paperwork (digital and hard copies) together with the provider's contact info to a safe place that you can remember and access easily. That could be in a filing cabinet for important documents or a dedicated folder on your computer or cloud storage.

2. Regularly review your requirements.

At the top of the CEU tracking page, you can read the requirements for each category to maintain your designation. It makes sense to keep records going back three to four years just in case.

3. Complete your CEUs in a timely manner.

Don't wait to complete your CEU requirements at the last minute. Start early to give yourself plenty of time. Schedule time monthly to enter your CEUs and check your member record in the VRA Canada Database. And check carefully to make sure the courses you chose will count towards your designation's CEU requirements for all categories, prior to registering for them.

FAQ

What is the renewal period for CEUs?

The new CEU framework introduced by VRA Canada on January 1, 2022 is predicated on a two-year renewal period. The first audits will take place at the end of 2023.

During the transition to the new CEU framework, will I be able to carry forward any of the credits I have accumulated over the last few years?

Yes, you will be able to carry forward up to 50 per cent of the required minimum or maximum number of credits required in each of the four categories. If you are audited, these will be taken into consideration. Please make sure you retain records for CEUs going back at least three (3) years in case you are audited. The system won't allow you to enter any CEUs that weren't carried over from the previous database, but you should maintain copies of previous training for the 2021 calendar year in case you are audited so you can prove that you completed the required training in the new categories.

Will my CEUs accumulated over the last few years appear in my member profile in the new membership database?

Yes, those credits have been retrieved and will be transferred to your records during the month of August 2022. You should review the records for any gaps in information and update anything that may be missing in the new system.

What might a self-directed learning plan contain or look like?

Reflection and Self-assessment – use the VRA Code of Ethics and refer to CVRP's Standards of Practice, if you are a CVRP member and they apply to you, as good guides when undertaking this step. Think about your strengths and identify areas of growth for you and your practice over the coming year. Record your top 3 – 5. You can also find useful templates for self-assessment forms online.

Plan and Implement – develop a learning plan that will help to build on particular strengths and to address identified areas for growth. This could take the form of a chart , a narrative or a list, whichever you are most comfortable with. List the areas you want to build on and create two to three goals for yourself. Match these against the requirements you need to meet for each category listed under your designation.

Review and Assess – review your plan regularly to make sure you are meeting your CEU requirements while also meeting the goals you've set for your personal and professional growth. Some plans will create space where you can document the results of your learning journey. This will help you when you assess your learning journey and begin the planning process for the next CEU reporting period.

Will I be audited? If so, what will I be expected to provide?

To maintain the integrity of VRA Canada's designations, a percentage of members (typically 10 % every 2 years) are selected randomly for CEU audit. Individuals who are selected for audit will be requested to submit supporting documentation for their CEU credits taken in the previous two calendar years using VRA Canada's online CEU tracking system in their member profile.

When does the audit take place? How long do I have after receiving notice that I'm being audited to review and update my CEU tracking in the VRA database?

Notices for audit will go out in November of 2023 and every November two years after that, i.e. 2025, 2027. For the first audit at the end of November 2023, you will have until the end of January 2024 (at least 60 days), and again at the end of January every two years after that, to review your CEUs and update them if necessary to meet the requirements for your designation.

In what format do I supply documents for audit?

It is preferable that you update your records in your online member profile to meet the requirements for your designation. PDFs are the best way to do this and can be uploaded to your records in the member database. You can also forward PDFs of your certificates of CEUs in a zip file to info@vracanada.com. The email subject line should read "Audit Request Response" then state your name and member number.

We will accept photocopies sent to the VRA Canada office: 89-91 St. Paul Street, Suite 301, St. Catharines, ON L2R 3M3, in some cases. Please email us first to discuss this option at info@vracanada.com.

Please call 1-888-876-9992 to discuss your options if you are still unclear how to proceed.

Do I need to have a CEU code to record my training in my profile online?

No, you do not. If you have a VRA or CVRP code you can enter that, but it is not a requirement. If you do not have a code you must enter n/a in the field to be able to move to the next field. The information about the training, who was the instructor, who offered the training and length of training are the most important information to capture in the CEU Training area of your member profile.

Does VRA pre-approve CEUs ?

Yes, we do but, as noted above, you do not require a CEU code to enter training into your record. N/A will suffice. Your training should meet category requirements.

How do VRA and CVRP work together for this new process?

If you upload your CEUs to CVRP and fulfill your requirements for your certifications there, you do not need to upload them to VRA. In the event you are audited, you will need to show proof that you have fulfilled your requirements to CVRP. We continue to work together to approve the same education sessions.

You can use a CVRP approval code or a VRA approval code when your record your CEUs in your member profile.

How do I track my CEUs?

See the process outlined above. It should take no longer than 1 – 2 minutes to enter the information required to track your CEU. The system also keeps a total of your CEU requirements and updates that every time you add a new CEU.

Will I be able to carry over CEUs if I exceed the number for each category?

CEUs collected in the last two months of a calendar year may be carried over into the next year if you have exceeded the minimums or maximums in any of the four categories. You must contact info@vracanada.com to request an override on these CEUs so they will be counted in your next two-year period.

What is a Learning Development Plan, and do I really need one?

A learning development plan offers a road map to meet the requirements to maintain your designation and fulfill continuous learning needs to increase your professional competence. It is recommended that you create one, but it is not a requirement.

How do I know if a course qualifies for a specific CEU category?

Use your best judgment. The categories are very self-explanatory.