

## **Associate (Graduate) Membership Renewal Policy and Guidelines on CE Requirements**

### **A. ASSOCIATE (GRADUATE) MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL AND ONGOING REQUIREMENTS**

All Associate (Graduate) Members are required to renew their membership annually, and for a maximum of 10 years as they are required to apply for CFP<sup>CM</sup> certification within these 10 years. To renew their membership, they must maintain technical competence and fulfill ethical obligations. They must complete a minimum of 15 credits of continuing education (CE) every year, in order to stay current with developments in the financial planning profession and better serve clients. Members who receive their membership after 1 July may complete a minimum of 7.5 CE credits to meet the renewal requirement for the first year.

In addition to the annual continuing education requirement, all Associate (Graduate) Members voluntarily disclose any public, civil, criminal or disciplinary actions that may have been taken against them during the previous year as part of the renewal process.

#### **Renewal Period**

The one year period of membership is by calendar year, from 1 January to 31 December. All current Associate (Graduate) Members must submit their completed and signed membership renewal application forms with appropriate fees to IFPHK before 31 December each year.

#### **Renewal Reminders and Notices**

Several reminders will be sent to members reminding them of renewal and continuing education requirements prior to 31 December.

After the renewal deadline on 31 December, a deficiency notice will be sent to members whose renewal applications are outstanding, alerting them that their memberships are being temporarily suspended, and subject to relinquishment.

Before the Associate (Graduate) Memberships are lapsed for renewal for more than one year, a relinquishment reminder will be sent again to prompt the members whose memberships are temporarily suspended that failure to renew before the next deadline will lead to relinquishment of their memberships.

If the Associate (Graduate) Memberships are let to be lapsed for more than one year, a notice will be sent to these former members that their memberships have been relinquished. They will need to fulfill the CFP<sup>CM</sup> certification education and examination requirements again, and submit a new application should they want to reinstate their memberships in the future.

### **B. SUSPENSION OF MEMBERSHIP AFTER ANNUAL RENEWAL DEADLINE**

If a completed application is not received before renewal deadline, the Associate (Graduate) Member will be considered as not having satisfied the renewal requirements and the membership will automatically be suspended. The list of "temporarily suspended Associate (Graduate) Members" will be posted on IFPHK's website and published in our official publication for public's information. IFPHK may take any other actions it deems appropriate.

#### **Membership Reinstatement within One Year of Membership Expiration**

For Associate (Graduate) Members who want to reinstate their membership after the renewal deadline and before 31 December of the next year, they must:

- Submit a completed Associate (Graduate) Membership Reinstatement Form together with a completed Associate (Graduate) Membership Renewal Application Form
- Pay appropriate membership fee
- Pay prevailing reinstatement fee
- Fulfill the continuing education requirement
- Continue to adhere to IFPHK's Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility

## **Associate (Graduate) Membership Renewal Policy and Guidelines on CE Requirements**

### **Relinquishment of Membership after One Year of Membership Expiration**

A maximum lapse of one year of the Associate (Graduate) Membership is allowed, i.e., till the renewal deadline for second year, before the membership is relinquished.

The list of “relinquished” Associate (Graduate) Members will be posted on our website and published in the official publication of IFPHK for public’s information. IFPHK may take any other actions it deems appropriate.

### **Membership Reinstatement after One Year of Membership Expiration**

The former member must submit a new membership application and is required to fulfill the CFP<sup>CM</sup> certification education and examination requirements again.

### **C. VOLUNTARY WITHDRAWAL**

An Associate (Graduate) Member may declare voluntary withdrawal by submitting a written request to IFPHK any time before the current membership expires.

If such request is not received before the membership renewal application deadline, it will be considered as “membership suspension” or “membership relinquishment” unless the reinstatement application is received with all renewal deficiencies being made up beforehand.

Reinstatement of voluntarily withdrawn memberships can be granted by IFPHK if the former member chooses to do so within the first year that they withdraw their memberships, and they must:

- Submit a completed Associate (Graduate) Membership Reinstatement Form together with a completed Associate (Graduate) Membership Renewal Application Form
- Pay appropriate membership fee
- Pay prevailing reinstatement fee
- Fulfill the continuing education requirement
- Continue to adhere to IFPHK’s Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility

Reinstatement of Associate (Graduate) Memberships is only allowed within the first year of withdrawal of memberships. After that, the former member must submit a new membership application and is required to fulfill the CFP<sup>CM</sup> certification education and examination requirements again.

### **D. EXEMPTION FROM MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL REQUIREMENTS**

Members who cannot comply with the renewal requirements for health reasons or other circumstances beyond their control can submit a written request to IFPHK for consideration. Such requests must include an explanatory letter and all applicable supporting documentation. These exception cases will be considered by the Executive Committee on a case-by-case basis.

In the event of hardship, concessionary fees will also be considered upon requests by members.

### **E. GUIDELINES ON CONTINUING EDUCATION (CE) REQUIREMENTS**

#### **Preamble**

Continuing education (CE) is required for Associate (Graduate) Members to renew their membership. Associate (Graduate) Members must meet the renewal standard of 15 CE credits every year. They are required to retain and provide such records and supporting documentary evidence upon request from IFPHK. These records should be kept for a minimum of three years.

## **Associate (Graduate) Membership Renewal Policy and Guidelines on CE Requirements**

### **Objectives**

1. To maintain, deepen and extend professional competence and technical knowledge;
2. To keep track with the development of financial industry;
3. To acquire the updated knowledge of the trend in financial planning field; and
4. To support financial planners' effort in keeping the professional knowledge up to date.

### **General Guidelines**

- Associate (Graduate) Members have the obligation to fulfill and maintain CE requirement. If Associate (Graduate) Members fail to comply with the CE requirement, it may lead to refusal of membership renewal.
- Associate (Graduate) Members are required to declare meeting the CE requirement upon membership renewal.
- Associate (Graduate) Members are required to maintain and provide CE records and supporting documentary evidence upon request from IFPHK during the random audit. These records should be kept for a minimum of three years.
- CE credits documentation may be a grade report or transcript for activities involving an examination, or attendance evidence such as certificates issued by the course providers. The certificate of attendance should include: Associate (Graduate) Member's name, name of program, name of CE sponsor, date of program, location, number of CE credits and signature of sponsor representative.
- In general, for each hour's participation in recognized CE activities, one CE credit can be granted.
- Excess CE credits gained within the year cannot be carried forward to the following year.
- Associate (Graduate) Members should file the declaration of compliance with integrity. All filings are subject to random audit. Disciplinary actions would be taken upon proof of violations.
- During the audit, randomly selected Associate (Graduate) Members are required to submit the CE attendance records and supporting documentary evidence that cover the following to IFPHK for assessment and record:
  - ✓ Name of Associate (Graduate) Member
  - ✓ Name of CE activity
  - ✓ Content of CE activity
  - ✓ Organizer of CE activity
  - ✓ Date of CE activity
  - ✓ Number of CE credits or participation hours of each CE activity

### **Recognized CE Activities**

- The activities should be tied directly to professional knowledge, skills and abilities that are covered in the CFP certification process, and be relevant to professional development of a personal financial planner.
- The CE activities should be of significant intellectual and practical content which involves interaction with other individuals.
- Content of CE activities should be topics covered in the CFP Certification Examination Syllabus including:
  - General Principles of Financial Planning
  - Insurance planning
  - Risk management
  - Investment planning
  - Tax planning
  - Employee benefits
  - Retirement planning
  - Estate planning
- The activities should be presented in structured format. Structured CE activities include:
  - Studies for a relevant post-graduate degree

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- Studies for professional qualifications such as:
    - CFA (Chartered Financial Analyst)
    - ChFC (Chartered Financial Consultant)
    - CLU (Chartered Life Underwriter)
    - ACII/FCII (Associate or Fellow of the Chartered Insurance Institute)
    - FLMI (Fellow of the Life Management Institute)
    - CPCU (Chartered Property Casualty Underwriter)
    - LUTCF (Fellow of the Life Underwriter Training Council)
    - CPA (Full Member of Hong Kong Institute of Certified Public Accountants)
    - Member of Hong Kong Bar Association
    - Member of the Law Society of Hong Kong
    - Fellow Member of the Actuarial Society of Hong Kong
  - Studies in relevant correspondence (distance learning) courses which require face-to-face participation by the member
  - Studies in relevant and well structured online learning courses that require participants to pass an build-in test as one of the completion criteria (For online learning courses, the general rule of one hour participation equals to one CE credit may not be applied)
  - Studies in relevant courses offered by universities or other tertiary institutions
  - Studies in relevant courses/seminars/workshops offered by professional bodies
  - Attending relevant conferences organized by professional bodies
  - Writing of relevant technical articles, papers or books
  - Working as a lecturer, instructor or discussion leader on a structured CE course (repeat presentations of the course should not be considered for this purpose)
  - Preparation of training materials for a structured CE course
  - Participation in relevant conferences, briefing sessions or discussion groups
  - Serving as a member of committees and working groups of a professional body or a technical committee of an individual firm in the financial planning field
  - Undertaking technical research in the financial planning arena for a new piece of work provided the research is subsequently applied to an engagement
- CE activity presenters should be technically competent.
  - CE activity organizers should have good track record of delivering quality programs.
  - Trainings on general management which are not directly related to financial planning will not be considered as recognized CE activities.
  - Activities, which do not have proof of attendance or examination record, generally cannot be accepted as CE activities.

Examples:

1. Reading financial press, business or financial literature and professional literature;
2. Subscription to professional or business publications;
3. Self-study, e.g. watching financial related television programs or videos.

### **F. UPDATES AND CHANGES**

Associate (Graduate) Members should observe and follow the current renewal policies and procedures set out in the Associate (Graduate) Membership Renewal Application Form in use.

IFPHK reserves the rights to change and update the membership renewal requirements and policy as and when needed. Therefore, Associate (Graduate) Members are advised to closely observe the latest announcements on IFPHK website, and pay specific attention to notices sent to them by IFPHK.