

Nova Scotia Institute of Agrologists Professional Development Policy

1. Scope:

The NSIA Professional Development Policy is applicable to all P.Ag. members unless exempted under section 10 of the Policy.

2. Categories:

Focus on agrology related education only, and have a narrow range of acceptable training that is directly related to the member's area(s) of practice:

Category I: **Structured Learning** – *an Agrology focused event organized and developed by an outside person/group, such as courses, conferences, workshops, webinars, AGMs*

Category II: **Self-Directed Learning** – *Agrology related journal articles, textbooks or other non-fiction text*

Category III: **Soft Skills** – *non-Agrology related language training, software training, project management or facilitation*

Note: You will need to declare your area(s) of practice and your Professional Development (PD) hours must be reasonably related to those areas.

3. PD Requirements:

Required hours (or credits) of 30 per year (with a minimum of 10 in Category I, Maximum of 5 in Category III) and submit annual reporting.

- An additional 5 hours of Category III is allowed for any member participating in NSIA Council or Committee meetings
- 15 hours per A.Ag. can be claimed by their mentor as PD hours. This can be claimed in a single year or over the two-year Articling program.
- New and reinstated members, including those returning from a Leave of Absence, will be allowed a prorated PD requirement based on the portion of the year they are active
 - Members applying for a Leave of Absence will also be allowed a prorated PD requirement for the portion of the year directly preceding their leave.

4. You are responsible for tracking events on the NSIA website or in an excel spreadsheet (provided by NSIA) and have all background information (agendas, readings, programs) available in case of an audit.

5. Reporting Period: January 1st to December 31st

6. Submission Date: January 31st

7. A late fee of \$50 (+HST) will be applied if PD requirements are not met, and no request to defer per section 10 has been received, by the submission date in section 7. For a second and subsequent consecutive offenses, a late fee of \$250 (+HST) will be charged.

- a. All payments received will be applied to the oldest invoice first

8. Auditing:

- a. 10% of total membership in the P.Ag. and A.Ag. categories will be selected each year to submit paperwork (hardcopy or electronic) to support claimed hours (random audit). Those who are not automatically audited per section 9b and/or 10 will be randomly selected. Audited members will have 30 days from an audit request to submit supporting paperwork. Failure to meet this deadline results in a failure to pass the audit. Note: names go back in the audit hat for subsequent years.
 - Members can be audited in back-to-back years but will be exempt from the audit pool in the third year
- b. Failure to pass the audit (i.e. insufficient paperwork or late submission of paperwork) results in an automatic audit for the next year (i.e. a probation period). Failure to pass the audit in the second-year results in the failure to meet the PD requirements and a subsequent membership review by NSIA Council.

9. Extension

- a. If members are unable to meet the PD credit requirements in any one year, they can apply to NSIA Council to have a 1-year extension to achieve the full 2-year requirement of 60 credits with a minimum of 20 hours in Category 1. Any such arrangements would automatically require an audit in the second year. Failure to pass this audit would result in a failure to meet PD requirements and a subsequent membership review by NSIA Council.

10. Exemptions:

- a. Members can apply to Council to be excused for one year from acquiring credits in situations such as maternity leave, unemployment, or long-term illness. Exemptions may only occur with adherence to the Leave of Absence Policy.