

**Audit Guide for CE Program Auditors**

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### AUDIT GOALS

The overall goal of all Continuing Education Program (CEP) audits is to verify that courses are delivered as approved. Training received through courses approved by the CEP is the only way a system operator's certificate can be renewed. As such, the Personnel Subcommittee (PS) has an obligation to the Personnel Certification Governance Committee (PCGC) and the industry to ensure that training received through courses approved by the CE Program is quality training, applicable to the industry, and is on a topic approved by the PCGC. These topics can be viewed in the System Operator Certification Manual Appendix A.

CE Program audits can occur on three levels. Level 1 audits are done primarily to ensure that data in SOCCED for a learning activity is complete. It also serves to make sure that the approval(s) of activities are done correctly.

The goal of a Level 2 audit is to ensure that the learning activity is delivered as it is approved. This involves reviewing course content and other items used to deliver the course.

A Level 3 audit is a "for cause" audit initiated by the CE Program Administer with the direct participation of the PS membership. The conduct and scope of a Level 3 audit is based on the "cause" for the audit, and can include a complete review of all provider materials, advertizing, website, and any other materials and processes used by the provider related to the "cause" for the audit. A "for cause" can result in probation, including revocation of the provider's account.

Audits are conducted for each quarter of the year. Since the quarter must be completed and sufficient time allowed for records to be uploaded into SOCCED, the audit being conducted will be for a quarter at least one quarter earlier than the quarter during which the audit is conducted. For example if we are in the second quarter of the year, the audit will be for the first quarter of the year, and at least 60 days after the first quarter of the year.

### AUDIT SETUP

#### SELECTING COURSES TO AUDIT

The CE Program Manager begins the audit with a random selection of courses in SOCCED that have been delivered during the quarter being audited. The default percentage of courses to be audited is 5% of the courses delivered in the courses delivered for a Level 1 audit, and 2.5% of the courses delivered for a Level 2 audit. Other percentages can be used if the number of audits should be lowered or raised for a given quarter.

SOCCEd conducts the random selection of courses to be audited when the CE Program Manager selects the quarter to be audited in SOCCEd. SOCCEd will select the percentages of courses mentioned above, and the CE Program Manager will select the correct percentages for the audit by selecting courses in sequence selected by SOCCEd. For example, if 85 courses are selected by SOCCEd for audit, the CE Manager selects the first third or 66% of the courses to be a Level 1 audit ( $5\% + 2.5\% = 7.5\%$ , 5% is 66% of 7.5%), and 33% to be Level 2 audits. These are selected in the sequence they appear on the SOCCEd list, which is selected at random by SOCCEd.

SOCCEd does not have the ability to select a specific delivery date in the audit quarter, so the first delivery in the quarter is the delivery that will be audited. The date of delivery is the first transcript date in SOCCEd for the quarter.

The CE Program Manager then changes the status of the selected courses to Under Audit in SOCCEd. This triggers automated emails to the providers notifying them of the audit and listing the materials that must be uploaded to the course in SOCCEd. The providers have thirty days to upload the materials on the list, and any other materials the auditor requests. Audits should be completed within 60 days so the next quarter audits can begin in a timely manner.

Each auditor completes an Audit Review sheet for each audit assigned to them. The checklists are uploaded into SOCCEd as a record of the audit results.

After the courses are targeted for audit, the audit team selects the courses they will audit so the auditor is not auditing any organization in their footprint. The total number of audits is divided equally among team members.

### LEVEL 1 AUDIT

NERC uses several course reviewers who volunteer their time to review courses. This can lead to some degree of inconsistency between reviewers. With this in mind, the PS has decided that it is prudent to have a Level 1 audit be primarily a check that all data and information required for approval of a learning activity has been submitted and is correct. This achieves the goal of checking for consistency among reviewers, and reinforces that the required data and information is present.

#### GOALS OF LEVEL 1 AUDIT

The goals a Level 1 audit include:

- Clarity and completeness of the provider's Individual Learning Application (ILA) application
- Correct course data is entered into the SOCCEd
- Quality of training in regard to correlation between:
  - ❖ Clearly stated learning objectives
  - ❖ Learning content that will accomplish the learning objectives
  - ❖ Delivery type appropriate for the content

- ❖ Learning assessments that validate that the learning objectives have been achieved by each individual learner
- Applicability to the NERC System Operator Certification Program's recertification requirements (as set by the PCGC)

### ITEMS REQUIRED FOR A LEVEL 1 AUDIT

Materials that must be submitted for a Level 1 audit are listed in the automated email sent by SOCCED when a course is selected for an audit Level 1. They are also listed at the top of the Level 1 Auditor's Checklist as below.

- Roster for specific instance of delivery for the ILA being audited including
  - NERC Activity I.D.
  - Delivery date (only for activity date being audited)
  - NERC certificate numbers for those attendees that are certified (not all attendees on roster may be certified)
- Summary of evaluations, either an electronic summary of all student feedback (Evaluations, surveys) for this course, or a scan of all evaluation forms for this course.
- A blank sample of the evaluation form (student feedback)

### WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN A LEVEL 1 AUDIT

As stated previously, an auditor should look for the presence of and correctness of course data and other information listed on the Level 1 Audit Checklist. The Level 1 Audit Checklist will include the following items for the auditor to verify:

#### PROVIDER INFORMATION

- The provider information section was complete and accurate.

#### LEARNING ACTIVITY INFORMATION

- The learning activity information section was complete and accurate.
- Neither the Standards hours nor Simulation hours are greater than the Operating Topic hours
- The CE Hours requested appeared appropriate for this learning activity.

#### LEARNING ASSESSMENT

- The type of learning assessment is appropriate for the type of learning objectives (knowledge vs. performance objectives)
- The integrity of the learning assessment is ensured by:
  - Trainer present
  - Proctor agreement
  - Learning contract
  - Unique login

### COURSE EVALUATIONS

- The “course evaluation is given to each student” checkbox is checked.
- Summary of evaluations was submitted for the specific instance of delivery of the ILA being audited.
- The provider submitted a copy of the course evaluation form used for the ILA being audited.

### ATTENDANCE VERIFICATION

- Roster was submitted for the specific instance of delivery of the ILA being audited.
- The NERC Activity ID matches SOCCED
- The date on the roster matches the specific instance of delivery of the ILA being audited

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- The learning objectives are clearly written.
- Learning objectives are written in a manner that successful achievement could be measured or observed.

### LEARNING ACTIVITY CONTENT

- The course content segment descriptions contain sufficient detail to determine that the objectives can be met within the scope of the content.
- Partial credit is allowed and the segments for which partial credit can be awarded are checked in the Learning Activity Content section of the ILA

### REPORTING AUDIT LEVEL 1 RESULTS

The audit team members will communicate their findings to the Audit Team Lead, who will enter the information in the Audit Worksheet, and then into SOCCED.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
			Status Set To	Auditor	Recommendation of Auditor P-Pass, F-Fail, N-No	Action Taken	Person Taking Action
1	Level 1 Audits 3rd Quarter 2009		Under Audit				
2	AMRN_001	AMRN_001_LK_Trans_Cntrl	v	Laurel Hennebury	P		
3	ATC_085	ATC 085 2009 94 Cycle 2 DTS	v	Laurel Hennebury	P		
4	BSC_001	BSC_001_NERC Standards Training 2008	v	Roger McBeth	P		
5							
6							
7	Level 2 Audits 3rd Quarter 2009						
8	XCEL_001	XCEL_001_T8532P-025	v	Lauri Jones	P		
9	AMRN_001	AMRN_001_BP_08	v	Laurel Hennebury	P		
10							
11		<b>Total Completed</b>			5		
12							
13		<b>% Completed</b>			7.04		
14							
15							

Figure 1 – Audit Team Worksheet

The information communicated to the Lead should include Recommendation for Pass or Fail Audit, and reasons for Recommend Fail. The auditors should contact the Team Lead if having problems with an audit such as a provider not being willing to submit requested materials. There will also be a PS member assigned to assist auditors along with the Team Lead. If the Team Lead cannot get resolution on an audited course, he or she will take it to the NERC CE Program Manager.

If the CE Program Manager cannot get resolution on an audited course, he will either Fail the course audit, or take it to the PS for a final ruling. Any course that the NERC Manager fails on an audit will be communicated to the PS membership in a timely manner.

The ruling of the PS on a course being audited is the final decision, short of a provider using the NERC Appeals Process.

When the Team Lead changes the status of a course to Pass Audit an automated email will be sent to the provider to communicate the results of the audit.

### TEAM LEAD

Each audit team will have a PS member serving as the lead. The lead will coordinate the audit and record final results in SOCCED. The Lead is assisted by PS members on the audit team in provided support to the auditors. The team lead conducts a periodic check of the status of audits and contacts members of the audit team if there audits have gotten behind schedule (the finish date for the audits is set when the audit team members have selected their courses to review).

When the Lead is ready to enter audit results into SOCCED, he or she can select several courses at once to change their status by checking the box in the far left side of their reviewer screen, then select Pass Audit. Because the number of audits that fail is very minimal (we try to work with providers to correct deficiencies in courses audited) a Fail Audit must be entered individually.

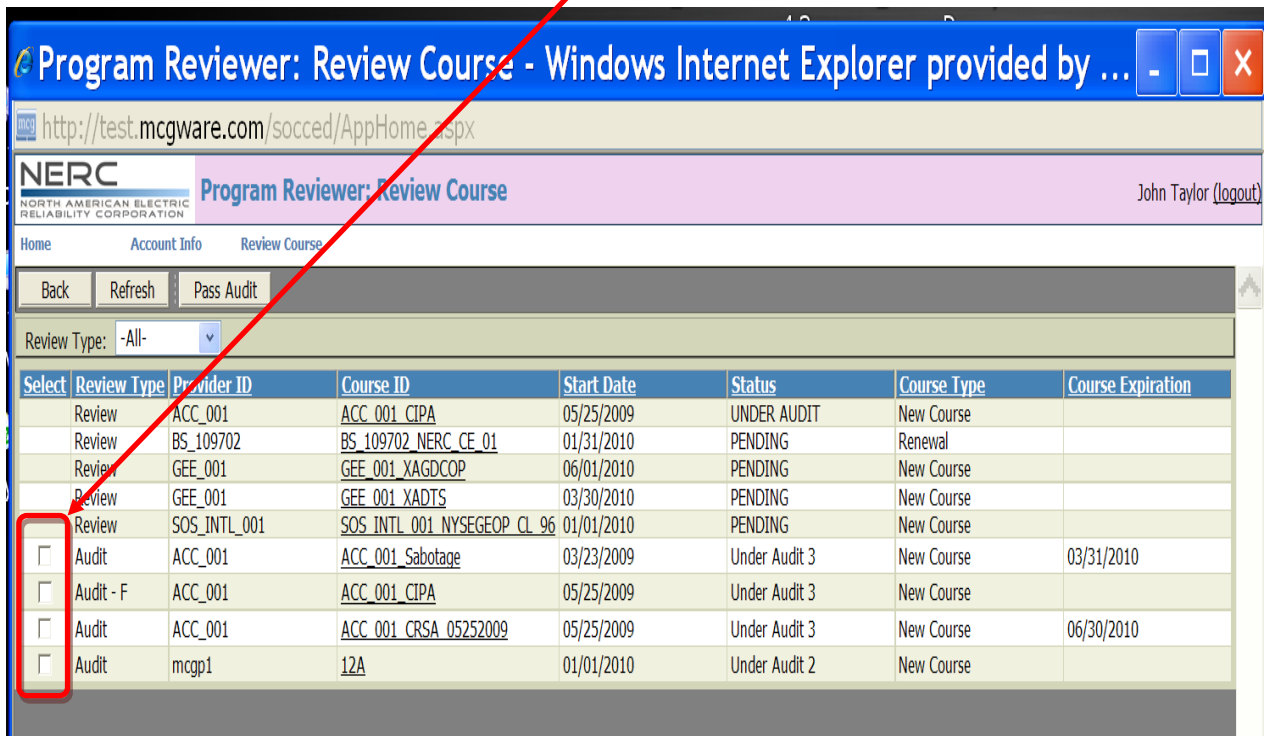


Figure 2 – Selection Screen For Changing Audit Status of Courses

### LEVEL 2 AUDIT

#### GOALS OF AUDIT LEVEL 2

The goals of a Level 2 audit include are initially the same as for a Level 1 audit. In addition, a Level 2 audit goes further to ensure that a course is being delivered the way it was approved. This requires review of all materials involved in the delivery of the course for the date of delivery selected. This includes course content, worksheets, exercises, etc. used for delivery. Many times this would require the electronic transfer of a large amount of data. SOCCED is limited to 4 Mb (upgraded to 10Mb in late 2010) of data that can be transmitted to attach to a course. The work around is to require a representative sampling of course content. The sampling should an hour or so of content, with a clear connection between the content and the applicable learning objectives.

#### ITEMS REQUIRED FOR A LEVEL 2 AUDIT

Materials that must be submitted for a Level 2 audit are listed in the automated email sent by SOCCED when a course is selected for an audit Level 2. They are also listed at the top of the Level 2 Auditor's Checklist as below.

- Roster for specific instance of delivery for the ILA being audited including
  - NERC Activity I.D.
  - Delivery date (only for activity date being audited)
  - NERC certificate numbers for those attendees that are certified (not all attendees on roster may be certified)
- Documentation of piloting if CBT or Self-study learning activity.
- A sample of the evaluation form (student feedback)
- Electronic summary (or the individual evaluations) of the evaluations received for the ILA being audited
- A copy of the learning assessments for the course (all versions if retesting is allowed).
- Record of learning assessment results for each participant for the delivery date being audited.
- Copy of proctoring agreement of learning contract (if used to ensure learning assessment integrity)
- A copy of one learning activity segment content (identified to meet objectives as listed on ILA).
- Documentation of the Pass/Fail rate for the date of delivery being audited.

#### WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN A LEVEL 2 AUDIT

As with a Level 1 audit the auditor should look for the presence of and correctness of course data and other information listed on the Audit Checklist. A Level 2 audit requires a more in-depth look at how the course was actually delivered. The Level 2 Audit Checklist will include the following items for the auditor to verify:

### PROVIDER INFORMATION

- The provider information section was complete and accurate.

### LEARNING ACTIVITY INFORMATION

- The learning activity information section was complete and accurate.
- Neither the Standards hours nor Simulation hours are greater than the Operating Topic hours
- The CE Hours requested appeared appropriate for this learning activity.
- If learning assessment time is included in CEHs, method of using learning assessment results to teach is documented
- Provider retains adequate documentation for four years to support their compliance with the requirements of the Continuing Education Program as stated in the Continuing Education Administrative Program (P15).
- The person listed in SOCCED for the ILA submitted can answer questions about the ILA and course.

### LEARNING ASSESSMENT

- The type of learning assessment is appropriate for the type of learning objectives (knowledge vs. performance objectives)
- The type of learning assessment is appropriate for the type content (knowledge vs. performance)
- The type of learning assessment is appropriate for the type of delivery mode (Course Type in SOCCED).
- There is a match between the learning assessment(s), learning objectives, content type, and delivery mode.
- The integrity of the learning assessment is ensured by:
  - Trainer present
  - Proctor agreement
  - Learning contract
  - Unique login

### COURSE EVALUATIONS

- The “course evaluation is given to each student” checkbox is checked.
- Summary of evaluations was submitted for the specific instance of delivery of the ILA being audited.
- The provider submitted a copy of the course evaluation form used for the ILA being audited.\

Course evaluations should include at least the following (P10 in the CE Manual):

- The type of learning assessment is appropriate for the type content (knowledge vs. performance)
- The type of learning assessment is appropriate for the type of delivery mode (Course Type in SOCCED).

- There is a match between the learning assessment(s), learning objectives, content type, and delivery mode.

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### ATTENDANCE VERIFICATION

- Roster was submitted for the specific instance of delivery of the ILA being audited.
- The NERC Activity ID matches SOCCED
- The date on the roster matches the specific instance of delivery of the ILA being audited
- The attendees' NERC certification ID numbers listed

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### SPECIALIZED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

#### ***OJT***

If learning activity is OJT, participant is presented with learning objectives and method of learning assessment

#### ***Filed Visit***

If learning activity is a filed visit, participant is presented with learning objectives and method of learning assessment

#### ***Backup Control Center Drill (BUCC Drill)***

If learning activity is a BUCC drill, travel time is not counted in CEHs

If learning activity is a BUCC drill, no CEHs are awarded for normal operations

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### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- The learning objectives are clearly written.
- Learning objectives are written in a manner that successful achievement of the learning objectives could be measured or observed.
- Achievement of learning objectives is validated by the learning assessment type and content.
- Learning objectives in the course content match learning objectives in the ILA.
- Documentation exists which verifies that the learning objectives are addressed in training delivery (i.e., in beginning of content material)

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### LEARNING ACTIVITY DELIVERY METHOD

- The learning activity delivery method(s) are appropriate for the type objectives, i.e., if there are performance objectives, there is demonstration, then an opportunity to practice.
- The content delivery method used was as specified on the ILA.

### LEARNING ACTIVITY CONTENT

- The course content segment descriptions contain sufficient detail to determine that the objectives can be met within the scope of the content.
- Partial credit is allowed and the segments for which partial credit can be awarded are checked in the Learning Activity Content section of the ILA.
- The total of the segment lengths is equal to the total CEHs.
- Learning objectives which apply to a content segment are included in the content for that segment.
- The course content delivered matches the description on the ILA (use a sampling of the content per segment such as one or two pages or slides of content).

**IMPORTANT!** When reviewing the course content, look at it with the learning objectives and learning assessment, and see if it answers the question “If this content is delivered this way the learning objectives will likely be met and validated by the learning assessment”. Look for a clear “line of site” or correlation between the learning objectives, course content, and learning assessment.

### REPORTING AUDIT LEVEL 2 RESULTS

The audit team members will communicate their findings to the Audit Team Lead, who will enter the information in the Audit Worksheet, and then into SOCCED

## NAVIGATION TO AUDITOR’S SOCCED REVIEWER PAGE

### LOGIN TO THE SOCCED DATABASE

**Step 1:** Go to the SOCCED Database: <https://socced.nerc.mcgware.com/Login.aspx>

**Step 2:** Enter your Reviewer User ID and Password. If you do not have an Reviewer ID and Password contact [John.Taylor@nerc.net](mailto:John.Taylor@nerc.net) .

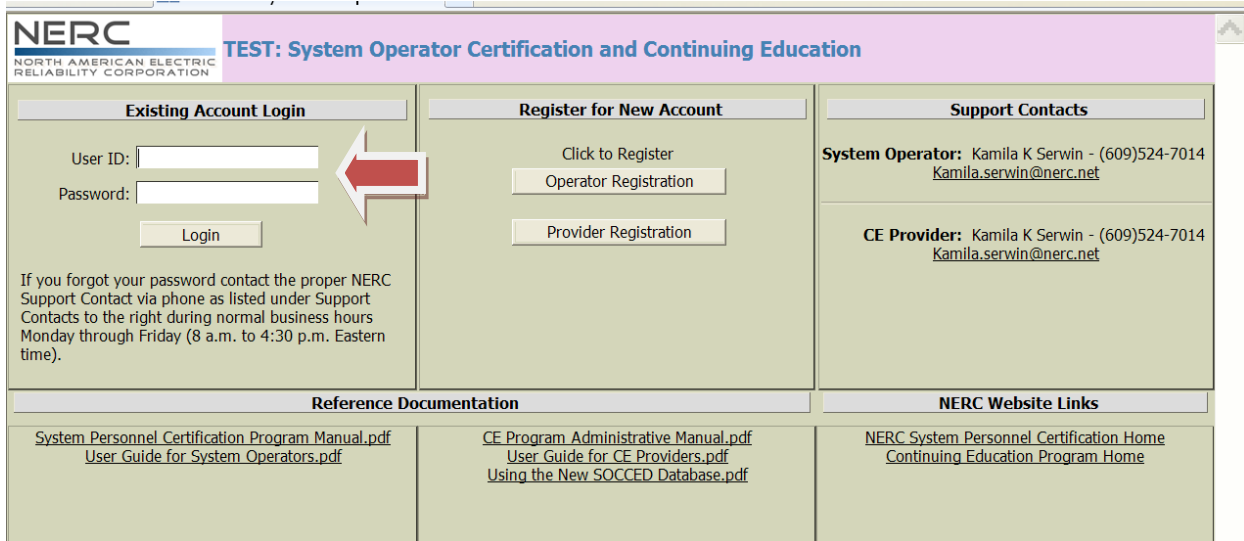


Figure 1 – SOCCED Reviewer Login Screen

**Step 3:** Click on Review Course

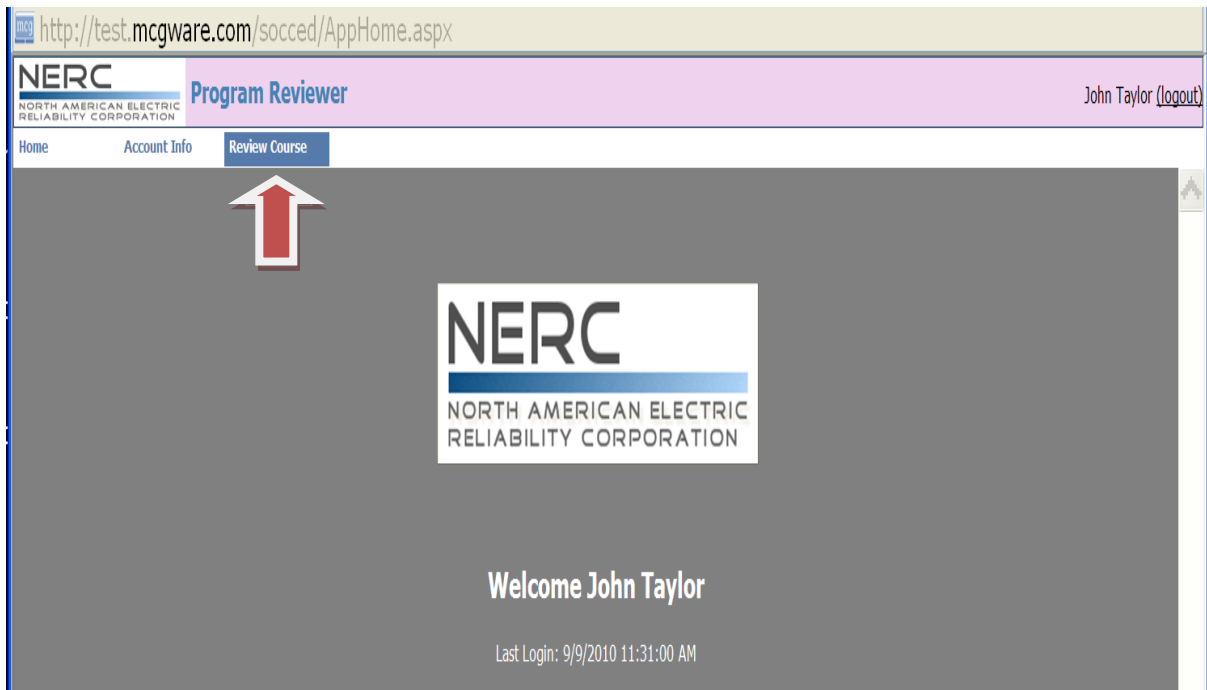


Figure 2 – Select Review Course

SELECT A COURSE TO REVIEW

**Step 4:** Select the Review Type, then click on the Course ID.

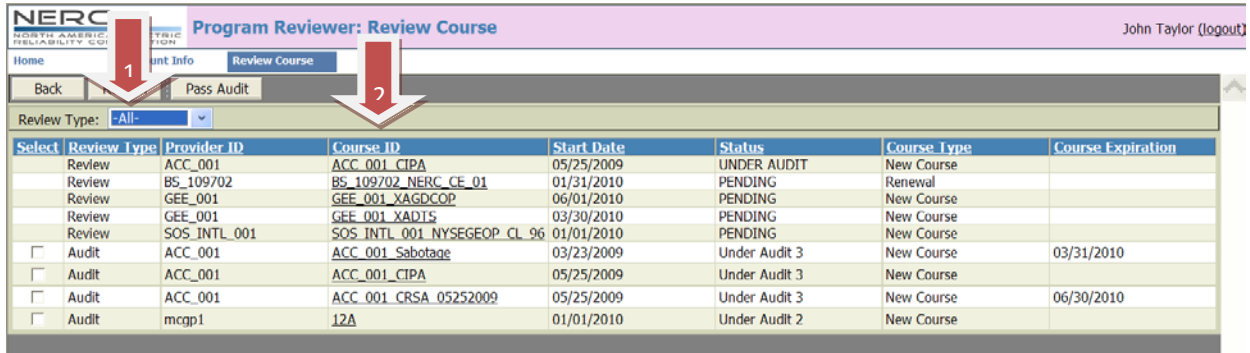


Figure 3 – Review Course Screen

**Step 5:** Scroll through the list and find a course that is assigned to you. Your audit team will jointly decide who will audit which courses. Select the course in the Course ID column.

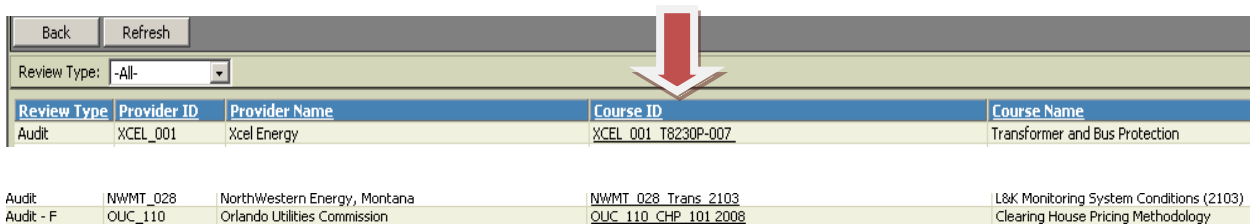


Figure 4 – Select Course to Review

**Step 6:** When you click the Course ID, the Review Course page will open. Click the Attachments tab on the far right to access the Provider documents.

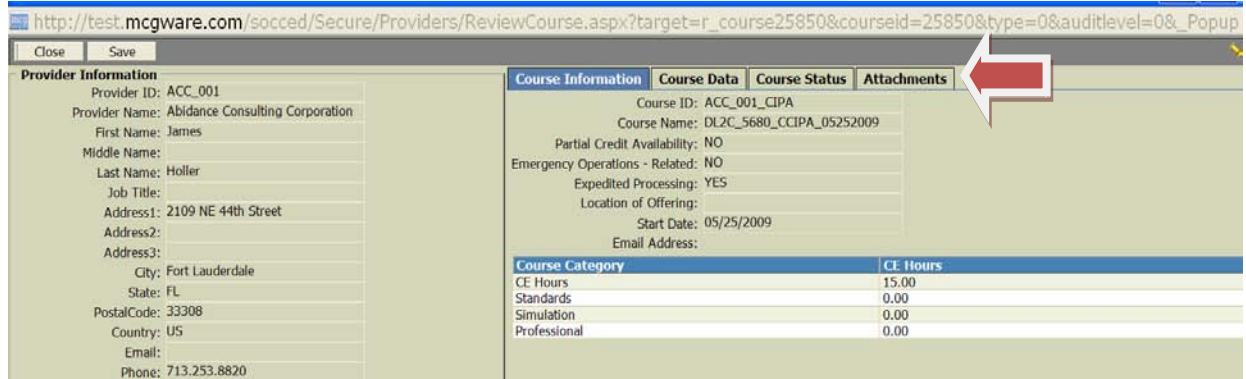


Figure 5 – Open Attachments to Review

### SELECT FILES TO REVIEW

#### Open Files to Review

**Step 7:** Under the File column, click the most recent ILA and accompanying documents. The required documents are listed in the Auditor Checklist (Level 1 or Level 2). Every file that is uploaded to SOCCEd has a date stamp. You can tell which file has been upload the latest by the numbers at the end of file name. In the courses below, we can tell that four files were uploaded on 20081111, based on the date at the end of each file name. The file loaded most recently can be determined by the last four digits after the date. So the third file from the top has a file name that ends with 5903. This was the last file uploaded on that day.

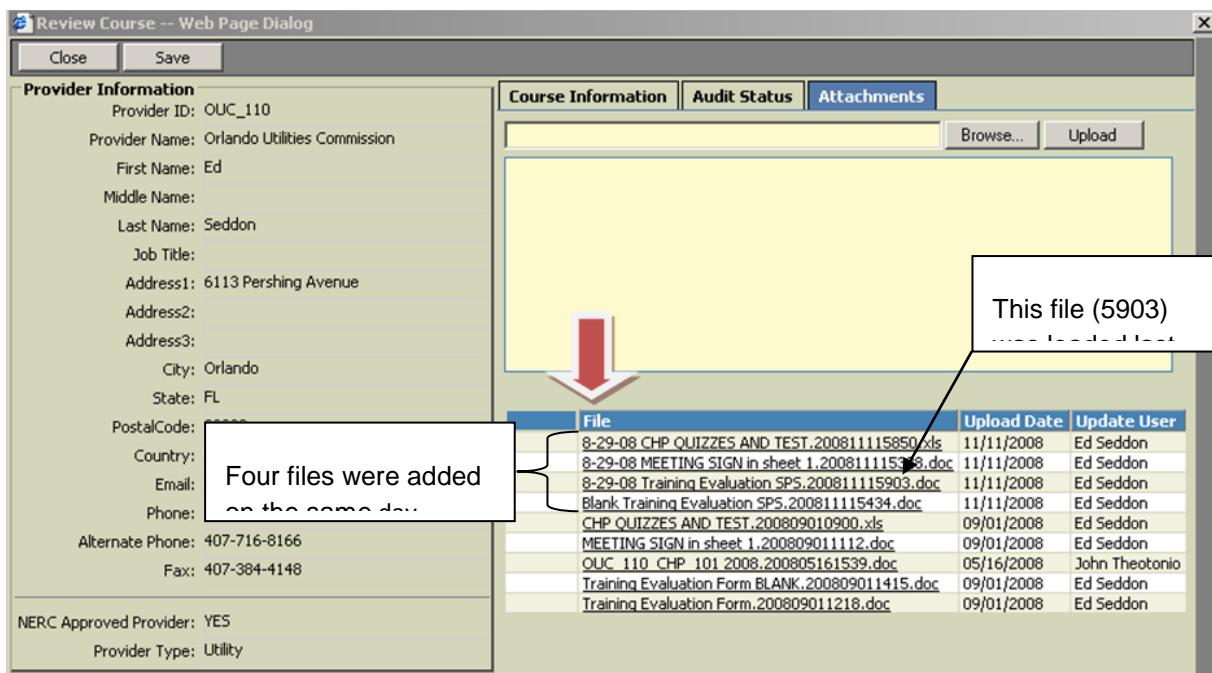


Figure 5 – Select files to review

**UPLOADING FILES TO A COURSE**

**Step 8:** Review the documentation. If any item is missing, contact the Provider using the contact information on the Review Course screen. If some files are needed, tell the Provider what is missing from the SOCCED and ask them to upload it. You can ask the provider for any additional (in addition to what the audit notice and your checklist require) items you need to complete the audit. If the provider is having trouble uploading items, you can upload them for the provider, if you choose to. The provider will need to send you the file(s) via email. To upload a document to the SOCCED, go to the Review Course page, select the Course ID (Figure 4 above), then the Browse button (Figure 6 below). This takes you to your local hard drive to select the document to upload.

## Audit Reference Guide

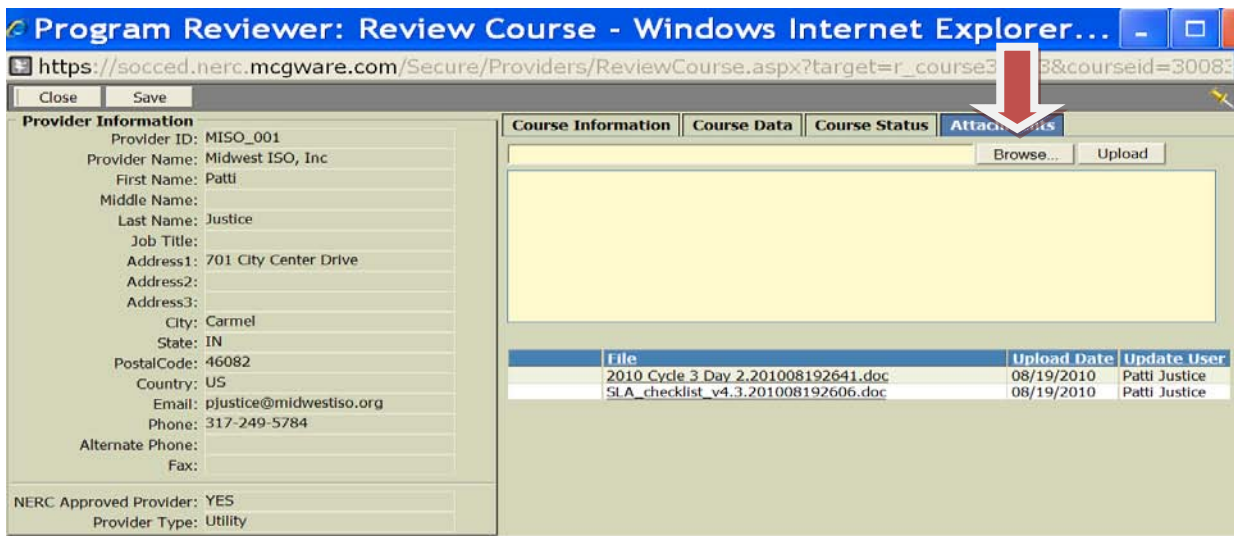


Figure 6 – Browse for File to Upload

Once you select the course from your hard drive, it will show up in the large yellow box (Figure 7 arrow 1) to the left of *Browse*.

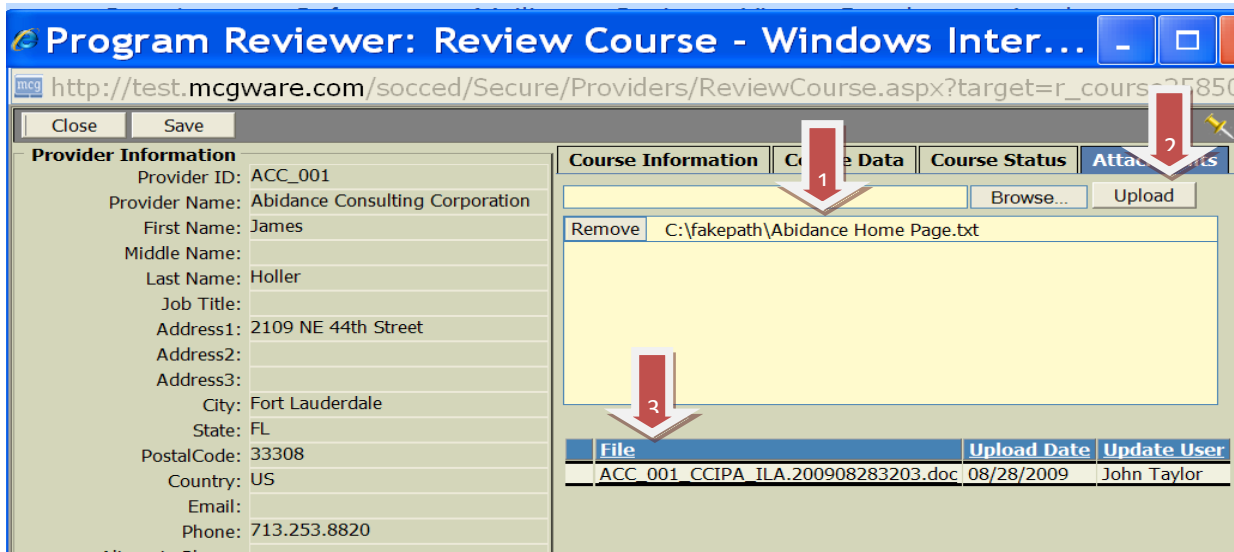


Figure 7 – Upload Selected Files

Select Upload (Figure 7 arrow 2) to attach the document. It appears below the large yellow box in the list of uploaded files (Figure 7 arrow 3). Occasionally, after you select Browse, select the file, it will not appear in the small yellow box. If this happens, go ahead and select Upload. You may get the error message “No File to Upload”. That’s OK. You have to select Upload for you can select a file again under

Browse. When the file has been selected under Browse, it will show up in the large yellow box. Select Upload and the file will appear on the list of files.

**COMPLETING AN AUDIT**

**Step 9:** Complete the appropriate Level 1 or Level 2 checklist and forward it to your team lead. Enter the results of your review in the Audit Team Worksheet (Figure 8) by selecting a course status of either Recommend for Approval or Recommend for Denial, and add any information that would be helpful for a higher level audit if needed, or for auditing other courses of this provider. Please do not update the status of the course under the Audit Status Tab, that will be done by the team lead when the full audit is complete. If you accidentally update the Provider status, it cannot be changed and the course will be immediately removed from the list.

The screenshot shows an Excel spreadsheet titled '2008 Fourth Quarter Audit team worksheet'. The spreadsheet has columns for Provider Contact, Provider ID, Course ID, Date of Class, Assigned Auditor, Audit Level, Status (Recommend for Approval; Recommend for Denial), Review Date, Comments, Action Taken, and Action Taken By. Two rows of data are visible, both highlighted in yellow. A red arrow points to the 'Status' column header.

Provider Contact	Provider ID	Course ID	Date of Class	Assigned Auditor	Audit Level	Status (Recommend for Approval; Recommend for Denial)	Review Date	Comments	Action Taken	Action Taken By
First Name Last Name	AEP_010	AEP_010_COP_358	10/22/2008		1					
	AFSO (FR)	AFSO (FR) Fall 2008 Loss of DC	10/7/2008		1					

Figure 8 – Add Course Status to Audit Team Worksheet

**Step 10:** After all the courses have been reviewed, the Team Lead will change the status of all the courses Recommended for Approval to the APPROVED status in the SOCCED. The Team Lead will forward the Audit Team Worksheet to the CE Program Administrator. If there are any courses Recommended for Denial, the CE Program Administrator will attempt to resolve the issue(s), or take the course(s) to the Personnel Subcommittee for review and a decision on the course.

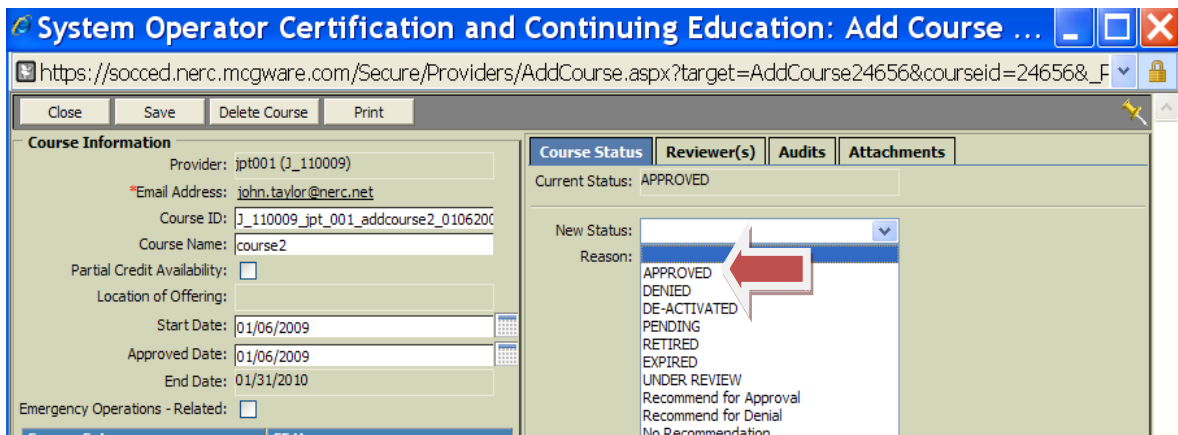


Figure 9 – Final Audit Status C7hanged in SOCCED