

White Paper #2

---

# Raising the Bar: A New Vision of Continuing Education for REALTORS®

September 2017



A woman in a white blazer and glasses is pointing upwards with her right hand, looking at a whiteboard. She is holding a clipboard in her left hand. Two other people, a man and a woman, are looking up at the whiteboard with interest. The background is a bright, modern office space with a white wall and a hanging light fixture.

*“Continuing education is an important part of maintaining high professional standards in the real estate industry. The current system is failing REALTORS®. It’s time for a new vision.”*

---

- Ettore Cardarelli, 2017 OREA President



September 18, 2017

**Dear OREA Members:**

It gives me great pleasure to present you with OREA's second white paper - Raising the Bar: A New Vision of Continuing Education for REALTORS®. Like many of you, I have recently had to go through the registration renewal process, otherwise known as the Real Estate Council of Ontario's (RECO) mandatory continuing education (CE) program. Simply put, we can do better.

The importance of professionalism in the real estate sector cannot be overstated. Real estate professionals have a desire to learn and should have access to rigorous continuing education that provides updates on changes to rules and legislation, opportunities for improvement and reminders about important ethical obligations.

In an increasingly complex marketplace, RECO's continuing education program is not providing REALTORS® with a high standard of instruction, which is a disservice to consumers. The program is falling short in enhancing professionalism and REALTORS® believe it is time for change.

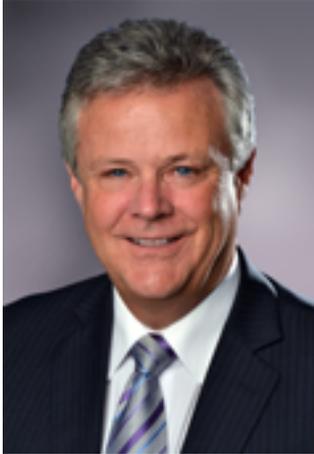
Continuing education is just one part of making sure Ontario's REALTORS® have the highest education standards in North America. To that end, OREA will be launching another white paper that will focus on registration education in the near future.

I encourage you to share your feedback and experiences with continuing education. They will help shape the recommendations we make to both RECO and the province going forward and will help shape the program for years to come.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ettore Cardarelli', written over a large, stylized, horizontal oval flourish.

Ettore Cardarelli  
2017 OREA President



September 18, 2017

**Dear OREA Members:**

Ensuring that our members have the highest educational and professional standards is important to not only consumers, but the industry as a whole.

There is a strong commitment from OREA and the REBBA Review Taskforce to raise the bar on continuing education (CE) and achieving greater professionalism. There is an equally strong commitment to the belief that a comprehensive and effective CE program is an investment in professionalism.

The focus of this white paper is on identifying ways to enhance and improve the current CE program. OREA will be releasing a white paper focused on improving education in the near future.

These proposals are not the official position of OREA or any other association and are intended to encourage feedback which will inform the policy proposals that go to the OREA Board of Directors.

Each section of the paper includes key questions which direct you to our website [www.REBBAreform.ca](http://www.REBBAreform.ca) to submit your answers. All feedback will be tabulated, reviewed by the Taskforce and will inform the recommendations we take to the government.

I look forward to reviewing your feedback.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Meehan', written in a cursive style.

John Meehan, Chair  
2017 REBBA Review Taskforce Chair

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| REBBA REVIEW: THE PATH FORWARD                          | 6         |
| HOW THIS WHITE PAPER WORKS                              | 7         |
| <b>SECTION 1: RAISING THE BAR</b>                       | <b>8</b>  |
| BRINGING CONTINUING EDUCATION BACK TO THE CLASSROOM     | 9         |
| MORE RIGOROUS ASSESSMENTS AND TESTING                   | 10        |
| MAINTAINING INTEGRITY AND SECURITY IN TESTING           | 11        |
| <b>SECTION 2: BRIDGING THE EDUCATION GAP</b>            | <b>12</b> |
| PUT CONTINUING EDUCATION BACK IN THE HANDS OF EDUCATORS | 13        |
| NEW PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM BEYOND RECO        | 14        |
| PERMITTING THIRD-PARTY CREDITS FOR RENEWAL EDUCATION    | 16        |
| CONCLUSION - A CALL TO ACTION                           | 17        |
| APPENDIX A  | 18        |

## REBBA REVIEW: THE PATH FORWARD

It's been fifteen years since REBBA was introduced. Modernizing the Act is an opportunity for Ontario REALTORS® to strengthen our industry and enshrine the highest professional standards in North America.

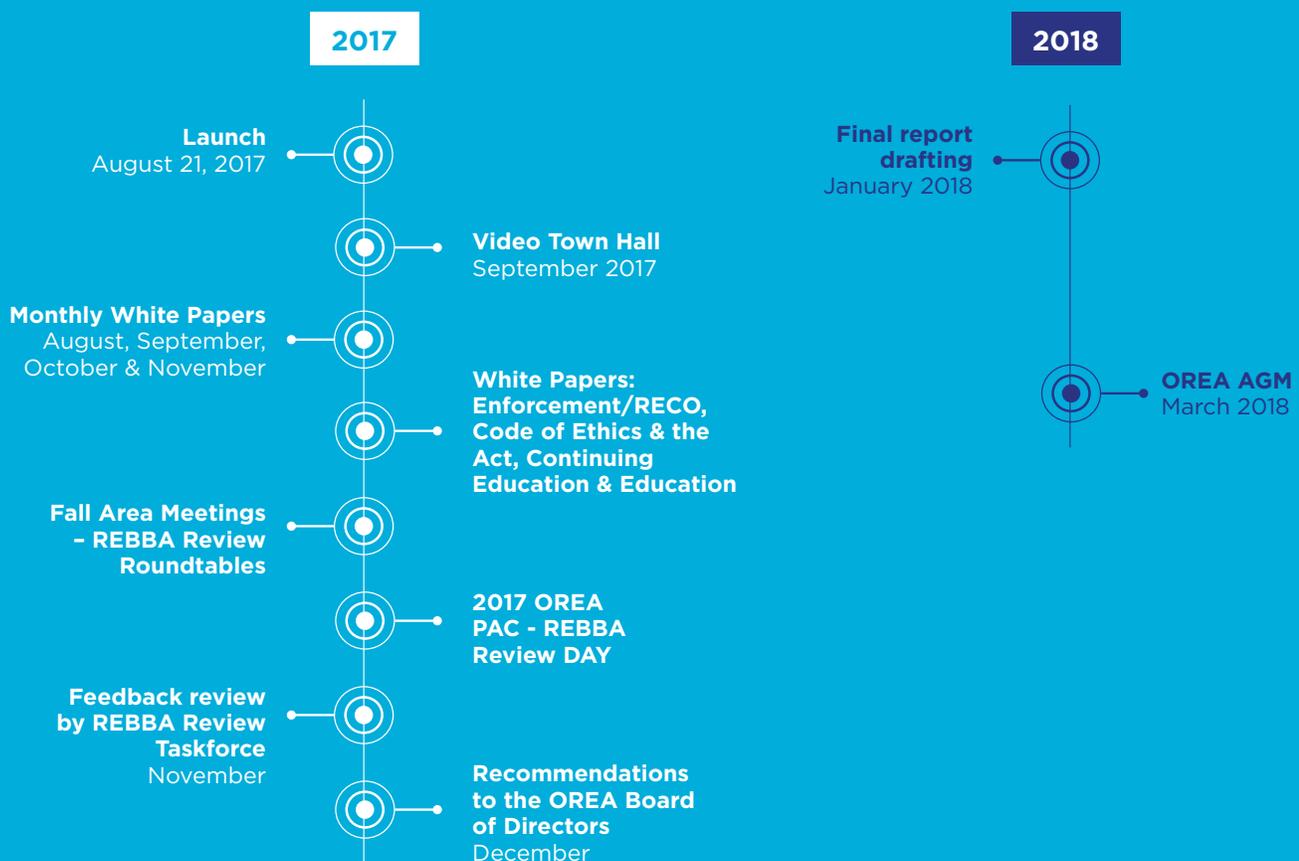
OREA has been advocating for the REBBA Review since last fall. We were pleased to see the Government listen to our advice when Premier Wynne committed to the review as part of the Province's Fair Housing Plan in April 2017. In June 2017, the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services (MGCS) formally announced a two-stage review process.

In response to the review, the OREA Board of Directors struck the 2017 REBBA Review Taskforce made up of leaders from across the industry. (*Appendix A*)

The first phase focused on the issue of multiple representation and solicited feedback until July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2017. OREA made a submission to the first phase which you can review [here](#).

The second phase will begin this Fall and extend into 2018 looking at all aspects of the Act. OREA has launched an extensive consultation with members to solicit their feedback on this phase of the review. This feedback will help shape the new Act and the profession for years to come.

### HERE'S A ROUGH OUTLINE FOR HOW OREA'S CONSULTATION WILL PROCEED:



## HOW THIS WHITE PAPER WORKS

---

This white paper presents a series of proposals that have been discussed by the OREA REBBA Review Taskforce. The Taskforce does not endorse any of these proposals. They are options we want your feedback on.

That feedback will inform the recommendations that are made by the Taskforce to the OREA Board of Directors. Once approved, those recommendations will form the basis of OREA's advocacy with the Provincial Government on a new REBBA.

Under each proposal are a series of questions with fillable response areas where you can submit your feedback. Simply write your responses in the fillable areas, save the document and email it to [REBBAREform@orea.com](mailto:REBBAREform@orea.com).

These white papers aren't the only way to get involved. Alternatively, you can submit feedback directly to OREA via:

 [REBBAREform@orea.com](mailto:REBBAREform@orea.com)

 [@OREAinfo](https://twitter.com/OREAinfo)

 Larissa Smit, Manager of Policy  
416.445.9910 ext. 236

 [www.facebook.com/OREAinfo](https://www.facebook.com/OREAinfo)

 [www.REBBAreform.ca](http://www.REBBAreform.ca)



**This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to help shape the future of our profession, raise professional standards and keep the real estate industry in Ontario strong.**

– John Meehan, Chair, 2017 REBBA Review Taskforce

## SECTION 1: RAISING THE BAR

---

*“The decision to move all continuing education online needs to be revisited. REALTORS® should have the option of taking their mandatory courses in-class with their peers or online.”*

- Ettore Cardarelli, 2017 OREA President

# BRINGING CONTINUING EDUCATION BACK TO THE CLASSROOM

---

## PROBLEM

Following a review of education programs, RECO took over continuing education in 2013. Prior to this, local boards had provided this education for over 40 years. In an effort to reduce costs, the mandatory continuing education program was taken completely online. The current online courses (RECO Update elective courses) scratch the surface on critical, need-to-know information and do not address topics that would enable registrants to perform more effectively on behalf of clients. The industry has become increasingly complicated and the reality of the current situation is that it is virtually impossible for many REALTORS® to stay on top of the multitude of regulatory changes when the courses are not updated regularly.

Additionally, many REALTORS® learn differently. Mandating online delivery means that registrants do not have access to any classroom experience or experiential learning. Not providing an option to take CE in-class also removes the ability for registrants to ask questions of instructors and learn from their peers. The focus of registrant mandatory CE should be on quality, not convenience.

## PROPOSAL

Giving registrants the option to choose the delivery of their continuing education courses either online or in-class.

## QUESTIONS

Do you support giving registrants the ability to choose how to complete continuing education courses - whether in-class or online?

**If Yes, Why?**

**If No, Why?**

Do you think there should be a mandatory in-class portion to CE courses?

**If Yes, Why?**

**If No, Why?**

---

**GIVE US YOUR FEEDBACK. Visit [www.REBBAreform.ca](http://www.REBBAreform.ca)**

---

## **MORE RIGOROUS ASSESSMENTS AND TESTING**

---

### **PROBLEM**

One of the most common critiques of the current continuing education program is that registrants do not have to 'pass' the course. Even if a registrant answers all the questions incorrectly, they still pass the CE module. Higher accountability in testing procedures is essential to ensure application of key learnings.

More rigorous assessments will ensure REALTORS® are able to provide the best advice and will better protect Ontario families looking to buy or sell a home.

### **PROPOSAL**

Mandatory continuing education courses should be amended to include minimum standards (pass or fail). Registrants who do not meet minimum standards will not pass the course. Additionally, if a registrant does not pass the course by a pre-determined number of attempts (e.g. three attempts), their license will be suspended upon review by RECO.

### **QUESTIONS:**

Do you support making continuing education courses pass/fail and would you support suspending licenses for registrants who do not pass?

**If Yes, Why?**

**If No, Why?**

---

**GIVE US YOUR FEEDBACK. Visit [www.REBBAreform.ca](http://www.REBBAreform.ca)**

---

# MAINTAINING INTEGRITY AND SECURITY IN TESTING

---

## PROBLEM

We have heard concerns about the security and integrity of the exams. Currently, there is no way to verify the identity of the person writing the exam. The best way to solve this is to mandate that exams are written in person at a testing centre or local board office where the writer must show proof of their identity. There are testing centres across the province that can accommodate online exams. University, college and even some high school students can't take an exam without showing ID - why should our security standards for REALTORS® be any less?

## PROPOSAL

Testing should be completed in person, where the identity of the test-taker can be verified in order to maintain the integrity of the exam structure.

## QUESTIONS:

Do you support requiring all exams to be taken in person at an approved testing centre?

**If Yes, Why?**

**If No, Why?**

---

**GIVE US YOUR FEEDBACK. Visit [www.REBBAreform.ca](http://www.REBBAreform.ca)**

---

## SECTION 2: BRIDGING THE EDUCATION GAP

---

*“RECO is a regulator not an education provider. Putting education back into the hands of educators is critical to enhancing professionalism.”*

- Ettore Cardarelli, 2017 OREA President

# PUT CONTINUING EDUCATION BACK IN THE HANDS OF EDUCATORS

---

## PROBLEM

RECO is not experienced in delivering education. Many registrants find that the RECO Update course is not updated consistently enough to ensure content is covering issues in the current marketplace, and the list of available electives is basic and lacks topicality.

Curriculum and course content must meet the ever-changing professional development needs of all registrants, while also ensuring program flexibility and rapid course development in response to an evolving real estate marketplace. Putting education back into the hands of educators is critical to enhancing professionalism.

## PROPOSAL

RECO should continue to establish the basic curriculum; setting course-taking requirements; approving topics, content and methodology for courses developed; and certifying the course developers and providers.

However, RECO should contract out continuing education courses to third-party service providers like universities, colleges or career colleges who can offer RECO-approved courses at their institutions.

## QUESTIONS:

Do you support RECO contracting out continuing education courses to third-party service providers like universities, colleges, or career colleges who can offer RECO-approved courses at their institutions?

**If Yes, Why?**

**If No, Why?**

---

**GIVE US YOUR FEEDBACK. Visit [www.REBBAreform.ca](http://www.REBBAreform.ca)**

---

# NEW PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM OUTSIDE OF RECO

---

## PROBLEM

A common concern amongst registrants is the lack of options and choices for continuing education courses.

In British Columbia, the British Columbia Real Estate Association (BCREA) reached a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with their 11 boards to deliver a Professional Development Program (PDP). The PDP courses are owned and operated by BCREA. There are four models offered by BCREA's 11 real estate boards: in-class, online, blended (combination of both) and distance-based. Each licensee in BC is required to take three courses over a two-year period. The courses are directly related to the skills and situations that REALTORS® would encounter in the marketplace.

## PROPOSAL

OREA, in partnership with local boards would work together to create a PDP to be owned by Ontario REALTORS®. The program would offer REALTORS® additional opportunities to further their professional development and education. REALTORS® would be required to earn a certain number of course credits over a two-year period in order to maintain their membership in organized real estate.

## QUESTIONS:

Do you support the creation of a REALTOR® Professional Development Program?

**If Yes, Why?**

**If No, Why?**

---

**GIVE US YOUR FEEDBACK. Visit [www.REBBAreform.ca](http://www.REBBAreform.ca)**

---

# BACKGROUND: BRITISH COLUMBIA CONTINUING EDUCATION (CE) SYSTEM

The continuing education (CE) system in British Columbia serves as a best practice for Ontario. Over the course of two years, REALTORS® are required to undertake relicensing education delivered by the Real Estate Council of British Columbia (RECBC) and professional development program (PDP) delivered by the British Columbia Real Estate Association (BCREA).

## RELICENSING EDUCATION PROGRAM (REP):

Every licensee in British Columbia is required to complete RECBC's Relicensing Education Program (REP) requirement before applying to renew their real estate license. Licensees have the option to choose between in-class or online delivery. The REP requirement is separate from the educational requirements of PDP.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (PDP):

BCREA's professional development program (PDP) provides a choice of real-time, self-paced, face-to-face, online and blended courses to licensees. The Association offers more than 30 BCREA-owned PDP courses on a wide variety of topics including agency, law, commercial, property management, technology, office management and ethics. BCREA also accredits a roster of external vendor courses for PDP credit.

BCREA's PDP courses provide REALTORS® with courses that will better educate them in topics that impact their day-to-day business operations. Some of the PDP course offerings include:

- Acting for Buyers and Sellers: Using Agency to Demonstrate REALTOR® Value
- Advertising Clinic: Do's & Don'ts
- Airbnb: What REALTORS® Need to Know
- Assignments of Contracts of Purchase and Sale
- Avoiding Complaints: Understanding the Rules of Cooperation
- Becoming a Paperless REALTOR®-Seller's Representative
- Becoming a Paperless REALTOR®-Buyer's Representative
- Canada's Anti-Spam Legislation: Guidance for REALTORS®
- Communicate with Confidence for REALTORS®
- Competition Law for REALTORS®
- Customer Service Excellence and the REALTOR® Brand
- E-Signatures/AuthentiSIGN® & Document Management Using TransactionDesk®
- Facebook for Business
- Foundations for Success in Commercial Real Estate
- Harnessing Statistics to Improve Your Business
- Introduction to Personal Real Estate Corporation (PREC)
- Know Your Product - Features of the Home
- Maximizing Your Business Tax Deductions (for REALTORS®)
- MOBILE REALTOR®
- Multiple Offers
- Professional Standards Enforcement: Practices and Procedures
- Residential Underground Systems: Out of Sight, Out of Mind
- Risk Management: Protecting Yourself, Your Client and Your Business
- Technology as a Strategic Lever for Your Business
- Today's Tech Tools for REALTORS®
- Using WEBForms and AuthentiSign for Paperless Transactions
- Writing Enforceable Contracts

# PERMITTING THIRD-PARTY COURSES FOR RENEWAL EDUCATION

---

## PROBLEM

The current continuing education program is solely sourced by RECO. Registrants are limited to the courses created and delivered by RECO. Elective courses focus on Business Analysis, Business Planning, Strategic Planning, Environmental Site Assessments, RECO's Insurance Program, Social Media for Real Estate Professionals, and Brokerage Inspections.

Professional development courses run by BCREA and Michigan REALTORS® accredit third-party providers to deliver external vendor courses for continuing education credit.

## PROPOSAL

There is an opportunity to establish a process where third-party providers are able to be accredited by RECO to have their courses count towards continuing education requirements.

## QUESTIONS:

Do you support third-party providers being able to apply to RECO to have their courses count towards registration renewal education?

**If Yes, Why?**

**If No, Why?**

---

**GIVE US YOUR FEEDBACK. Visit [www.REBBAreform.ca](http://www.REBBAreform.ca)**

---

A photograph of three people in professional attire standing outdoors in front of a brick building. On the left, a woman with blonde hair in a bun, wearing a black blazer and a purple patterned skirt, holds a blue folder and smiles. In the center, a man in a light orange shirt and dark pants is gesturing with his hands while talking. On the right, a woman with dark curly hair, wearing a light blue blazer and white pants, has her arm around the man's shoulder and is also smiling. The scene is lit with soft, natural light, suggesting an evening or dusk setting.

*“RECO deserves credit for committing to reviewing the continuing education program. We look forward to participating in the review and bringing forward concrete recommendations for raising the bar when it comes to CE.”*

---

- Ettore Cardarelli, 2017 OREA President

## CONCLUSION - A CALL TO ACTION

---

OREA is concerned that RECO's current Continuing Education Program is not meeting the needs of Ontario REALTORS®. Namely, the program is not enhancing professionalism in the real estate industry.

Our mutual goal should be a program that is a leader in North America for standards in education and professionalism that truly protects the public interest and enhances consumer confidence in the real estate profession.

Where continuing education is concerned, we believe the best way to do this is by returning course development and delivery to education providers in the marketplace, duly selected and accredited by RECO.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss OREA's ideas for improving the quality of the Continuing Education Program with RECO and other interested stakeholders.

**Additional comments:**

## APPENDIX A

---

### REBBA Review Taskforce

#### CHAIR:

**John Meehan**

*Toronto Real Estate Board*

#### MEMBERS:

**Rui Alves**

*Brampton Real Estate Board*

**Larry Cerqua**

*Toronto Real Estate Board*

**Karen Cox**

*REALTORS® Association of  
Grey Bruce Owen Sound*

**Glenn Crosby**

*Toronto Real Estate Board*

**John DiMichele**

*Toronto Real Estate Board*

**Stacey Evoy**

*London and St. Thomas Association  
of REALTORS®*

**Ray Ferris**

*Simcoe and District Real Estate Board*

**Dreena Gilpin**

*Sudbury Real Estate Board*

**Brad Henderson**

*Sotheby's International Realty Canada*

**Andrew Hodgson**

*The Lakelands Association  
of REALTORS®*

**David Kurt**

*Sudbury Real Estate Board*

**Linda McCallum**

*Ottawa Real Estate Board*

**Janice Myers**

*Ottawa Real Estate Board*

**Heather Scott**

*The Lakelands Association  
of REALTORS®*

**Phil Soper**

*Royal LePage Canada*

**Phil Dorner**

*Windsor -Essex County  
Association of REALTORS®*

#### STAFF LIAISON:

**Matthew Thornton**

*Vice President, Public Affairs  
and Communications*

**Adam Yahn**

*Head, Government Relations*



The Ontario Real Estate Association is here to help Ontario REALTOR® succeed in building stronger communities. We have 70,000 REALTOR® members who take up this mission for you every day. Ontario REALTORS® use their skills, experience, knowledge, drive and determination, along with the latest technology, to help more men, women and families achieve the Canadian dream of home ownership. As one of Canada's largest professional associations, we are Ontario's strongest advocate for home and property ownership, property rights, and prosperous communities. The trademarks REALTOR®, REALTORS®, and the REALTOR® logo are controlled by The Canadian Real Estate Association (CREA) and identify real estate professionals who are members of CREA. OREA is located at 99 Duncan Mill Road, Don Mills, Ontario, M3B 1Z2 Contact us at [www.orea.com](http://www.orea.com).