

# Reporting Learner Data in PARS

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## Introduction

This tutorial is designed to guide accredited CME providers through the process of uploading learner completion records into ACCME's Program and Activity Reporting System (PARS) for activities registered for Maintenance of Certification (MOC) also known as Continuing Certification, providers who have received a REMS RPC grant, or those providers participating in the State Medical Board Collaboration.

## **Entering Activities**

Providers are required to enter in their activities into PARS **prior** to reporting learner completion:

- CME providers participating in the <u>State Medical Board</u> collaboration can prospectively enter activities in PARS in order to report CME completion in PARS for their physician learners.
- CME providers can <u>use PARS to register activities for MOC</u> by attesting to compliance with requirements for <u>CME for MOC</u>. When registering activities in PARS for these programs, providers agree to report completion data via PARS to the certifying boards.

# **Entering or Uploading Learner Completion Data**

Providers can upload learner completion data for physician learners who have earned *AMA PRA Category* 1<sup>™</sup> credit for CME activities, MOC credit for registered certifying board activities, or a combination of both into PARS.

Providers can report learners' CME credit for physicians licensed in all US licensing states/territories.

Providers can report learners for MOC/CC credit towards the following collaborating certifying boards:

Board	Abbreviation
American Board of Anesthesiology	ABA
American Board of Internal Medicine	ABIM
American Board of Orthopaedic Surgery	ABOS
American Board of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery	ABOHNS
American Board of Pathology	ABPATH
American Board of Pediatrics	ABP
American Board of Surgery	ABS
American Board of Thoracic Surgery	ABTS
American Board of Orthopaedic Surgery	ABOS

There are three different ways to enter learner participation data into PARS. Depending on the volume and scope of your program one method may be better utilized than others.

- 1) You can enter the learners manually within the PARS interface
- 2) You can upload a batch file of learners via Excel or XML
- 3) You can use <u>ACCME web services</u> to transfer completion data from your Learner Management System directly to PARS



Once learner records have been submitted, PARS will perform some initial validation to ensure that the correct information about the learner is entered. If your submission passes validation, you will see the new learner records appear as either **Submitted** or **Accepted**. It will typically take about a day for any Submitted records to be processed by any boards who require additional processing on their end.

# **Collecting Information from Learners**

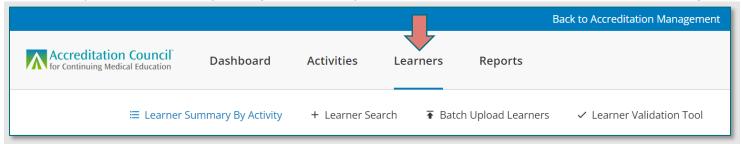
Before you can begin entering in learner completion you will need to collect some basic information from your learners who are claiming credit. Your organization should develop a mechanism to collect the required information from your learners, as well as gain their permission to report their completion information into PARS.

	State Medical Licensing Collaboration	Maintenance of Certification
First Name	Learner's first name	Learner's first name
Last Name	Learner's last name	Learner's last name
State of Licensure	The state in which the learner is licensed	N/A
Board ID	The learner's corresponding state licensure number or NPI	The unique ID assigned to the physician by their certifying board.  *The board ID is optional for ABOS and ABS
Date of Birth	Month and Day of learner's birth (MM/DD)	Month and Day of learner's birth (MM/DD)  *The DOB is optional for ABP and ABA.
Completion Date	The date the learner engaged in the activity. This date entered should fall within the start and end dates listed for the activity and cannot be a date in the future.	The date the learner engaged in the activity or completed any evaluation requirements. This date should fall within the start date and credit claim date listed for the activity and cannot be a date in the future.
Number of Credits	The amount of <i>AMA PRA Category</i> $1^{TM}$ credit the learner has earned.	The amount of MOC credit the learner has earned.
Type(s) of Credit	AMA PRA Category 1™ credit	The type(s) of MOC credits earned vary by certifying board. The activity must first be registered as offering the credit type.
ACCME Activity ID	The unique 9-digit PARS-assigned ID for the activity in which the learner participated.	The unique 9-digit PARS-assigned ID for the activity in which the learner participated.



## **Accessing Learner Reporting in PARS**

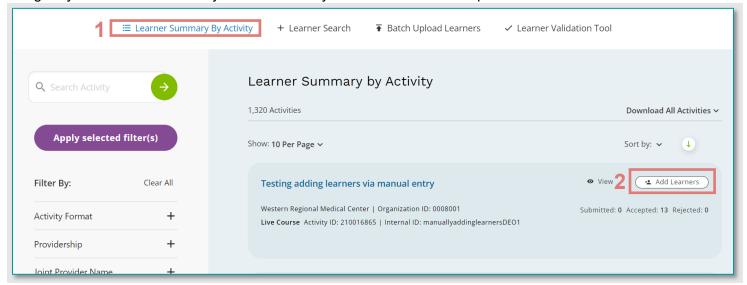
To report physician learners for your eligible activities you can click on the Learners tab at the top of the page.



## **Using the PARS Web Form for Manual Learner Entry**

Step 1: Navigate to the Learner Summary by Activity tab from the main Learners tab.

**Step 2:** Once you have located your activity, click the Add Learners option on the activity card. This will navigate you to the form where you can enter any learner information required for CME and/or MOC.

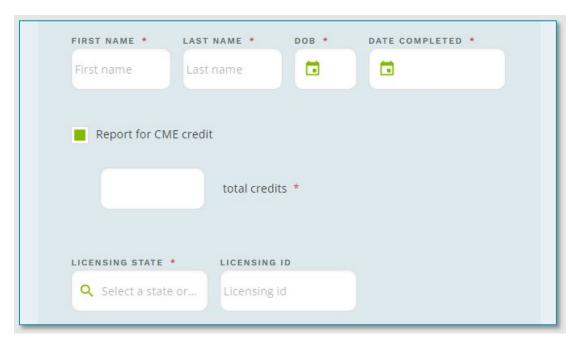


# To report CME and MOC in a single completion record

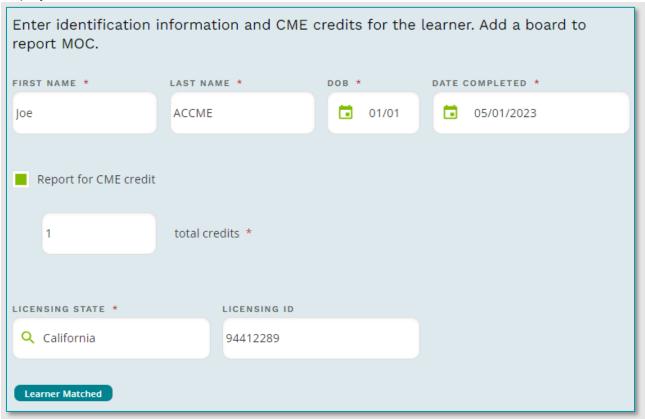
PARS allows a learner to be reported into the system for both CME and MOC in one submission if the activity offers AMA PRA Category 1 credit and is registered for one or more certifying boards' MOC programs.

To begin, fill out the first part of the form. Ensure that the Report for CME credit option is checked and fill out any fields with an \* indicated.



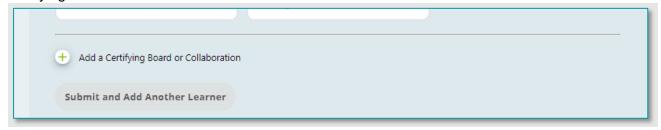


As you fill out the form, if the system can find a matching learner it will display a Learner Matched icon. If the system can find a unique match with partial information, it will pre-fill any remaining identification fields and display the Learner Matched icon.

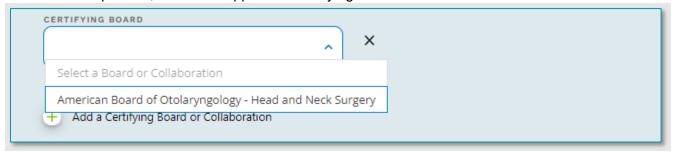




If the activity is registered for MOC for a participating board, and your learner is certified by that board you can add their completion information to this record. To add MOC credit to this completion, you can click on + Add a Certifying Board.

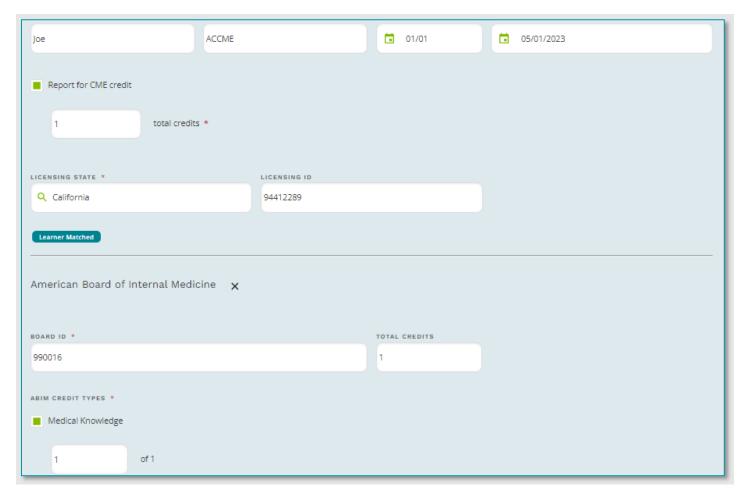


Once this is expanded, select the applicable certifying board.

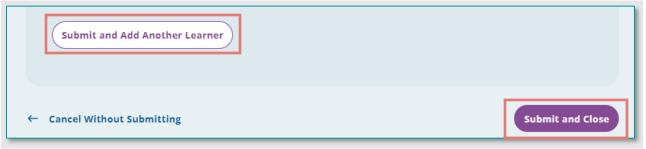


Fill out any MOC specific fields, including the board ID, total MOC credits earned, and any earned credit types. In most cases the credit type amounts will default to the total MOC earned, however you may reduce the number of credits if applicable (ex: the learner earned 8 credits, but only 1 of them counted towards patient safety requirements). A sample finished form is below:





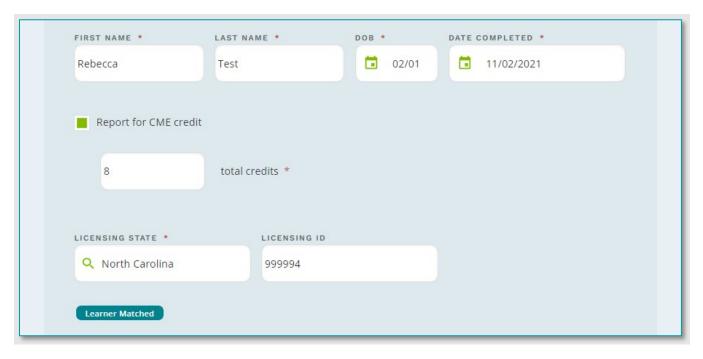
Once all required fields are filled out with valid information and the system can find a match, you can click submit and add additional learners or submit and close to go back to the activity learner summary.



## To report a learner completion for CME only

If your learner has earned CME for an activity only fill out the first section of the form. Ensure that the Report for CME credit option is checked and fill out any fields with an \* indicated. A sample finished form is below:



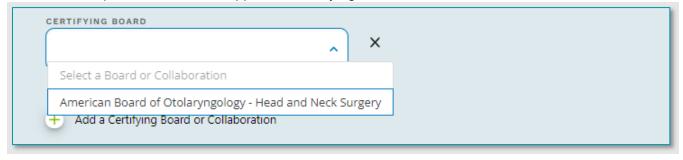


## To report a learner completion for MOC only

You will want to ensure that the Report for CME selection is un-checked. Fill out any fields with an \* indicated. Click on the + Add a Certifying Board option

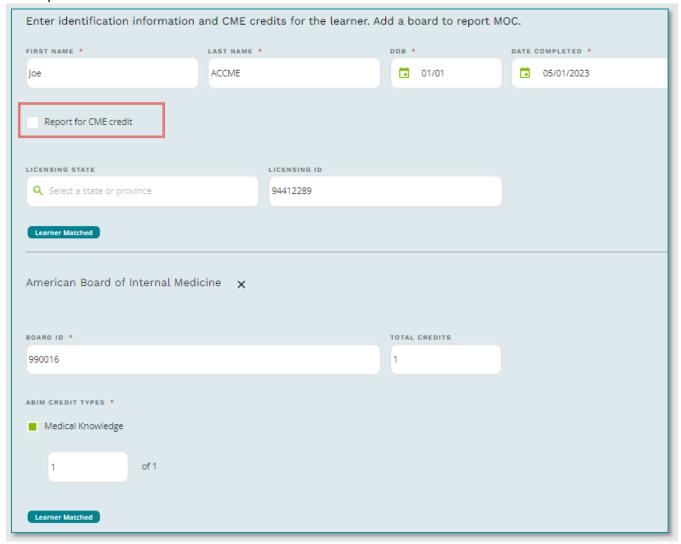


Once this is expanded, select the applicable certifying board.





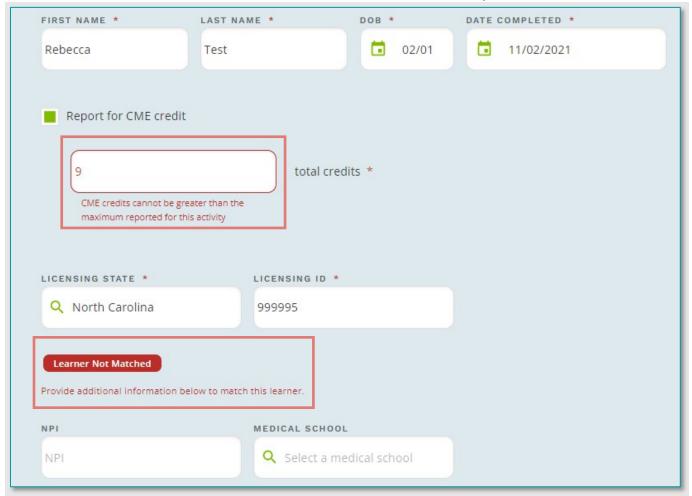
#### A sample finished form is below:



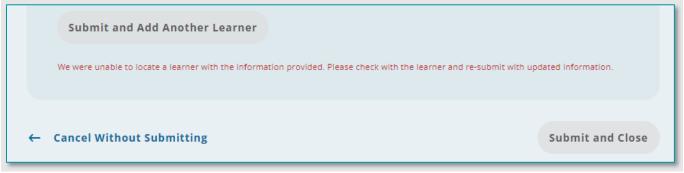


### **Manual Learner Submission Errors**

If there is an invalid submission or PARS cannot find a matched learner, you cannot proceed with reporting CME for a learner until the information is corrected or more information is provided.



If additional information is supplied and PARS still cannot find a match, contact the learner to determine that the information provided is correct.

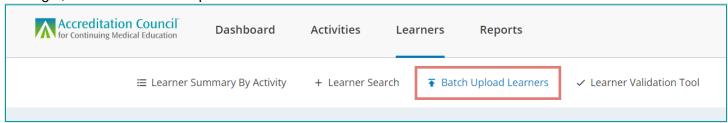




# **Batch Learner Upload Methods**

In addition to the manual method listed above, providers have the option to upload a file with up to 5,000 learner records. PARS accepts properly formatted Excel (.xlsx) and .xml file types. These files must be specifically formatted for PARS to accept the data. This document is meant as an overview of the upload process; file templates and detailed instructions for how to create these files are available on the ACCME's website.

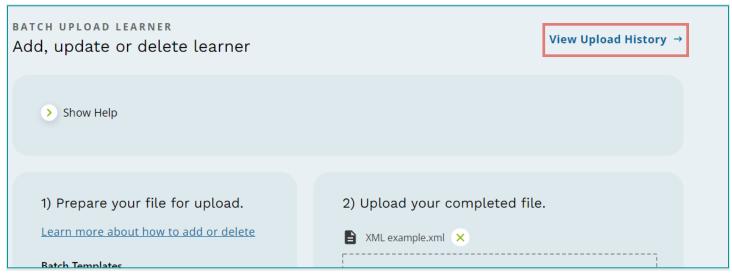
To begin, click on the Batch Upload Learners tab under the Learners header.



If you need to download a template, you can do so from the left section of this page. If you already have a file prepared, you can either drag and drop the file on the page or select which file you are looking to upload from your computer.



Once the file has been uploaded, it will begin to process. You can click on View Upload History to see the results.

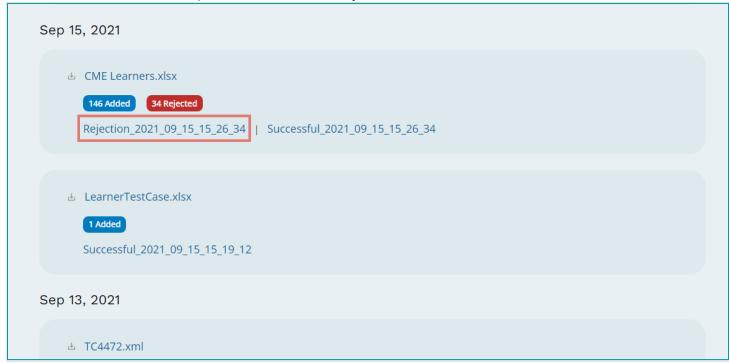




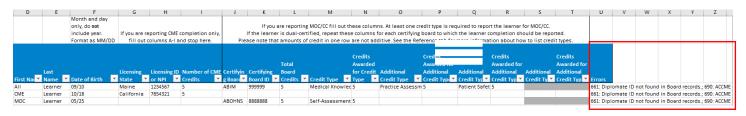
Here you can see when files were uploaded, how many records were successfully processed, and if there were any records with errors upon processing.

## **Batch Upload Errors**

To see which records did not process, click on the Rejection link.



The downloaded Excel file will provide an error code and description for any records which did not pass PARS validation.



You can make any changes directly in the Excel file, resave it, and upload it back into PARS. You do not need to remove the columns with the <u>error code and message</u> as these columns will be ignored upon resubmission.

## **ACCME PARS Web Services**

A web service is available to enable CME providers' software applications, such as learning management systems, to submit activity and participant completion data directly to PARS. The goal of these services is to reduce the need for CME provider staff to use manual data entry or batch upload methods. To use these web services, your IT professionals will need to make modifications to your current software. For more information please see the **PARS Web Services** section of our Technical Information web page.



To gain access to report through web services you will need to contact <u>info@accme.org</u> in order to provision web service credentials and access to the testing environment (Sandbox PARS).

#### Web Services Errors

See the Web Services Guide for more information on this form of submission as it is mostly technical in nature.

In order to submit learner completions via the web service, you will want to ensure that the web service credentials you are using are accurate for the correct environment. The ACCME will provision web service specific credentials to your organization upon request. This access is different from any existing PARS access in the interface. If you receive the following error, please check that the credentials provided are entered correctly. If they are, please reach out to your vendor, or <a href="mailto:info@accme.org">info@accme.org</a> for additional troubleshooting.

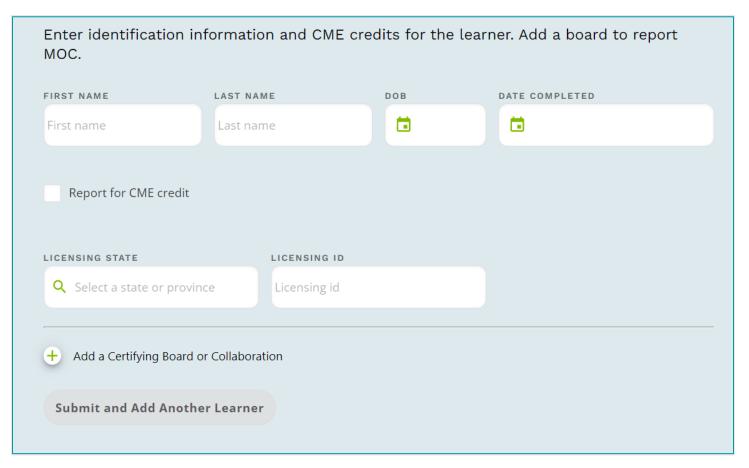
# **Reporting Learners for REMS programs**

In order to report learner completion for a REMS compliant activity, the activity will first need to be fully registered in PARS. REMS completion can be reported within PARS, or by any batch method or web service integration. More information on these specific technical methods can be found in the instructions for the appropriate upload.

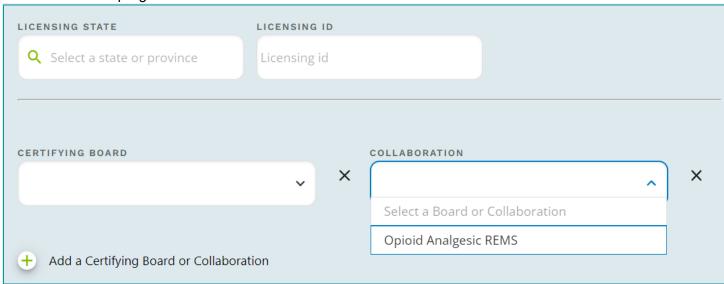
REMS completion information can be entered on its own or can be combined with the reporting of CME and/or MOC. If you choose to report a learner's CME and/or MOC along with the REMS completion, any REMS-specific information will remain de-identified with reported out to the RPC/FDA.

To begin, click on the add a certifying board or collaboration option.



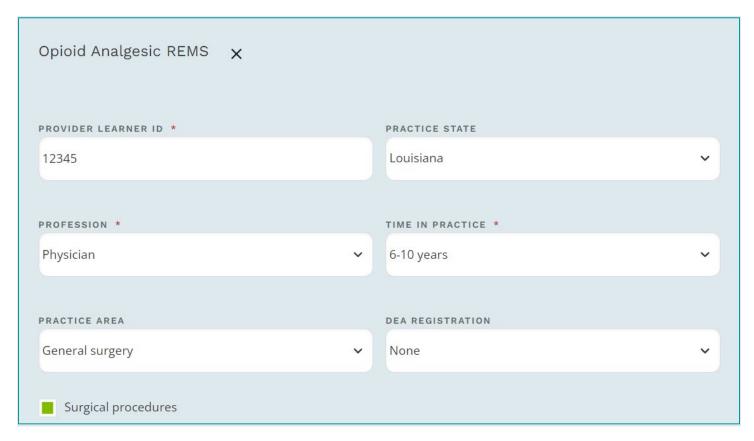


Select the REMS program under the collaborations section.



Fill out any required \* fields, along with the date of completion. You should fill out any optional fields if you have the corresponding information from the learner.

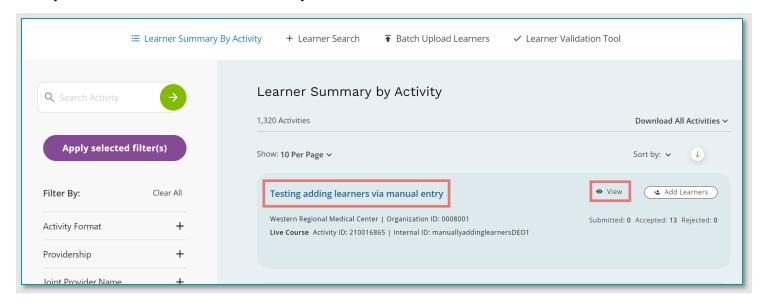




# **Viewing Learner Records in PARS**

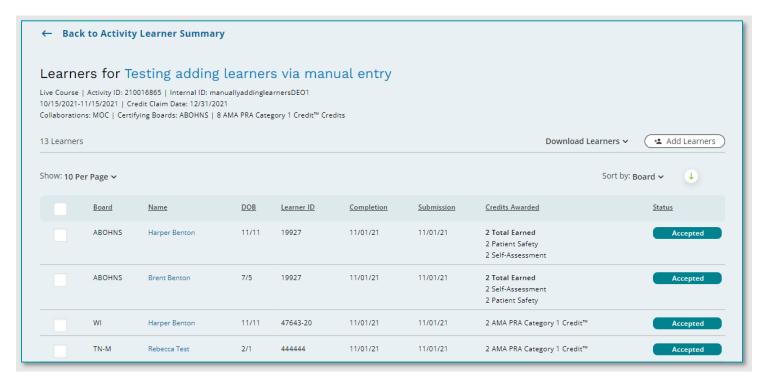
## Learners in an activity

You can view any entered learner records in PARS from the Learner Summary by Activity by clicking on the activity title, or the View button on the activity card.





On this page you can see information on the learners reported for an activity, credits earned, and the current status of the learner record.

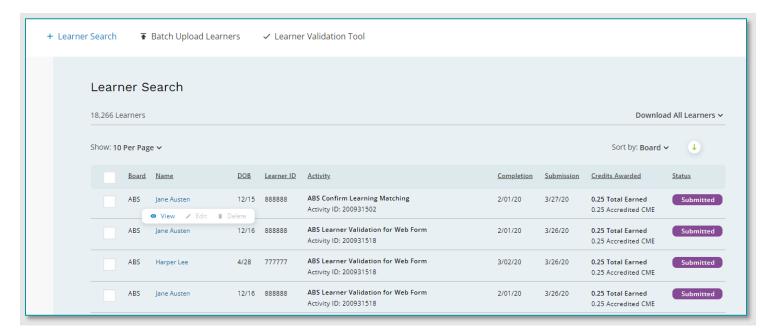


You can export a list of learners by clicking on the Download learners link, or you can view a learner's information within the activity by clicking on the learner's name.

#### Learner Search

PARS has a global learner search where you can search for any learners entered into PARS by your organization. You can access this feature from the Learners tab and click on Learner Search. From here you can filter your learners, manage completions, and download a filtered list of learners.

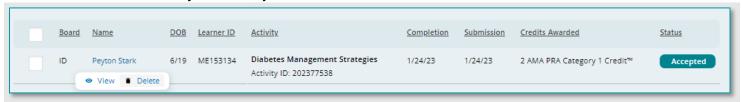




## **Deleting Learner Records**

If a record has been submitted in error, you can delete it from PARS. A record with a Submitted status will need to be fully processed before it can be deleted. Once the record is deleted, it will either be removed from the system and no longer appear within the activity, or the delete will be sent to the board for processing and the record will remain in the system with a Delete Submitted status until it is fully processed.

To remove a record manually in PARS, you can hover over the name of the learner and select it for deletion.



You can delete multiple records from the interface by using the checkboxes to the left of the records and selecting Delete selected records.





For an Excel or XML upload you can upload a file with the same information as what was entered into PARS originally, but with a record action of "Delete". The same can be done with records sent through the web service.



For XML submitted via batch or web service, please ensure that the credit ID sent for the delete matches the original credit ID as well as all additional learner completion fields.

```
<ar:Module
      <ar: ModuleName moduleID="200608492">Annual Meeting for Ophthalomology</ar: ModuleName>
      <ar:Status>Completed</ar:Status
      <ar:CompletedDateTime>2020-01-02T16:15:00</ar:CompletedDateTime>
      <ar:CreditCertificate>

    <ar:CreditReceived>

             <hx:activityCertification>ABO MOC Part II
             <hx:creditUnit>Point/hx:creditUnit>
             <hx:numberOfCredits>4</hx:numberOfCredits>
          </ar:CreditReceived
          <ar:CreditID>ccid:testProvider.org:123488</ar:CreditID>
      </ar:CreditCertificate>
   </ar:Module>
</ar:Activity>
<ar:XtensibleInfo>
   <ex:learnerRecordAction>delete</ex:learnerRecordAction>
</ar:XtensibleInfo>
```

# **Learner Reporting Errors and Troubleshooting**

#### **Errors from PARS**

PARS has basic data validation in place to ensure that the information being entered into the system can be matched to the correct physician, that the amount of credit does not exceed that of the activity, as well as a few other check points to ensure that data is being loaded in the correct format.



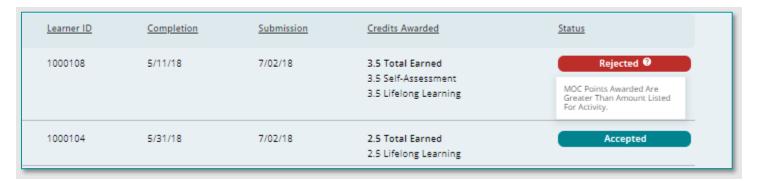
If a record does not pass this initial PARS validation, it will not be processed in the system and there will be no record of the completion in PARS. PARS will provide an error as to why the learner was not loaded into the system. The information will need to be corrected in order to successfully submit the learner.

If the information provided to you by the physician prompts a data error, you should reach out to that learner to ensure that the correct information was provided. If you have confirmed that the information is correct and you still receive errors, the physician should reach out to their board to confirm that everything is correct in their account.

#### Errors from the Board

If a record is successfully entered into PARS and has a Submitted status, it has been sent to the board for further processing. The board will send a response back to PARS letting the provider know if the record was Accepted or Rejected.

If a learner was rejected by the board, you will receive an email from PARS with a list of any learners who were rejected and error messages. You can also hover over the Rejected status of the record to view the error in PARS for more information.



If a rejected record needs to be resubmitted, you can either submit a new record with correct information or you can edit the record if applicable. Rejected records can either be left in the system or deleted.

#### List of Error codes

Below is a list of learner submission errors from PARS and the Boards, and a short description of what the error means and how to resolve. Some errors may only occur depending on the submission method you are utilizing or the board that is validating the record.

Error Code	Error Message	Description
601	Learner record action was not specified.	Record action must exist.
602	Learner record action is not valid.	The record action must be indicated as "Add" or "Delete". No other actions will be accepted.
603	Duplicate record (Credit ID was same as a previous record).	The creditID must be unique in each learner record with a record action of "Add"
605	Record not found. Delete action has unknown credit ID.	The delete record submitted cannot be matched to an existing record. Make sure you are deleting a record that has already been entered and accepted into the system.



Error Code	Error Message	Description
621	Missing diplomate ID.	The learner ID is not included in the upload. Please make sure a valid value is entered.
622	Missing diplomate first name.	The first name is not included in the upload. Please make sure a valid value is entered.
623	Missing diplomate last name.	The last name is not included in the upload. Please make sure a valid value is entered.
624	Missing diplomate date of birth	The date of birth is not included in the upload. Please make sure a valid value is entered if required.
630	Missing ACCME activity ID.	The ACCME Activity ID is not included in the upload. Please make sure a valid value is entered.
631	Missing activity completion date.	The completion date is not included in the upload. Please make sure a valid value is entered.
632	Missing MOC points.	The point element is not included in the upload. Please make sure a valid value is entered.
650	Missing ACCME credit ID.	The ACCME credit ID element is not included in the upload. Please make sure a valid value is entered.
661	Diplomate ID not found in Board records.	The ID entered does not exist in the board records. You will need to confirm that the correct ID is entered.
664	Diplomate date of birth does not match Board record for this diplomate ID.	Either the date of birth or the ID is entered incorrectly.
665	Diplomate name does not batch Board record.	Either the name of the learner or the board ID is entered incorrectly.
670	Activity ID does not match with a registered MOC activity.	Learner data can only be submitted for activities that have been registered as offering MOC credit. Confirm that the activity has been registered accurately in PARS. Learners can be submitted immediately after it has been registered as offering MOC.
671	Activity completion date not valid	The date entered is not valid. The completion date must be entered between the start and end dates listed for the activity and must be formatted as MM-DD-YYYY.
672	Activity completion date proceeds activity start date.	Learners cannot be entered before the activity date listed in PARS. You should confirm that the activity date listed in PARS is correct and make any changes if necessary, or you should resubmit with the correct completion date.
673	MOC points not valid.	The credit awarded is not formatted correctly.
674	MOC points awarded are greater than amount listed for activity.	For most activity types, the amount of credit earned by a learner must be less than what the activity is worth.
675	MOC points not in increment of .25	Points must be awarded ending in values of .00, .25, .50, or .75. No other decimal values will be accepted.



Error Code	Error Message	Description
676	Invalid activityCertification value.	The credit types submitted are not formatted correctly. Please ensure that you are reporting credits as per the specifications of the boards.
677	Missing creditCertificate element.	At least one creditCertificate element must be reported per learner completion.
678	Invalid activity credit certificate. Activity certificate [Activity Certificate Name] allowed once per learner submission record.	A record cannot contain two of the same activityCertification values within the same learner record.
680	Patient safety credit not available for activity.	The activity has not been registered as offering Patient Safety credit.
681	Practice assessment credit not available for activity	The activity has not been registered as offering Practice Assessment (Improvement in Medical Practice) credit.
690	ACCME activity ID does not exist	There is no 9-digit ACCME activity ID listed by the accredited provider. Ensure that you are reporting on the correct activity.
705	Due date for reporting participant data has passed. PARS will not accept participant records after the deadline set by the specialty board for the reporting year.	The completion date of the record is too far in the past to be accepted in PARS. If you receive this error you should contact the certifying board directly in order to award the learner credit.
706	Deadline for deleting participant data has passed. PARS will not accept deletions of participant records past the date set by the specialty board.	You cannot delete a record for a previous year (the deadline for deletes is 12/31 of each year)
709	Record is a duplicate for learner completion previously reported to Board.	Used for duplicate of learner record report previously through a non-PARS method.
710	Maximum MOC points already granted.	The learner has already earned the amount of points available for the activity.
711	MOC points reported exceed maximum available to this learner for this activity.	The amount of credit submitted would push the total amount of earned credit over the maximum available for the activity.
712	Learner ID type is not valid.	The identification type does not exist or does not correlate with the correct board.
713	Activity registration type is not valid.	The activity registration type does not exist or does not correlate with the correct board.
717	Learner cannot receive MOC credit for multiple completions of this activity on a single date.	Certain boards only allow for one completion per activity per learner per day.
718	Unable to match a learner with the information provided	If the board does not require the board ID as part of the validation, this error indicates that PARS found more than one match, and the learner should be resubmitted with the board ID included. (Currently only ABS does not require the board ID)
998	General learner record processing error.	Contact the ACCME for more information regarding this error. This is typically a processing error.



Error Code		Description
999	General learner record processing error.	Contact the ACCME for more information regarding this error. This is typically a processing error.

# **Technical Resources**

The newest versions of batch templates, XML specs and technical instructions can be found on our website.

If you have any questions about the PARS learner reporting process, please email us at info@accme.org.