

CERTIFICATE VS CERTIFICATION

Background

The International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA) may use existing IAIA resources to provide credentialing to members and non-members for a fee. Credentialing is an educational process that can demonstrate to others, or to the individual, that he or she has some understanding of the subject matter in a specific field. Credentialing falls squarely within IAIA's mission to foster best practice in impact assessment. The certificates that IAIA provides as part of its Professional Development Program is an excellent example of this.

Certification is process by which a professional is recognized for a broad range of expertise in the field of which education and training are only a part. For example, there were two times in IAIA's history where the topic of establishing a certification program was widely discussed by the Board, membership, and staff. This occurred in 2005 and 2017. IAIA even created *Guideline Standards for IA Professionals* (see Attachment A) in 2011. The work funded by one of IAIA's Innovation Grants, Compendium of National IA Professional Recognition Schemes, initiated a 2017 discussion of the Board of the Directors and it examined voluntary and government programs worldwide. While development of a certification program was deemed too much of a lift, IAIA did established the Professional Development Program (PDP) in 2014, which is a certificate program. The development of a certification program remains a goal of IAIA.

It may be useful to provide some definitions of terms, so in further discussions everyone is speaking the same language, or at least knows the meanings of the words used in this document. The following are various forms of credentialing:

- Accreditation - a voluntary process through which a third-party organization grants recognition to an organization, system or program after verifying it has met minimum criteria.
- Certificate of Attainment/Completion - a voluntary program an organization conducts that has an education or training component in which an individual gets a certificate if they pass a test about course content. This program may be run by the Training Committee/Department. IAIA's PDP is such a program.
- Certificate of Attendance/Participation - a voluntary program that an organization conducts with an education or training component in which each individual gets a certificate for being present, and no assessment of learning is conducted. This program may be run by an organization's Training Committee/Department. IAIA's pre-conference training courses fall into this category.
- Certification Program - a voluntary program an organization conducts that verifies education/training and experience gained elsewhere, as well as assesses current competencies. Unlike certificate programs, there is not a series of organizational-related training required to obtain certification. For this reason, certification programs are not run by an organization's Training Committee/Department due to conflict of interest and are usually vetted in the Board of Directors or group independent of the Training Committee/Department. There are usually ongoing or continuing education/training requirements to maintain the certification.
- Continuing Education Courses – are voluntary credit or non-credit courses offered to supplement education beyond a degree or to maintain a certification. They may be offered by educational institutions or the training departments of other organizations.

- Credentialing - voluntary and non-voluntary educational processes that can demonstrate to others, or to the individual, that he or she has some understanding of the subject matter in a specific field.
- Degree and diploma – voluntary program in which the individual completes a recognized set of academic courses in a specific field. These are only offered by colleges, universities and trade institutes.
- Licensure/Registration – non-voluntary progress through which a government agency grants recognition to an individual after verifying that the person has met minimum criteria to practice a profession.

There is no legal authority on how many of these voluntary programs are structured, and some are hybrids. There is, however, *ISO/IEC 17024 General Requirements for Bodies Operating Certification of Individuals* and *ASTM E2659 Standard Practice for Certificate Programs*. If IAIA wants its programs accredited, developing them with these guidelines in mind would be useful.

Proposal for a Systematized Training/Credentialing Program

The objective is to quickly establish an expanded credentialing program using existing IAIA resources to not only increase income, but to enhance IAIA's mission to expand impact assessment best practice and benefit the profession. Establishing a certification program is a long-term goal of IAIA, but will take a few years to establish.

Three options being proposed:

- New Certificate of Completion/Attainment Program (see below)
- New Continuing Education Program (see below)
- New Online Training Courses (see below)

New Certificate Program

It is proposed that IAIA would create a new certificate program utilizing video materials primarily from existing webinars and conferences (see Attachment B). The topic would be Fundamentals of Impact Assessment. With that said, a few new presentations may need to be recorded. The program would require individuals to view and pass multiple choice tests covering 10 hours of programming. The tests would be conducted after each hour or so of module content had been viewed. This would be a self-directed program without a trainer, and would serve as an on-ramp to PDP or an eventual certification program.

New Continuing Education Program

Many of the presentations in Attachment B are too advanced for a novice practitioner, or someone who has not been introduced to the fundamentals of impact assessment. The same is true for the latest material from the virtual symposium that has not been added to this list yet. Many of these presentations would be excellent continuing education modules if properly repackaged. This may include combining two or three presentation on a topic, like biodiversity, and having the speakers record a new analysis of those presentations, and detail what may have changed since they were recorded. The major topical areas under which specific courses may be offered would be:

- Environmental Impact Assessment
- Social Impact Assessment
- Strategic & Cumulative Assessment

- Multilateral Standards/Finance
- Innovations in Impact Assessment

These continuing education courses would link in well with IAIA's future Certification Program. The market analysis previously mentioned would provide a better indication of which of these scenarios is more probable per course.

Online Training Courses

This initiative is about providing the online opportunity for IAIA conference training course instructors to be able to teach the course that they would have provided live, in an online setting, for those who would like to do so. We will be following up with each presenter upon the approval of this proposal for an updated level of interest in participation. Please note this is a voluntary opportunity to interested IAIA20 trainers, and it is not required of the trainers.

This online approach will:

- permit people who registered for courses at our annual conferences, or who were interested in doing so, to have access to the courses they had want to attend
- provide access to a broader attendee community than could have attended live
- add a new and potentially substantial revenue source for IAIA
- provide a replacement revenue source for instructors, by helping instructors transition their live IAIA course to an online format, to increase the audience they can reach
- provide an online training platform to those instructors who may not have access to such systems to offer online courses themselves
- provide IAIA members and others with the opportunity to take more than one of the conference courses, as the online courses would be held sequentially over a period of months, rather than concurrently, as at the physical conference

This set of online trainings will not replace the live offerings prior to the IAIA annual conference.

Guideline Standards for IA Professionals

Preamble

These guidelines establish a standard which IAIA members and others can utilize as a minimum standard and which can be presented to accreditation bodies for their consideration in establishing standards for the profession. IAIA itself does not accredit professionals, given the international composition of its members and the different jurisdictions of impact assessment. However, in recognition of the needs and desires of IAIA members and accreditation bodies to establish standards, these guidelines were adopted by the IAIA Board of Directors as a standard to which IA practitioners and administrators should aspire at various levels of their careers.

These guidelines provide broad guidance as to the characteristics IAIA expects of entry-level, senior, and lead practitioners and administrators. Since many of the criteria are qualitative, it is the sum of an individual's qualifications rather than his or her suitability against any one criterion that will determine whether he or she meets the overall requirements of these guidelines. These guidelines do not necessarily address competence in any particular IA discipline.

These guidelines were adopted by the IAIA Board of Directors on 27 October 2010.



Guidelines compiled by John Boyle.

For inquiries, contact:

IAIA Headquarters

1330 23rd Street South, Suite C • Fargo, ND 58103-3705

Phone +1.701.297.7908 • Fax +1.701.297.7917

info@iaia.org • www.iaia.org

Guideline Standards for IA Professionals

IA Practitioner

Theme	IA Practitioner	Senior IA Practitioner	Lead IA Practitioner
IAIA "Code of Conduct"	Subscribes to the IAIA "Code of Conduct" as adopted by the IAIA Board of Directors.	Subscribes to the IAIA "Code of Conduct" as adopted by the IAIA Board of Directors.	Subscribes to the IAIA "Code of Conduct" as adopted by the IAIA Board of Directors.
Education and training	Has been awarded a relevant ¹ degree from an accredited university OR is a member in good standing of a relevant professionally accredited organization.	Has been awarded a relevant degree from an accredited university OR is a member in good standing of a relevant professionally accredited organization.	Has been awarded a relevant degree from an accredited university OR is a member in good standing of a relevant professionally accredited organization.
Experience	Has at least 2 years of experience in undertaking and reporting on IA studies.	Has at least 5 years of progressively senior experience and responsibility in designing, undertaking and reporting on at least component ² IA studies, including public participation.	Has at least 10 years of progressively senior experience and responsibility in designing, undertaking and reporting on comprehensive, integrated IA studies, including public participation ³ .
Understanding of IA methods	Has a good understanding of IA methods, including cumulative and strategic IA.	Has a thorough working knowledge of IA methods, including cumulative and strategic IA.	Has a thorough working knowledge of IA methods, including cumulative and strategic IA.
IA study management	Under direction, has demonstrated a capacity to effectively plan and carry out specialist IA studies.	Has demonstrated a capacity to effectively lead at least component IA studies and, under direction, some multi-disciplinary studies, and to look beyond compliance to develop and promote best practice.	Has demonstrated a capacity to effectively lead and integrate comprehensive, multi-disciplinary IA studies at all scales, and to look beyond compliance to develop and promote best practice.
Sustainable development	Has a good understanding of the structure, functioning and inter-relatedness of ecological, socio-economic, health and political systems that support sustainable development.	Has a good understanding of the structure, functioning and inter-relatedness of ecological, socio-economic, health and political systems that support sustainable development.	Has a good understanding of the structure, functioning and inter-relatedness of ecological, socio-economic, health and political systems that support sustainable development, and has a demonstrated ability to apply this understanding to sound project planning and impact assessment.
IA administrative systems	Is familiar with the IA administrative systems and guidelines of the country(s) in which s/he works.	Has a working knowledge of IA administrative systems and guidelines in the country(s) in which s/he works, and a demonstrated ability to effectively interpret and fulfill their requirements.	Has a broad working knowledge of IA administrative systems and guidelines, and a demonstrated ability to effectively interpret and fulfill their requirements.
Professional development	Actively engages in continuing professional development through readings, publications/presentations, and/or training.	Has demonstrated an active commitment to best practice and continuing professional development through readings, publications/presentations, training, and/or mentoring.	Has demonstrated an active commitment to best practice and continuing professional development through readings, publications/presentations, training, and/or mentoring.
Mentoring	N/A	Has demonstrated an active commitment to mentoring less experienced practitioners for their professional development.	Has demonstrated an active commitment to mentoring less experienced practitioners for their professional development.

¹ For example: environmental studies, geography, ecology, biology, sociology, public health, social anthropology, planning, engineering, landscape architecture.

² For example: biophysical, socio-economic, human, public health.

³ Such as public scoping of IA documents, public dialogue and comments on IA documents, and consultations with stakeholders.

IA Administrator

Theme	IA Administrator	Senior IA Administrator	Lead IA Administrator
IAIA "Code of Conduct"	Subscribes to the IAIA "Code of Conduct" as adopted by the IAIA Board of Directors.	Subscribes to the IAIA "Code of Conduct" as adopted by the IAIA Board of Directors.	Subscribes to the IAIA "Code of Conduct" as adopted by the IAIA Board of Directors.
Education and training	Has been awarded a relevant degree from an accredited university OR is a member in good standing of a relevant professionally accredited organization.	Has been awarded a relevant degree from an accredited university OR is a member in good standing of a relevant professionally accredited organization.	Has been awarded a relevant degree from an accredited university OR is a member in good standing of a relevant professionally accredited organization.
Experience	Has at least 2 years of IA experience with an emphasis on the administration of public-sector IA processes.	Has at least 5 years of progressively senior IA experience and responsibility with an emphasis on the administration of public-sector IA processes, including some experience with conducting integrated IA studies and related public participation.	Has at least 10 years of progressively senior IA experience and responsibility with an emphasis on the administration of public-sector IA processes, including some experience conducting integrated IA studies and related public participation.
Understanding of IA methods	Has a good understanding of IA methods, including cumulative and strategic IA.	Has a thorough working knowledge of IA methods, including cumulative and strategic IA.	Has a thorough working knowledge of IA methods, including cumulative and strategic IA.
IA administrative systems	Is familiar with the IA administrative systems and guidelines of the country in which s/he works.	Has a good working knowledge of the IA, environmental and related institutions, legislation, policies, and administrative procedures within which s/he works.	Has a detailed working knowledge of the IA, environmental and related institutions, legislation, policies, and administrative procedures within which s/he works.
Review of IA documents	Under direction, is capable of drafting integrated IA requirements for projects, of evaluating the adequacy of IA documents, of drafting practical project approval conditions, and of following up the implementation of those conditions.	Has demonstrated an ability to establish integrated IA requirements for projects in at least a few sectors, to evaluate the adequacy of IA documents, to craft practical project approval conditions, and to follow up the implementation of those conditions.	Has demonstrated an ability to establish integrated IA requirements for a full range of project types and scales, to evaluate the adequacy of IA documents, to craft practical project approval conditions, and to follow up the implementation of those conditions.
Sustainable development	Has a good understanding of the structure, functioning and inter-relatedness of ecological, socio-economic, health and political systems that support sustainable development.	Has a good understanding of the structure, functioning and inter-relatedness of ecological, socio-economic, health and political systems that support sustainable development.	Has a good understanding of the structure, functioning and inter-relatedness of ecological, socio-economic, health and political systems that support sustainable development, and has a demonstrated ability to apply this understanding to sound IA review and decision-making.
Professional development	Actively engages in continuing professional development through readings, publications/ presentations, training, and/or mentoring.	Has demonstrated an active commitment to best practice and continuing professional development through readings, publications/ presentations, training, and/or mentoring.	Has demonstrated an active commitment to best practice and continuing professional development through readings, publications/ presentations, training, and/or mentoring.
Mentoring	N/A	Has demonstrated an active commitment to mentoring less experienced administrators for their professional development.	Has demonstrated an active commitment to mentoring less experienced administrators for their professional development.

IAIA CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

Fundamentals of Impact Assessment

- PDP Foundations Course without trainers, assignments, or reading material?
- Understanding Impact Assessment Webinar 2020 (1:18:28)
- Overview of Proposed Canadian Impact Assessment Act Webinar 2018 (58:07)
- Lost in Time: The Black Hole Between ESIA Completion and Project Implementation Webinar 2018 (56:28)

Environmental Impact Assessment

- Seeing the forest for the trees. Are offsets the panacea? IAIA19 (66:02)
- Toward improved implementation of biodiversity offsets IAIA18 (1:34:23)
- Compliance and Enforcement of Impact Assessment (EsIA) Requirements, Commitments and Related Permit Conditions Webinar 2020 (1:38:54)
- Species Environmental Assessment Guideline Webinar 2020 (1:29:48)
- The IAIA Guide on Air Quality Impact Assessments Webinar 2020 (1:01:31)
- Microplastics in Estuarine and Coastal Ecosystems: Recent Assessment of the State of Knowledge in the Chesapeake Bay Webinar 2020 (1:00:55)
- Is the oil and gas industry able to adapt to the renewable energy revolution? IAIA19 (73:59)
- Guidelines on Business and KBAs: Managing Risk to Biodiversity Webinar 2018 (1:00:17)
- Accessing and Interpreting Biodiversity Information for High Level Biodiversity Screening Webinar 2018 (1:00:17)
- Reforming Environmental Permit and Review Systems: El Salvador Webinar 2018 (1:19:06)

Social Impact Assessment

- How to develop quality SIA practitioners? IAIA19 (64:30)
- Resettlement and Impact Assessment - Points of Intersection Webinar 2016 (1:01:05)
- Understanding Impacts on Vulnerable Populations through Psycho Social Impact Assessment Webinar 2017 (1:29:05)

- Exploring the Relationship between Quality and Justice IAIA18 (1:22:03)
- Effective Project Level Grievance Mechanisms in a Changing Landscape: An Interactive Tool Webinar 2020 (1:02:48)
- Addressing Health in Environmental Impact Assessment - A Draft for Consultation Webinar 2019 (1:00:11)
- How are we ‘doing’ gender? Crowdsourcing our experiences and tools, Oxfam’s gender impact assessment guide Webinar 2019 (1:00:40)
- Health, Well-Being and Gender Impacts: HIA of a Night Time Economy Framework Webinar 2018 (46:43)
- Empowering Indigenous Voices in Impact Assessment Webinar 2017 (1:29:31)
- Health Consideration in Impact Assessment Webinar 2017 (59:47)

Strategy and Cumulative Impact Assessment

Finance

- International Finance: THE role of independent accountability mechanisms IAIA18 (1:38:14)

Innovations in Impact Assessment.

- Going digital: Is this evolution or revolution? IAIA19 (44:00)
- ESG: What is it, why is it important and how does it relate to impact assessment? Webinar 2020 (1:00:31)
- Disaster, Conflict, and Impact Assessment: Making this better rather than worse Webinar 2020 (1:00:03)
- Launch - Compendium of National EIA Professional Recognition Schemes Webinar 2019 (48:19)
- Rapid Tour of Emerging Technologies and IA Webinar 2019 (46:47)
- Environmental Risk Assessment (ERA) in the Food Chain Webinar 2016 (40:37)