IREC

STANDARD

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General Requirements for

Renewable Energy & Energy Efficiency Certificate Programs

IREC Interstate Renewable Energy Council

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IREC Standard 14732: 2013
General Requirements for Renewable Energy & Energy Efficiency Certificate Programs

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1. Scope

1.1 This standard forms the foundation for the accreditation of certificate-awarding entities that develop and administer credit or non-credit energy efficiency and renewable energy-related programs offered in formal educational institutions and other legal entities. For the purposes of this standard, energy efficiency is defined as the result of efforts to reduce the amount of energy consumed in producing a service, product, or condition. Renewable energy constitutes wind, solar, geothermal, bioenergy, hydrogen, non-conventional hydro, and renewable fuels.

1.2 This standard provides the accreditation requirements that energy efficiency and renewable energy programs must meet and document to earn and maintain accreditation. The purpose of accreditation is to determine whether the program meets the requirements for issuing a market-valued certificate.

1.3 This standard does not address requirements for the certification of individual practitioners, educators, or trainers in energy efficiency and renewable energy programs.

1.4 Organizations shall abide by local, state, and federal regulatory requirements. This standard is not intended to supersede any codes, requirements, or regulations.

2. Referenced Documents

At the time of publication of this standard, the following referenced documents are the most current:

Gelman, R., National Renewable Energy Laboratory, U.S. Department of Energy, Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, 2011 Renewable Energy Data Book, October 2012 DOE/GO-102012-3598

IREC ISPQ International Standard 01022: 2011, General Requirements for Trainers and Training Programs Offering Renewable Energy, Energy Efficiency, or Distributed Generation Training

ANSI/ASTM E 2659-09 Standard Practice for Certificate Programs

ANSI/ISO/IEC 17024:2012 Conformity Assessment—General Requirements for Bodies Operating Certification of Persons

ANSI/ISO/IEC 17011:2004(E) Conformity Assessment—General Requirements for Accreditation Bodies Accrediting Conformity Assessment Bodies

ANSI/IACET 1-2007 Standard for Continuing Education and Training

3. Terminology

This terminology is provided solely for the purposes of this standard, to guide applicant organizations. Several sources were referenced, including: Professional Testing, Inc., ASTM E 2659-09 Standard Practice for Certificate Programs, ASTM E 2708-10 Standard Terminology for Personnel Credentialing, and ISO/IEC 17024:2012 Conformity Assessment—General Requirements for Bodies Operating Certification of Persons.

Accepted Testing Practices—Practices that experts who develop, maintain, and administer examinations follow to assure the reliability and validity of assessment instruments. There are several published standards addressing accepted testing practices, including:

- International Standard ISO/IEC 17024:2012 Conformity Assessment—General Requirements for Bodies Operating Certification of Persons (accreditation standards) administered by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI)
- Principles for the Validation and Use of Personnel Selection Procedures, 4th Edition (2003) published by the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology
- Principles of Fairness: An Examination Guide for Credentialing Boards (Council on Licensure, Enforcement and Regulation and National Commission for Certifying Agencies, revised 2002)
- Standards for Education and Psychological Testing (1999) published by the American Educational Research Association, the American Psychological Association and the National Council on Measurement in Education
- Uniform Guidelines of Employee Selection (1978), adopted by the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Department of Labor and Department of Justice

Accreditation—Third-party review and attestation of an entity's conformance with an established standard. Accreditation is awarded for a fixed period of time and requires renewal.

Certificate—A document awarded to individuals who meet and successfully complete the certificate program's requirements.

Certificate-Awarding Entity—A legal entity that offers education or training culminating in the award of a market-valued certificate.

Certificate Invalidation—The nullification of an issued certificate when an individual fails to comply with a certificate program's terms and conditions.

Certificate Program—A course, sequence of courses, or learning events focused on an area of specialized knowledge or information with specific learning objectives. The certificate program is developed, supervised, and evaluated by subject-matter experts and culminates in the issuance of a document indicating fulfillment of specific completion requirements.

Certificate Program Personnel—Individuals employed, contracted, or volunteering to administer any component of the certificate program, including: instructional design and

delivery, assessment development and administration, student registration, program delivery support and administration, and other key program-related activities and services.

Criterion-Referenced Standard—A method of categorizing, through assessment, the performance of examinees into two groups by comparing their performance to an established standard of competence (pass or fail).

Criterion-Referenced Scoring Methodology—An assessment scoring methodology that measures an individual's performance against predetermined competency standards that have been validated by subject-matter experts, rather than against the performance of others. Each assessment must be validated against the competency standards that it is assessing.

Curriculum—Broadly, a plan for the education of learners. This can include a program of studies (e.g., subjects), course content (e.g., topical outlines), planned learning experiences, or a series of learning outcomes. It is typically a written plan.

Designation—The title or trademark label applied to achievement of a credential.

Document Control—The procedures established in developing, approving, revising, naming, storing, accessing, and disposing of program documents (such as policies, procedures, and records).

Education/Training Cycle—The series of steps or stages that comprise a complete education/training program, from admission to issuance of the certificate.

Generally Accepted Procedures, Processes, or Practices—Procedures, processes, or practices that have been agreed upon and validated by experts in a discipline and are referenced consistently in professional literature.

FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974)—Federal legislation in the United States that protects the privacy of students' personally identifiable information (PII). The act applies to all educational institutions that receive federal funds. It states that parents of students under 18, or eligible students (students over 18 or those who have matriculated to an educational institution above high school), must be allowed to view and propose amendments to their educational records. The act also mandates that schools must obtain written permission from parents or eligible students to release a student's PII.

Internal Audit—The review of an entity's policies and procedures to determine the entity's conformance with them. Internal audits include preventive and corrective actions for areas of non-conformance, as well as opportunities for continuous quality improvement.

Job Task Analysis—A formal, industry-accepted study, validated by a group of subject-matter experts, that defines competencies in knowledge, skills, and attitudes as the basis for education/training curricula. Similar activities are also referred to as task analyses, practice analyses, and role-delineation studies.

a) **Tasks** are the individual functions, whether mental or physical, necessary to carry out an aspect of a specific job.

b) **Knowledge, Skills, and Attitudes (KSAs)** include the physical and mental capabilities that a practitioner must possess to perform a job competently, ethically, and safely.

Learner—A participant in a learning event who acquires knowledge or skills directly or indirectly through the facilitation of a subject-matter expert.

Learning Objectives—Measureable and observable statements of learner outcomes. Learning objectives typically have three components: conditions statements, behavior or action, and a performance standard. They are used as guides to develop tests and assessments.

Management Review—The study of internal audit and program evaluation results by program management. This may be followed by the implementation of corrective or preventive actions.

Management System—The combination and integration of policies, procedures, and processes by which the certificate program is developed, implemented, maintained, and evaluated.

Market-Valued Certificate—Demonstration by the certificate-awarding entity that the issued certificate has value in the market by requiring skills that are in demand by employers and/or achieving recognition by industry, government, or the public that training outcomes result in marketable and job-related skills.

Passing Score—The criterion-referenced minimum score a learner must achieve to pass a test or assessment that is intended to identify those who have achieved the learning objectives.

Performance Standard—The criteria component of a learning objective that describes specific performance expectations. It is generally stated in terms of a learner's competence regarding a given task, skill, or area of knowledge.

Personnel—(see **Certificate Program Personnel**)

Prerequisites—Previously learned knowledge, skills, and abilities that the learner must acquire before new learning can occur. Prerequisites can take the form of individual knowledge and skills, skill sets, and lessons, units of instruction, and courses that have specific learning objectives. These differ from program entry requirements, which are a list of abilities and accomplishments that an individual must have before taking a course. Entry requirements usually take the form of abilities (such as math, language, or kinesthetic aptitudes), work experience (for example, two to three years working as a solar installer apprentice), or education (such as a high school diploma).

Program Evaluation—A process whereby the certificate-awarding entity conducts a comprehensive evaluation of the certificate program against stated program performance objectives. It affords stakeholders the opportunity to provide feedback on learner attainment of

outcomes, course design, course delivery, quality of instruction, assessment instruments, graduate job placement, facilities, equipment, and administration processes.

Stakeholders—Any individual or group who has a primary interest in, or who may be significantly affected by, the certificate program.

Subject-Matter Experts (SMEs)—Qualified personnel who contribute to various aspects of the development and implementation of the certificate program, including the learner assessments. SMEs are selected based on their extensive knowledge of the content being delivered and the learner outcomes and competencies being assessed.

Systematic Program Plan—Any one of several processes recognized by education and training professionals that documents the creation or revision of educational programs, workshops, or courses using inter-related components of analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation.

Tangible Products—Student work with multiple critical elements that must be evaluated for compliance to a standard or criterion. Examples include schematics, blueprints, diagrams, system installations, reports, architectural models, renderings, and essays.

Valid Certificate—The length of time for which a certificate is considered current, based on how long program content remains relevant.

4. General Requirements

The following general requirements establish conditions for submission of an application for accreditation and provide the basis for requirements of the standard.

4.1 Eligibility for Accreditation: The certificate-awarding entity shall demonstrate that it has conducted the education/training program in its entirety, at least once, at the time the accreditation application is submitted.

4.2 Legal Entity: The certificate-awarding entity shall be a legal entity or part of a legal entity.

4.3 Organizational Structure: The certificate-awarding entity shall have an organizational infrastructure that ensures confidence on the part of learners and other stakeholders. Certificates shall be issued by an entity that has a designated manager charged with administrative oversight to ensure that the certificate program conforms to all policies, procedures, and administrative processes.

4.4 Policies and Procedures: The certificate-awarding entity shall have policies and procedures that guide decisions related to administration of the systematic program plan and the management system.

4.5 Stakeholder Participation: The certificate-awarding entity shall provide interested and relevant parties affected by workforce outcomes of the program with opportunities to participate in program development and continuous quality improvement initiatives in a manner that maintains a balance of stakeholder representation and transparency of process.

4.6 Linkage with Industry: The certificate-awarding entity shall maintain relationships with the subject industry to ensure the continued currency and market value of the certificate. Industry is defined as entities involved in the technology being taught and may include employers, workforce-development organizations, manufacturers, professional associations, and contractors, among others.

4.7 Staff Size: The certificate-awarding entity shall demonstrate it has sufficient personnel to meet program obligations and functions.

4.8 Commitment to Quality: The certificate-awarding entity shall have a written process for continuous improvement of program implementation and management. Top management shall ensure that this policy is understood and implemented at all levels of the organization.

5. Requirements for Written Policies and Procedures

At a minimum, there shall be written policies and procedures to address the following program areas. Policies and procedures must be published and available to interested parties. Policies must comply with applicable regulations or statutory requirements.

a) Certificates: The certificate-awarding entity must have written policies and procedures that provide for the granting and use of certificates and revocation of certificates. At a minimum, certificate invalidation shall occur if it is found that the certificate holder has not fulfilled the certificate program requirements.

1) Certificates must include the names of the certificate issuer and holder, the title and scope of the certificate program, the date issued, a unique certificate number, the date of expiration (if applicable), and the designation obtained (if applicable). The certificate must be signed or validated by an authorized official.

2) The certificate-awarding entity shall define how the certificate is referred to and what its authorized uses are and communicate this information to certificate holders and other stakeholders.

b) Complaints and Appeals: The certificate-awarding entity shall have defined policies and procedures for filing, handling, and resolving complaints and appeals. Due process shall be assured.

c) Confidentiality: Except as required in this standard, or by regulations and statutory requirements, the certificate-awarding entity must have written policies and procedures that provide for the confidentiality of information obtained in the course of education/training activities. Information that must be kept confidential includes, but is not limited to, any personally identifiable information of learners and/or applicants.

d) Conflict of Interest: The certificate-awarding entity must have clear and documented policies and procedures to ensure that conflicts of interest concerning the certificate program are minimized and managed—or avoided, if possible. Such policies and procedures shall apply to all certificate program personnel.

e) Internal Audit: The certificate-awarding entity must have written policies and procedures governing the internal audit process.

f) Non-Discrimination: The certificate-awarding entity shall ensure that its practices do not discriminate in admitting candidates, educating or training learners, providing access to resources, or hiring personnel.

g) Paid Promotions and Undue Influence: Promotion of products and services to the exclusion of others is prohibited within the delivery of educational content. The program must disclose sponsorship(s) and indicate to learners that other products or services exist in the market. Where any form of outside financial support is provided to the certificate-awarding entity, there shall be documentation ensuring that no undue influence on the program has occurred as a result of such financial support.

h) Record-Keeping and Documentation Systems: The certificate-awarding entity shall maintain a comprehensive record-keeping and documentation system that details the types of records maintained, parties with access to those records, timeframes for record

storage, and procedures for records disposition. At a minimum, the record-keeping and documentation system shall include the following:

1) Complaints and appeals
2) Confidentiality and privacy
3) Internal audits
4) Personnel records
5) Program evaluation reports
6) Relationship to relevant industry
7) Stakeholder participation
8) Student records
9) Systematic program plan
10) Financial records
11) Certificates issued

i) Release of Information: The certificate-awarding entity must have written policies and procedures that provide for the release of information about an applicant or learner that is gained in the course of education/training activities. Information may only be released with the written consent of the subject person, unless otherwise required by applicable law.

j) Safety and Safe Practices: The certificate-awarding entity must have and maintain policies and procedures that ensure ongoing safety and safe practices in the delivery of the certificate program.

6. Requirements for Personnel

The certificate-awarding entity shall meet the following requirements for program personnel.

6.1 Certificate Program Personnel: The certificate-awarding entity is responsible for and has authority over personnel matters related to the certificate program.

6.1.1 Sufficient Personnel: The certificate-awarding entity shall demonstrate it has sufficient and qualified personnel to perform the functions required by the certificate program.

6.2 Qualifications of Certificate Program Personnel: The certificate-awarding entity shall define and document the necessary education, training, certification, and/or experience required of personnel who design, develop, implement, and evaluate the program. Qualifications requirements must be reviewed at least annually.

6.3 Responsibilities of Personnel: At a minimum, the certificate-awarding entity shall identify personnel responsible for the following key program activities:

a) Formulating and implementing policies and procedures that guide administration and management of the certificate program

b) Planning and monitoring for viable financial operation of the certificate program
c) Designing and implementing the certificate program
d) Recruiting, monitoring, and evaluating the performance of instructors
e) Overseeing the roles and responsibilities of volunteers, contractors, and associated committees
f) Communicating information about the certificate program
g) Making the decision to issue a certificate

6.4 Written Job Descriptions: The certificate-awarding entity shall provide all program-related staff with clearly documented job descriptions that list their duties and responsibilities and identify their supervisors and the personnel that report to them. Written job descriptions shall be reviewed and updated annually to reflect current responsibilities.

6.5 Evaluation of Employees: The certificate-awarding entity shall conduct regular performance evaluations of its employees and document the results, including plans for continued professional development.

6.6 Management of Contracted Services: The certificate-awarding entity shall identify all providers of contracted services related to key program activities, including: recruitment, promotion, curriculum development, instruction, evaluation, and other services in which contractors have access to sensitive information. The certificate-awarding entity shall maintain full responsibility for all contracted services. At a minimum, a signed agreement of record must be in place that includes provisions for:

a) Compliance with certificate program policies and procedures
b) Confidentiality and conflict of interest
c) Monitoring and evaluating the contractor's work
d) Protection of intellectual property and ownership of the program

6.7 Qualifications of Contracted Personnel: The certificate-awarding entity shall provide evidence that all contracted services are delivered by qualified providers.

7. Requirements for Financial Viability

The certificate-awarding entity must provide evidence of financial resource capability for operating the certificate program, including delivery of the curriculum for all enrolled participants. Evidence should include a financial plan that outlines the projected income and expenses of managing the certificate program.

8. Requirements for Certificate Program Application

The certificate-awarding entity shall require program applicants to submit a signed application form. At a minimum, the application form shall contain:

a) The scope and requirements of the education/training program
b) A statement that the applicant agrees to comply with the requirements and directions of the education/training program and to supply any information relevant to safety and medical issues
c) A description of how the applicant meets the required education and work experience criteria, if applicable, including supporting documentation and prerequisites
d) Contact information

9. Requirements for Management System

The certificate-awarding entity shall have a documented management system. The management system shall include, at a minimum, the following components: documentation, document control, internal audit, management review, and communication of internal audit results.

9.1 Documentation: All policies and procedures of the organization that directly impact the development and administration of the certificate program must be documented.

9.2 Document Control: Document control shall include the tracking, management, and use of certificate program documents to ensure system integrity.

9.3 Internal Audit: An internal audit shall be planned and conducted, at least annually, or as deemed necessary by the organization. The internal audit report shall document any circumstances of non-compliance with policies and procedures. The internal audit report shall include the reason(s) for non-compliance, and corrective and/or preventive actions to ensure compliance. Results of the internal audit shall be communicated to program management.

9.4 Management Review: Program management shall review the results of the internal audit, acknowledge corrective and preventive actions, and ensure that such actions are taken.

10. Requirements for Certificate Program

The following requirements for analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation shall be components of the certificate program.

10.1 Certificate Development: The certificate-awarding entity shall develop the certificate program in accordance with requirements of the entity's own systematic program plan.

10.2 Job Task Analysis Basis for Curriculum or Syllabus: The certificate-awarding entity shall base the certificate program on a current, valid job task analysis (JTA) that has been developed using generally accepted procedures and includes the following:

a) An objective or scope that defines the overall job, including conditions and criteria
b) A list of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes (KSAs) that define the job
c) Criticality ratings for each KSA

d) Criteria used for validating the JTA

The use of one or more partial JTAs is subject to the same criteria specified above. Entities that use a partial JTA must show how it is connected to a specific, more encompassing job. The KSAs should be listed and rated for criticality, and the JTA should be documented for validity.

10.2.1 Syllabi or Curricula: The syllabi and/or curricula, together with stated prerequisites, if any, shall ensure that participating learners receive instruction and practice that is linked to the knowledge and skill competencies as stated in the JTA.

10.2.2 Availability of Job Task Analysis: The JTA shall be available upon request as a reference for learners.

10.3 Systematic Program Plan: The certificate-awarding entity shall develop and maintain its own systematic program plan using principles of criterion-referenced instruction.

10.3.1 Documentation of Systematic Program Plan: The certificate-awarding entity shall document how it has integrated analysis, program design, development, implementation, and evaluation into a systematic program plan.

10.3.2 Comprehensive Curricula and Syllabi: The certificate-awarding entity shall have a defined curriculum for each program and a syllabus for each course in the program submitted for accreditation. Instruction shall conform to the curricula and syllabi.

10.3.3 Curricula and Syllabi Revision and Maintenance: The certificate-awarding entity shall revise and maintain the curricula and syllabi, including the applicable prerequisites (skills and knowledge) needed for learners to achieve learning objectives. The timing of these revisions (called continuous performance improvement) can be based on whether or not the job changes, changes to the syllabus or testing procedures, the addition or deletion of activities such as labs, or other instructional modifications.

10.3.4 Utilizing Another Entity's Curricula: Certificate-awarding entities that use curricula developed by other entities must demonstrate that the curricula meet the requirements of the applicant organization's systematic program plan and that these curricula are revised, maintained, and evaluated in the same way as their own systematic plans.

10.4 Certificate Issuance: The certificate-awarding entity shall establish and publish requirements for issuing a certificate. Such requirements shall be aligned with the program's curricula.

10.4.1 Minimum Guidelines for Issuance: Requirements for issuing a certificate shall include minimum guidelines for participation in the program and achievement on assessments of learning outcomes. Minimum guidelines shall not include the option to test out or in any other way avoid participation in the full program.

10.5 Certificate Term: If the certificate has an expiration date or requirements for renewal, the length of the term and/or the renewal requirements shall be referenced in information for learners and stakeholders.

10.6 Facilities: The certificate-awarding entity shall have or have access to facilities in which to conduct education/training.

> **10.6.1 Support of the Learner:** The education/training facilities must support the learners' participation in the program and attainment of learning objectives.
>
> **10.6.2 Safety:** Facilities must provide a safe learning environment that supports delivery of the course(s), interaction of learners and instructors, and instructional technology–including proper safety materials and equipment.
>
> **10.6.3 Off-site Facilities:** Certificate-awarding entities conducting education/training off-site or in facilities that they do not own shall assure and attest that such facilities comply with the program's requirements.

10.7 Tools, Equipment, and Hardware Requirements: The certificate-awarding entity shall ensure that the necessary tools, equipment, and hardware are available for learners to achieve the specified learning outcomes. This includes, but is not limited to, personal protective equipment, safety materials and equipment, education/training hardware, and tools.

10.8 Resources: The certificate-awarding entity shall provide access to library, research materials, and applicable job-placement resources for the learners' reference and use. Services may be provided through various media and may be subcontracted.

10.9 Delivery of Certificate Program: The certificate-awarding entity shall deliver a program that meets the following requirements:

a) The material is presented in an organized learning format
b) Courses incorporate adult learning principles and practices in delivery of instruction
c) Assignments and practice exercises are clear and have defined and measurable objectives
d) Students receive timely and specific feedback regarding their progress in attaining the learning objectives
e) Where applicable, practice exercises related to the learning objectives are offered. Practice exercises may take the form of group projects, case studies, scenarios, lab activity, practical experiences, and other forms of learner-centered instructional practice

10.10 Online Delivery: If learning is delivered online, requirements for the delivery of the certificate program as outlined in this standard must be met in addition to the following conditions:

a) Each course or learning event has an identified instructor

b) The provider indicates in advance of the program the hardware and software that are required for the learner to participate
c) The provider indicates in advance of the program the computer skills that are required for the learner to participate
d) Navigation is clearly described orally or in writing. If difficulties are encountered during navigation, instructions are given for getting assistance
e) There is a system in place that tracks and monitors student progress
f) Learners have a mechanism for contacting the provider with technical and content-related questions. Response time related to training questions is stated in the syllabus and adhered to
g) Contingency strategies are in place to provide a quick recovery from technology-related interruptions to complete the education/training in a timely manner

10.11 Assessment of Learners: All courses shall have a summative examination to measure attainment of the learning objectives. Assessment of learners may include written examinations, practical examinations, exercises, and group projects. All examinations shall meet the requirements as set forth in this standard.

10.11.1 Information to Learners: Criteria by which learners will be evaluated for a given education/training course or program shall be made available in writing at the outset of the course or program.

10.12 Written Examinations: Assessment of individual learners must include a written examination. Written examinations must be criterion-referenced. That is, they must be based on stated learning objectives that include a performance standard. Written examinations must follow guidelines for acceptable practices in examination development and administration.

The certificate-awarding entity must have written policies and procedures for developing, maintaining, administering, and scoring examinations that ensure the following:

10.12.1 Examination Development and Maintenance:

a) Examinations assess learners' achievement of the stated learning objectives based on the performance standard (i.e., the criterion). Examination questions shall follow accepted guidelines for specific question types (such as multiple choice or performance)
b) Examinations are developed in a secure manner (with specific provisions that address the security of examination materials, non-disclosure agreements, and restricted access of examination materials to authorized personnel)
c) Examinations are routinely reviewed and evaluated for quality, relevance, and accuracy of measurement

10.12.2 Examination Administration:

a) Examinations, including those provided online, are administered in a secure and standardized manner
b) Examination administration is aligned with the type of examination
c) Reasonable accommodations are provided for learners with special needs

d) Examination administrators follow examination administration protocols

10.12.3 Scoring of Examinations:

a) The passing score is determined by a methodology that is criterion-referenced. That is, based on the stated performance standard in the learning objective
b) Learners receive a score that indicates their performance against the stated learning objectives
c) Evidence is provided to ensure that the scoring of the exam is consistent across raters (i.e., inter-rater reliability)
d) Learners receive their scores in accordance with published timelines

10.13 Non-Written Assessments (Oral, Performance, and Tangible Products): When non-written assessments are also administered, such assessments must be criterion-referenced. That is, based on stated learning objectives that include a performance standard. All assessments must conform to accepted assessment practices.

The certificate-awarding entity must have written policies and procedures for developing, maintaining, administering, and scoring non-written assessments that ensure the following:

10.13.1 Development and Maintenance of Non-Written Assessments:

a) All assessments measure learners' achievement of the stated learning objectives based on the performance standard (i.e., the criterion)
b) Measurement instruments for non-written assessments (such as criterion-referenced checklists, rubrics, and observation instruments) follow accepted guidelines for development
c) All assessments are developed in a secure manner (with specific provisions that address the security of assessment materials, non-disclosure agreements, and restricted access of assessment materials to authorized personnel)
d) Assessments are routinely evaluated and reviewed for quality, relevance, and accuracy of measurement for continuing quality improvement

10.13.2 Administration of Non-Written Assessments:

a) All assessments are administered in a secure and standardized manner
b) When a physical performance is assessed, all space and equipment needs are specified and standardized. These requirements are met before any assessment is conducted
c) Oral examinations are conducted individually and privately
d) Administration of all types of assessments is aligned with the type of examination (oral, performance, or tangible product)
e) Reasonable accommodations are provided for learners with special needs
f) Examination administrators follow examination administration protocols in accordance with the type of assessment

10.13.3 Scoring of Non-Written Assessments:

a) The passing score is determined by a methodology that is criterion-referenced. That is, based on the stated performance standard

b) A scoring rubric, checklist, or observation instrument is used in accordance with the type of assessment
c) Individual items in checklists and other observation instruments have specific criteria for observation (such as yes/no, pass/fail, or behaviorally anchored rating categories)
d) Checklists and other observation instruments include specific stated criteria for mastery of the task, skill, or knowledge that the instrument is measuring
e) Learners receive a score that indicates their performance against the stated learning objectives
f) Processes are in place to ensure consistent scoring (i.e., inter-rater reliability)
g) Learners receive their scores in accordance with published timelines

10.14 Awarding Credits: If academic or continuing education credit is offered for the certificate program, there shall be a consistent and documented method by which such credits are awarded. Information about the amount and type of credits awarded and the requirements for earning credits shall be communicated to all stakeholders.

10.14.1 Use of Another Entity's Credit-Awarding System: If the certificate-awarding entity chooses to use another entity's credit-awarding system, it must adhere to the requirements of that system.

10.15 Evaluation of Program Effectiveness: As part of the systematic program plan, the certificate-awarding entity shall conduct an ongoing evaluation of program effectiveness, with an emphasis on learner attainment of outcomes, course design, delivery, quality of instruction, assessment instruments, graduate job placement, facilities, equipment, and administration processes.

10.15.1 Comprehensive Program Evaluations: The certificate-awarding entity shall develop, implement, and maintain an evaluation process that allows all program participants to provide feedback on all aspects of the program.

10.15.2 Results of Performance Data: The comprehensive evaluation shall include results of performance data related to the learners' attainment of learning outcomes, and these data shall be used to make modifications or revisions to the course and/or program.

10.15.3 Record of Evaluations: The results of evaluations shall be documented in a comprehensive manner at least annually and become part of the official record of the program. The comprehensive evaluations shall be part of the entity's provisions for continuous improvement.

11. Requirements for Information about the Certificate Program

The certificate-awarding entity shall publish and make available relevant program information.

11.1 Communicating Use of Certificate: The certificate-awarding entity shall communicate to certificate holders and other stakeholders authorized use of the certificate and its designation, if applicable.

11.2 Informational Materials: The certificate-awarding entity shall publish and define uses of the certificate in the marketplace. It shall not state or suggest that certificate holders are certified, licensed, registered, or accredited, or suggest that successful completion of the certificate program will guarantee a job for the certificate holder.

11.3 Information Provided to Learners and Stakeholders: At a minimum, the certificate-awarding entity shall provide applicants, learners, and stakeholders with an accurate, current, detailed description of the following:

a) The scope of the certificate program, including: the current job task analysis, desired outcomes, curricular content, learning objectives, and assessment methodologies
b) A description of prerequisites and program requisites, including: fees, additional charges for instructional materials, tools, and protective equipment
c) The skill sets that certificate holders would expect to gain and examples of the types of jobs for which they might apply upon successful completion of the program
d) Relevant program policies (such as deadlines, cancellation and refund policies, appeals and due process)
e) The terms of awarding academic or continuing education credits
f) Changes to the program and effective dates