

**Self Assessment**

**Worksheet**

This worksheet is designed to assist agencies toward completion of the Self Assessment.

All Self Assessments must be submitted utilizing the online system.

Updated 03/10/2022

Pro Board

Self Assessment Worksheet

This Self Assessment document contains detailed descriptions of the information required to adequately document compliance with each criterion. It also identifies the format in which the information should be entered. Finally, the documents required to be available during the site visit are listed in addition to your complete policy and procedure manual. For some criteria, there is supplemental information. This is provided to assist the applicant in the self assessment process and the completion of this document.

Unless specifically noted as being a section of the Operational Procedures or a Committee on Accreditation Opinion, the supplemental information should be considered explanatory in nature and should not be considered a formal Pro Board policy or procedure.

The criteria are subdivided into three sections:

*Section 1: Program Administration (PA) Criteria*

*Section 2: Test Development (TD) Criteria*

*Section 3: Test Administration (TA) Criteria*

This document contains fillable fields for you to enter your documentation in compliance with the criteria as described in the instructions on the next page. The fillable fields will expand to accommodate the length of your response.

Instructions

Please clearly indicate how your agency meets that criterion or the associated identified issue. Please ensure:

* All the information requested is included.
* **Only the part of the policy that addresses the identified issue** is in the form field.
* Each form field is completed.
* N/A is reported in any form field if the criterion or identified issue is not applicable.

Please do NOT include peripheral or extraneous policy information in the response boxes – only include information needed to address the criterion.

Please provide information in the following format:

1. **Copy and paste** into the form field the exact language from your agency's policies that outline how your agency complies with the criterion or identified issue. More than one policy, **or only a part of a policy**, may be necessary.

- Or –

2. Provide both a short description of how your agency complies with the criterion or identified issue **and**paste the parts of the policies that apply if it can be more clearly defined with both a description and the policies.

**Important note**: It is not acceptable to simply reference a policy number or name and include a policy manual with your application.

**SECTION 1: PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION (PA) CRITERIA**

**CRITERION PA1**

**The agency shall ensure that the certification process is nondiscriminatory and available equitably to all persons served by the agency.**

**For each question, provide or describe the following:**

*1. The written policy, procedure, statute, etc. that addresses nondiscrimination*

2. The written policy, procedure, etc. that identifies equitable access, including:

*a) Accommodation of candidates with disabilities*

*b) Open access for certification candidates to access application and administrative processes of the certification program*

*c) An equitable fee structure*

PA1 - Must be Available During Site Visit:

1. A copy of the identified policy, procedure, statute, etc.

**CRITERION PA2**

**Within one year of accreditation or extension to a new standard or level of a standard, procedures shall be in place to address the issue of how incumbents will be deemed eligible to enter the certification system in accordance with the Pro Board Operational Procedures for Certification Implementation Procedures, Section IV.**

Supplemental Information

Incumbent Eligibility Policy:

The Pro Board requires a policy to address incumbents when an agency seeks accreditation or extends accreditation to new levels. Incumbents are not eligible for accredited certification based on experience, training, or time in service unless the agency is approved for the portfolio process for that level of certification. However, the agency may allow incumbents to begin their accredited certification at a level based on assessments of experience, training, or time in service.

Example: A long-time chief officer may start his or her certifications at Officer III rather than Firefighter I based on a consistently applied assessment of prior training and experience. The process must be uniformly available and the assessments performed equitably for all potential candidates.

Alternately, an agency may elect not to allow incumbents to begin their accredited certification at a level based on those assessments and require incumbents to be **certified** by an accredited agency to all of the required lower levels before progressing.

**For each question, provide or describe the following:**

*1. The written policy, procedure, etc. that addresses how incumbents will be deemed eligible to enter the certification system within one year of accreditation or extension to a new standard or level of standard.*

PA2 - Must be Available During Site Visit:

1. A copy of the identified policy, procedure, etc.

**CRITERION PA3**

**Procedures shall be in place to address the issue of prerequisites, if required by a standard or level of a standard, so that all candidates are evaluated in the same manner in accordance with the Pro Board Operational Procedures for Prerequisite Requirements, Section V.**

Supplemental Information

**Definitions:**

**Prerequisite**: a qualification level that must be fulfilled as a prior condition for another level to begin or exist. These are identified in a level of a standard usually found in the “General” section before specific JPR’s, requisite knowledge, and requisite skills are identified. Example from Fire Officer II - “For qualification at Level II, the Fire Officer I shall meet the requirements of Fire Instructor I…”

**Requisite Knowledge**: Fundamental knowledge one must have prior to being able to perform the task. Requisite knowledge is foundational for JPR performance.

**Requisite Skills:** These are the necessary skills (psychomotor and cognitive) one must have prior to being able to perform the task. Requisite skills are foundational for JPR performance.

**Document Review:** A process by which records are evaluated by an accredited agency to ensure a candidate meets requisite knowledge (RK) and/or requisite skills (RS) prior to JPR testing. This process can be used in lieu of testing the RK or RS. If the agency is approved to utilize **Document Review**, “DR” must be entered into the “Other” column of the Assessment Methodology Matrix (AMM) for the RK and/or RS only in lieu of **Testing**.

Below are suggested items that may be utilized to fulfill **Prerequisites.** They may also be utilized to fulfill **Requisite Knowledge** and **Requisite Skills** under an accredited **Document Review** protocol.

a.      Certifications (accredited or non-accredited)

b.      Proof of completion of training (course completion or training records)

c.      Licenses (FAA, EMS, others)

d. Experience (life learning)

e.      Other (subject to COA review and approval)

The assessment of these items must reasonably satisfy the **Prerequisite** identified in the standard for which the candidate is seeking certification and applied fairly and consistently. The assessment of training, education, experience (life learning), or non-accredited certification **may not** be used to retroactively grant accredited certification to the lower, prerequisite level. To achieve Pro Board accredited certification to the prerequisite level, the candidate must successfully pass the certification evaluation(s) by a Pro Board accredited agency.

**For each question, provide or describe the following:**

*1. The written policy, procedure, etc. that addresses* **Prerequisites** *for each level, if required, so all candidates are evaluated equally.*

*2. The written policy, procedure, etc. that addresses how the current* **Prerequisites** *for each NFPA standard are addressed.*

*3. The written policy, procedure, etc. for the process that ensures that* ***requisite knowledge****for each JPR is verified through* **Document Review** *or* **Testing***.*

*4. The written policy, procedure, etc. for the process that ensures that the* ***requisite skills****for each JPR are verified through* **Document Review** *or* **Testing***.*

PA3 - Must be Available During Site Visit:

1. A copy of the identified policy, procedure, etc.

**CRITERION PA4**

**Procedures shall be in place to ensure that the agency is responsive to the views and opinions of organizations representing groups affected by the certification program, such as volunteer firefighter associations, labor organizations, fire chiefs’ associations, etc.**

**For each question, provide or describe the following:**

1. *The policy, procedure, guidelines, etc. under which the agency solicits, assesses, and responds to views and opinions of individuals or organizations that represent groups affected by the certification program.*
2. *The names of the organizations and their respective representatives on the agency’s advisory board or committee, if an advisory board model is used.*
3. *A list of any groups from whom you solicit input that are not represented on the advisory board or committee.*

PA4 - Must be Available During Site Visit:

1. A copy of the identified policy, procedure, etc.

**CRITERION PA5**

**Procedures shall be in place to evaluate and respond fairly to appeals of the certification system including individual test items and/or assessment outcomes.**

**For each question, provide or describe the following:**

*1. The policy, procedure, etc. that identifies how a candidate may* ***challenge individual test items****.*

*2. The policy, procedure, etc. that identifies how a candidate may* ***appeal assessment outcomes or test results.***

*3. The written policy, procedure, etc. that identifies how a candidate* ***may appeal a policy, process, or methodology*** *of the certification system.*

*4. The written policy, procedure, etc. that identifies how the agency* ***assesses and addresses the challenges and appeals listed above.***

PA5 - Must be Available During Site Visit:

1. A copy of the identified policy, procedure, etc.

2. Documentation of any appeals in the past three years.

**CRITERION PA6**

**Procedures shall be in place to ensure that a fair retest policy is consistently applied for candidates who fail an exam.**

**For each question, provide or describe the following:**

1. *The written policy, procedure, etc. that addresses the retest policy* ***for******each testing methodology utilized by the agency.***

PA6 - Must be Available During Site Visit:

1. A copy of the identified policy, procedure, etc.

**CRITERION PA7**

**If the agency delegates its certification authority, procedures shall be in place to ensure compliance with the Pro Board Operational Procedures for Delegation of Authority, Section IX.**

**Delegation of Authority:**Delegation is the process by which an accredited agency authorizes another agency to conduct certification on its behalf. The accredited agency is responsible for ensuring that the delegated agency conforms to all Pro Board criteria, policies, and procedures.

**Note:** This is an optional criterion and only needs to be addressed if the agency seeking accreditation has completed the process for delegation of authority. Please put N/A in the response fields if the criterion is not applicable.

**For each question, provide or describe the following:**

*1. A list of all entities to whom authority to certify has been delegated.*

*2. The standards and levels to which each delegated agency may certify.*

*3. The written policy, procedure, etc. of the accredited agency that covers delegation of its certification authority and how it addresses the criterion.*

PA7 – Required to be submitted with this application.

1. The most recent delegate site visit report(s).

PA7 – Required to Available During the Site Visit.
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1. The most recent delegate site visit report(s).

2. The most recently submitted Self-Assessment Document (COA 3) by each delegated agency to the primary (parent) accredited agency.

3. Communication with delegated agencies as determined by the site-team leader.

**SECTION 2: TEST DEVELOPMENT (TD) CRITERIA**

**CRITERION TD1**

**Procedures shall be in place to ensure that the National Fire Protection Association's (NFPA) Fire Service Professional Qualifications Standards, or other standards approved by the National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications (Pro Board), are the basis upon which accredited certification testing is conducted.**

**Note:** A list of standards and levels to which the Pro Board has granted accreditation to certify can be found at on our website at <https://theproboard.org/documents/>

**For each question, provide or describe the following:**

*1. The written policy, procedure, etc. that stipulates that the certification test is based upon NFPA or other approved standards.*

*2. Identification of any standards or levels for which the Pro Board has not previously granted accreditation and for which approval to certify is being sought.*

TD1 - Must be Available During Site Visit:

1. A copy of the identified policy, procedure, etc.

**CRITERION TD2**

**The agency shall have the ability to completely test the level(s) of each applicable standard with justifiable test methodologies.**

Supplemental Information

**Justifiable Methodology:**

The agency shall determine and be able to justify the candidate test methodology used for each JPR or requisite knowledge or requisite skill identified in the standard. Typical methodologies include **cognitive written tests, psychomotor skills assessments, product/project assessments, process assessments, and portfolio assessments**. The Pro Board allows some flexibility in the determination of assessment methodology. Higher level Job Performance Requirements (JPR’s) may require additional methodologies in addition to traditional cognitive and psychomotor methodologies.

**1. Cognitive Written (Knowledge) Assessment Methodology:**

Cognitive written (knowledge) assessment methodology is used to evaluate a candidate’s subject matter knowledge using a written test in which the candidate is required to provide specific answers to specific questions related to the JPRs of the standard/level to which the candidate is seeking certification.  These responses are then securely scored in relation to the answer that has been determined to be correct through the local validation process.

Complete Coverage:

For cognitive assessments, complete coverage of the standard requires a group (database) of questions that include enough questions correlated to either each JPR or each requisite knowledge area identified in the standard.

The generation of a test instrument from that database can be done through a documented random selection process from that database. A preferred method is a stratified random selection or a random selection of test items from each subgroup of correlated questions. In other words, a number of questions randomly selected from each group of questions correlated to each JPR or requisite knowledge.

The random selection can also be prioritized to not only ensure complete coverage, but more rigorous coverage of critical knowledge areas. In other words, more questions can be selected from high priority knowledge areas and fewer from lower priority areas. Those priorities should be determined by a documented process using subject matter experts and defined criteria. In all cases, the process used to generate test instruments should be documented and repeatable.

**2. Psychomotor (Skills) Assessment Methodology:**

Psychomotor (skills) assessment methodology is used to evaluate a candidate’s ability to perform physical tasks using a real-time skills performance evaluation. Candidates are required to correctly perform the physical task/skill identified by the critical components of the JPR and are evaluated on their directly observed performance.  Correct performance outcome of the skill is normally indicated as part of the yes/no or pass/fail scoring checklist.

For psychomotor assessments, complete coverage of the standard requires a group of skills assessment items that include at least one skills assessment item correlated to either each JPR or each requisite skill area identified in the standard.

Random selection, stratified random selection, and/or prioritized random selection (see Cognitive above) from the whole set of skills assessment items are acceptable methods of ensuring complete coverage of the standard/level regarding psychomotor testing. In all cases the process used to determine the number and selection of skills assessment items for each standard should be documented and repeatable.

**3. Product Assessment Methodology**

Product assessment methodology is used to evaluate a candidate’s ability to perform a cognitive skill which cannot be directly observed but is evaluated on how an individual completes the task outcome.  An agency gives the student an assignment that requires the application of knowledge to yield a product.  A trained evaluator scores this product after the student submits it.  The product is graded using identified scoring criteria such as a rubric.

Examples include creating a/a budget, report, proposal, memorandum, letter, lesson plan, incident action plan, or outline.

These products may be completed outside of the classroom or out of direct observation of an evaluator and submitted to the evaluator.   Products are not assessed in real time and may have more than one acceptable outcome. After a product is submitted, a rubric or other scoring criteria, approved by the COA, is used to facilitate inter-rater reliability by allowing the evaluators to differentiate consistently between different degrees of candidate performance.

**4. Process Assessment Methodology**

Process Assessment Methodology is used to evaluate a candidate’s ability to use mental activity to perform a cognitive skill. An evaluator cannot directly observe this mental process.  The trained evaluator grades the student in real time, using identified scoring criteria such as a rubric which may facilitate inter-rater reliability by allowing the evaluator to differentiate consistently between different degrees of candidate performance. There may be more than one acceptable outcome.

An assessment is likely a process if:

* The evaluator is witnessing the application of knowledge in real time, and the physical activity is not the focus of the assessment
* The evaluator is assessing the candidate’s knowledge to complete a task by having the candidate verbalize what they are thinking or the mental steps they are making to arrive at an answer

Process assessments typically require the candidate to apply knowledge through verbalizing ideas or steps to the evaluator.  Examples include the evaluation of a candidate:

* Conducting size-up of an emergency
* Conducting an inspection
* Delivering a discipline or counseling session
* Interacting with the subject of an investigation, a member of the public, or while conducting an inspection
* Delivering a presentation
* Administering an examination

**5. Portfolio Assessment Methodology**

Portfolio assessment methodology is used to evaluate compliance with the JPRs or objectives of the appropriate standard by evaluating documentation of the candidate’s experience, training, and education.  Typically, portfolio assessment may be accomplished without directly testing the JPRs, but they must have been evaluated in a manner consistent with the verbs used in the Critical Component.  Portfolio assessment may be accomplished in combination with other testing or assessment methodologies.

Certification based solely on portfolio assessment must meet all JPRs of a given standard.  Certification based on a combination of portfolio and other methodologies may use a selection as allowed by other methodologies.

This portfolio is evaluated using criteria which have been identified by the agency and approved by the COA.  These criteria facilitate inter-rater reliability by allowing the evaluator to consistently give credit for experience, training, and education from outside sources. Agencies wishing to employ this method must create a list of acceptable documents or items for each JPR.

The documentation provided by the candidate must indicate the candidate performed each JPR according to the verbs in each JPR.  It is likely not appropriate to evaluate those standards which are primarily psychomotor, such as NFPA 1001, 1002, 1003, 1005, or 1006, and lower levels of NFPA 1051, 1072, 1081, and other standards that are predominantly physical. Agencies shall use the current standard when evaluating portfolios.

**6. Other Assessment Methodology:**

The other assessment methodology column in the Assessment Methodology Matrix is used to identify a valid and reliable assessment tool for all or part of a certification assessment that is not described above.

**Important Note:** The submission of the required Assessment Methodology Matrices or other acceptable documentation of compliance with this criterion shall be taken as affirmation the submitter has reviewed and is in compliance with the information contained in the following document:

**For each question, provide or describe the following:**

*1. The written policies, procedures, etc. used to produce test instruments that ensure complete coverage of the applicable standard.*

*2. The written procedures used to select justifiable test item methodologies (cognitive, psychomotor, product/project, process, portfolio, or other).*

*3. The written procedures that ensure if multiple levels of a standard or different standards are being tested within a single test instrument that the candidate is graded on those different levels separately. (Note: If multiple levels are not being tested within a single test instrument, this does not need to be addressed.)*

*4. The written policies, procedures that identifies the technical material(s) or texts upon which the tests are based.*

TD2 - Required to be Submitted with the Application:

1. A completed online Assessment Methodology Matrix that includes all items available for testing that demonstrates complete coverage and identifies the assessment methodology for each standard/level for which the agency is seeking accreditation.

**Notes on Matrices:**

1. Assessment Methodology Matrices Worksheets (AMMW) can be requested by calling the Accreditation Manager. Formal Applications must utilize the AMM found in the Online Application System.
2. The online Assessment Methodology Matrices should be completed based on the **test bank, skills sheets,** **product/projects, processes, portfolio or other testing processes** available after they have been locally reviewed and validated as some test items may be deleted or added during that process.
3. **It is acceptable to use more than one (1) assessment methodology within a single JPR.**
4. **Assessment Methodology Matrices submitted after the Self Assessment document may be reviewed on the site visit at the discretion of the site visit team leader and COA Chair.**

TD2 - Must be Available During Site Visit:

* 1. A copy of the identified policy, procedure, etc.
	2. A copy of the process used by the agency to complete local validation for each methodology used.
	3. A completed **online** Assessment Methodology Matrix for each standard/level for which the agency is seeking accreditation.
	4. All evaluation tools listed on **the AMMs** and the ability to sort them by JPR and demonstrate that each item assesses the identified in that JPR.
	5. All cognitive test items (questions) identified on **the AMMs** and the ability to sort them by JPR and demonstrate that the questions assess the knowledge identified in that JPR.
	6. **All product/project, process, portfolio and other process materials identified on the AMM.**
	7. Identification of, and access to, any delegated entities that certify to a standard or level to which the parent agency does not certify.

**CRITERION TD3**

**Procedures shall be in place within test development, administration, review, and improvement processes to ensure the production of valid and reliable test instruments and test results.**

Supplemental Information

**Validity and Reliability:**

**Validity:** Test validity refers to the degree to which the test actually measures what it is intended to measure.

**Reliability:** Test reliability refers to the degree to which a test is consistent and stable in measuring what it is intended to measure. Most simply put, a test is reliable if it is consistent within itself and across many administrations of the test.

**The Relationship of Reliability and Validity:** Test validity is a prerequisite to test reliability. If a test is not valid, then reliability is insignificant because consistency across iterations of a test that does not measure what it is intended to measure is meaningless. Similarly, a test that is asserted to be valid but not reliable (consistent over iterations) is not fair to the candidates or very useful for certification purposes.

The Pro Board's goal is for accredited agencies to develop valid test items, generate valid and reliable tests, administer those tests in a consistent way to help ensure reliability, review the test item and test instrument statistics, make adjustments to the test items and test instruments to improve the validity and reliability of the candidate assessments. This criterion is meant to help you assess your performance in those areas for each test methodology that you use.

There are five categories of assessment methodology that an agency may use to assess/test candidates;

TD3 - A - Cognitive
TD3 - B - Psychomotor
TD3 - C - Product/Project based
TD3 - D - Process
TD3 - E - Portfolio
TD3 - F - Other

This criterion requires the agency to complete all the sections under each methodology that the agency uses in any of its candidate assessments/tests. It is acceptable to use more than one assessment methodology within a single JPR.

**TD3 – A COGNITIVE WRITTEN (KNOWLEDGE) ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY**

Cognitive written (knowledge) assessment methodology is used to evaluate a candidate’s subject matter knowledge using a written test in which the candidate is required to provide specific answers to specific questions related to the JPRs of the standard/level to which the candidate is seeking certification.  These responses are then securely scored in relation to the answer that has been determined to be correct through the local validation process.

Supplemental Information

**Test Item Development:**
 **Note:** As used here, a “test item” is a single test question, and a “test instrument” is the set of questions used to evaluate the candidate(s).

There are several ways to ensure validity of test items as they are developed and/or reviewed. An agency may use the expertise of affiliated educational institutions and employ multiple and/or quite sophisticated validity and reliability assessments. However, at a minimum, a process may be used which employs a team of subject matter experts (SMEs) to develop or review test items.

The team of SMEs shall ensure:

* questions are well formed and appropriately correlated to the standard.
* correct answers are sound and appropriately correlated.
* reasonable distractors are used (if multiple choice).
* skills sheets, product/projects and portfolio processes are similarly assessed.

This process should be documented, secure, and repeatable, and in no way compromise the security of the test items developed or reviewed.

**Generating Test Instruments:**

The group of test items (test bank) for a given standard or level must have a sufficient number of test items from which tests can be developed. The bank must also include test items that are designed to assess, and correlated to, each of the areas of the standard that are going to be tested cognitively.

Random selection from that correlated bank of test items can then be used to generate a test instrument. Another methodology of selection is stratified or targeted random selection, where the random selection is done from the subsets of test items for each section of the standard for which cognitive evaluations are used.

 **For each question, provide or describe the following:**

**A. Cognitive Test Item Development**

1. *Does the agency use cognitive test items for any levels of certification that are developed by an****outside agency****or company, sometimes referred to as a****third-party****? Please answer "yes" or "no".*

If "Yes", complete both "a" and "b" below:

1. *Name and contact information of the developer (cognitive test items)*
2. *Procedures for developing cognitive test items for validity. This should be provided by the developer of these test items.*

**Note:** Please check with the Accreditation Manager to see if this information has already been provided by the developer and if so, indicate that in the box below.

1. *Does the agency use cognitive test items for any levels of certification that are developed****in-house****through an agency process? Please answer "yes" or "no".*

If "yes", please identify:

* 1. *Procedures for developing "in-house" cognitive test items for validity*

**B. Cognitive Test Item Local Review**

*1. Procedures for reviewing cognitive test items.*

*2. Procedures for generating cognitive test instruments.*

*3. Procedures for determining a passing score (cut score) for cognitive tests.*

*4. Procedures for cognitive test item and test instrument analysis.*

*5. Procedures on how to use the cognitive test analysis to make decisions for test item and test improvement regarding validity and reliability.*

**TD3 – B PSYCHOMOTOR (SKILLS) ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY**

Psychomotor (skills) assessment methodology is used to evaluate a candidate’s ability to perform physical tasks using a real-time skills performance evaluation. Candidates are required to correctly perform the physical task/skill identified by the critical components of the JPR and are evaluated on their directly observed performance.  Correct performance outcome of the skill is normally indicated as part of the yes/no or pass/fail scoring checklist.

**Note:** As used here, a “test item” is a single skills evaluation and/or skills evaluation checklist, and a “test” is the entire set of skills used in a candidate evaluation regarding this methodology (skills) for a given standard or level.

**For each question, provide or describe the following:**

**A. Psychomotor or Skills Assessment Development**

*1. Does the agency use skills test items (skill sheets) for any levels of certification that are developed by an****outside agency****or company, sometimes referred to as a****third-party****? Please answer "yes" or "no".*

If "yes", please complete both "A" and "B" below:

* 1. *Name and contact information of developer (skills test items)*
	2. *Procedures for developing skills test items for validity. This should be provided by the developer of these test items.*

**Note:** Please check with the Accreditation Manager to see if this information has already been provided by the developer and if so, indicate in that in the box below.

1. *Does the agency use skills test items for any level of certification that are developed****in-house****through an agency process? Please enter "yes" or "no".*

If "yes", please identify:

*a. Procedures for developing****"in-house"****skills test items for validity*

**B. Psychomotor Test Item Local Review**

*1. Procedures for reviewing skills test items for validity*

*2. Procedures for generating skills tests, including the selection of skills to be tested by the candidate(s).*

*3. Procedures for determining a passing score (cut score) for skills tests or test items.*

*4. Procedures for skills test item and skills test analysis.*

*5. Procedures on how to use the analysis to make decisions for test item and test instrument improvement regarding validity and reliability.*

**TD3 - C PRODUCT/PROJECT BASED ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY**

Product assessment methodology is used to evaluate a candidate’s ability to perform a cognitive skill which cannot be directly observed but is evaluated on how an individual completes the task outcome.  An agency gives the student an assignment that requires the application of knowledge to yield a product.  A trained evaluator scores this product after the student submits it.  The product is graded using identified scoring criteria such as a rubric.

Supplemental Information

These products may be completed outside of the classroom or out of direct observation of an evaluator and submitted to the evaluator.   Products are not assessed in real time and may have more than one acceptable outcome. After a product is submitted, a rubric or other scoring criteria approved by the COA is used to facilitate inter-rater reliability by allowing the evaluators to differentiate consistently between different degrees of candidate performance.

Examples include creating a/an:

* Budget
* Report
* Proposal
* Memorandum
* Letter
* Lesson plan
* Incident action plan
* Outline

**For each question, provide or describe the following:**

**A. Product/project-based Assessment Development**

*1. Does the agency use product/project-based assessments for any level of certification that are developed by an outside agency or company, sometimes referred to as a third-party? Please answer "yes" or "no".*

If "yes", please complete both "a" and "b" below:

* 1. *Name and contact information of developer of the product/projects.*
	2. *Procedures for developing project/product test items for validity. This should be provided by the developer of these test items.**Please provide answers to items “1” through “5” below. This should be provided by the developer of these test items.*

**Note:** Please check with the Accreditation Manager to see if this information has already been provided by the developer and if so, indicate that in the boxes below.

*1. The qualifications of person(s) responsible for developing product/projects*

*2. The processes used to develop product/projects to validly and reliably meet applicable job performance requirements or objectives of the appropriate standard*

*3. A description of the final product that is produced upon completion of the product/project*

*4. The procedures for post-administration analysis of the product/project review process for validity and reliability*

*5. Procedures to use the analysis to make decisions for improvement regarding validity and reliability*

1. *Does the agency use product/project-based assessments for any level of certification that are developed in-house through an agency process? Please answer "yes" or "no".*

If yes, please provide answers to items “1” through “5” below:

*1. The qualifications of person(s) responsible for developing product/projects*

*2. The processes used to develop product/projects to validly and reliably meet applicable job performance requirements or objectives of the appropriate standard*

*3. A description of the final product that is produced upon completion of the product/project*

*4. The procedures for post-administration analysis of the product/project review process for validity and reliability*

*5. Procedures to use the analysis to make decisions for improvement regarding validity and reliability*

**B. Product/project-based Assessment Administration**

*1. The relationship, if any, with a course of study or training.*

*2. If the product/project is individual-based or group-based.*

*3. The environment in which the work is to be completed (in classroom or outside), the level of supervision (proctored or not), the time allowed for completion, and the format of the required submission by the candidate(s).*

**C. Product/project-based Assessment Evaluation**

*1. The qualifications of the person(s) responsible for evaluating product/projects.*

*2. The evaluation process that ensures each candidate has achieved the applicable job performance requirements or objectives of the appropriate standard whether the product/project is individual-based or group-based.*

*3. The process for setting a passing grade (cut score) for the product/projects.*

*4. The process to assess the accuracy and consistency (inter-rater reliability) of evaluators of the product/projects*

*5. The safeguards in place to minimize the potential for fraud during the preparation and submission of the product/projects*

**TD3 - D PROCESS ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY**

Process Assessment Methodology is used to evaluate a candidate’s ability to use mental activity to perform a cognitive skill. An evaluator cannot directly observe this mental process.  The trained evaluator grades the student in real time, using identified scoring criteria such as a rubric which may facilitate inter-rater reliability by allowing the evaluator to differentiate consistently between different degrees of candidate performance.    There may be more than one acceptable outcome.

Supplemental Information

An assessment is likely a process if:

* The evaluator is witnessing the application of knowledge in real time, and the physical activity is not the focus of the assessment
* The evaluator is assessing the candidate’s knowledge to complete a task by having the candidate verbalize what they are thinking or the mental steps they are making to arrive at an answer

Process assessments typically require the candidate to apply knowledge through verbalizing ideas or steps to the evaluator.  Examples include the evaluation of a candidate:

* Conducting size-up of an emergency
* Conducting an inspection
* Delivering a discipline or counseling session
* Interacting with the subject of an investigation, a member of the public, or while conducting an inspection
* Delivering a presentation
* Administering an examination

**For each question, provide or describe the following:**

**A. Process-based Assessments Development**

*1. Does the agency use process-based assessments for any level of certification that are developed by an outside agency or company, sometimes referred to as a third-party? Please answer "yes" or "no".*

If "yes", please complete both "a" and "b" below.

*a. Name and contact information of developer of the process (third-party)*

*b. Procedures for developing process-based assessment test items for validity. This should be provided by the developer of these test items.*

Please provide answers to items “1” through “5” below. This should be provided by the developer of these test items

**Note:** Please check with the Accreditation Manager to see if this information has already been provided by the developer and if so, indicate that in the boxes below.

*1. The qualifications of the third-party person(s) responsible for developing the process assessments.*

*2. The procedures used by the third party to develop process-based assessments to validly and reliably meet applicable job performance requirements or objectives of the appropriate standard.*

*3. A description of the acceptable cognitive skills or mental processes to be assessed.*

*4. The procedures for analyzing or evaluating the mental processes to be assessed for validity and reliability*

*5. Procedures to use the analysis to make decisions for improvement regarding validity and reliability*

*2. Does the agency use process-based assessments for any level of certification that are developed in-house? Please answer "yes" or "no".*

If "yes", please provide answers to items 1 through 5 below:

*1. The qualifications of person(s) responsible for developing the process-based assessments.*

*2. The procedures used to develop process-based assessments to validly and reliably meet applicable job performance requirements or objectives of the appropriate standard.*

*3. A description of the acceptable cognitive skills or mental processes to be assessed.*

*4. The procedures for analyzing or evaluating the mental processes to be assessed.*

*5. Procedures to use the analysis to make decisions for improvement regarding validity and reliability.*

**B. Process-based Assessments Administration**

*1. The relationship, if any, with a course of study or training.*

*2. If the process-based assessment is individual-based or group-based*

*3. The environment in which the work is to be completed (in classroom or outside), the level of supervision, the time allowed for completion and the cognitive skills to be assessed by the process-based assessment*

**C. Process-based Assessments Evaluation**

*1. The qualifications of the person(s) responsible for evaluating the process-based assessments.*

*2. The evaluation procedure that ensures each candidate has achieved the applicable job performance requirements or objectives of the appropriate standard whether the process is individual-based or group-based.*

*3. The procedure for setting a passing score (cut score) for the process-based assessments.*

*4. The procedure to assess the accuracy and consistency (inter-rater reliability) of evaluators of process-based assessments*

*5. The safeguards in place to minimize the potential for fraud in process-based assessments*

**TD3 - E PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY**

Portfolio assessment methodology is used to evaluate compliance with the JPRs or objectives of the appropriate standard by evaluating documentation of the candidate’s experience, training, and education.  Typically, portfolio assessment may be accomplished without directly testing the JPRs, but they must have been evaluated in a manner consistent with the verbs used in the Critical Component.  Portfolio assessment may be accomplished in combination with other testing or assessment methodologies.

Certification based solely on portfolio assessment must meet all JPRs of a given standard.  Certification based on a combination of portfolio and other methodologies may use a selection as allowed by other methodologies.

This portfolio is evaluated using criteria which have been identified by the agency and approved by the COA.  These criteria facilitate inter-rater reliability by allowing the evaluator to consistently give credit for experience, training, and education from outside sources. Agencies wishing to employ this method must create a list of acceptable documents or items for each JPR.

The documentation provided by the candidate must indicate the candidate performed each JPR according to the verbs in each JPR.  It is likely not appropriate to evaluate those standards which are primarily psychomotor, such as NFPA 1001, 1002, 1003, 1005, or 1006, and lower levels of NFPA 1051, 1072, 1081, and other standards that are predominantly physical. Agencies shall use the current standard when evaluating portfolios.

 **Procedures for the portfolio methodology related to the candidate which should include:**

**For each question, provide or describe the following:**

**A. Portfolio Methodology Development**

*1. Procedures for developing and disseminating clear instructions for the process to potential candidates in the portfolio process*

*2. Procedures for the assignment of a member of the certification organization to act as an advocate for the candidate in the portfolio process*

**B. Assessment Team for Portfolio**

1. Selection of the team members for portfolio review

*a. Eligibility and expertise of portfolio review team members.*

*b. Training of the portfolio review team members.*

*c. Contingency procedure if no existing team member has expertise in the specific area of a portfolio application.*

2. Conflicts of interest that exist for the portfolio review team members

*a. How portfolio review team members are educated about potential conflicts?*

*b. What provisions are made when a conflict arises in a portfolio review?*

**C. Portfolio Methodology Administration**

*1. Evaluating submitted materials (educational course transcripts, certificates, credentials, documentation of experience, etc.) to determine demonstration of competency to specific job performance requirements, requisite knowledge and/or requisite skills.*

*2. Authenticating submitted material and procedures to minimize the potential for fraud in the portfolio review process*

*3. Establishing and publishing predetermined credentials.*

*4. Establishing of the “passing grade” (cut score) for portfolio evaluations and how is it established.*

*5. An appeals process for candidates denied certification through the portfolio evaluation process.*

*6. Rescinding of certifications incorrectly awarded by the portfolio process as a result of mistake or fraud.*

**D. Portfolio Methodology Evaluation**

*1 Procedures for post-administration analysis of the portfolio review process for validity and reliability.*

*2 Procedures for the use of the analysis to make decisions for improvement regarding validity and reliability of the portfolio review process.*

*3. A list of items which have been accepted to satisfy JPRs by the agency.*

**TD3 - F OTHER ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY**

The other assessment methodology column in the Assessment Methodology Matrix is used to identify a valid and reliable assessment tool for all or part of a certification assessment that is not described above.

**It is possible for an agency to become accredited using test methodologies other than the four previously specified. Agencies using other methodologies must comprehensively demonstrate through policy and during the site visit how all Pro Board criteria are met within the alternative evaluation system.**

TD3 - Must be Available During Site Visit:

1. A copy of the identified policy, procedure, etc. for each of the methodologies
2. **A list of items which the agency has accepted to satisfy JPRs.**
3. Individual portfolios (if the portfolio methodology is used).
4. Access to Evaluation Team members (if the portfolio methodology is used).

**CRITERION TD4**

**Procedures shall be in place to ensure security of certification test-item banks, current and previous versions of test instruments, and other associated materials.**

**For each question, provide or describe the following:**

1. The written policy, procedure, etc. that addresses how test banks, test instruments and other related materials will be secured, including:

*a. Procedures for security of materials and information during test item development, local validation, and* ***local*** *review.*

*b. Procedures for security of test banks and test instruments in the location(s) where they are stored and processed.*

*c. Procedures for security during test instrument transport and administration.*

TD4 - Must be Available During Site Visit:

1. A copy of the identified policy, procedure, etc.

**SECTION 3: TEST ADMINISTRATION (TA) CRITERIA**

**CRITERION TA1**

**Procedures shall be in place to ensure that adequate notification of examinations is provided to potential candidates.**

**For each question, provide or describe the following:**

1. The written policy, procedure, etc. that addresses this criterion, such as:

*a. The procedures for notification of the entire candidate base that identifies timelines, appropriate methods and media for notification and ensures universal user access to test announcements.*

*b. The procedures for informing the candidates of the technical materials (or texts) upon which the examinations are based.*

TA1 - Must be Available During Site Visit:

1. A copy of the identified policy, procedure, etc.

**CRITERION TA2**

**Procedures shall be in place to ensure that certification testing is conducted at a frequency, time of day, and geographical location that adequately meets the needs of the certification candidates, departments and other users of the certification system.**

Supplemental Information

Frequency of Testing:

There are no strict frequency, location (distance), or time requirements for test administration. The criterion simply states that the agency must strive to adequately meet the needs of the constituents. The frequency of an exam for one standard or level may be significantly less frequent than for another standard or level based on user demand. A good way to ensure that this criterion is being met is by soliciting feedback on this topic at your advisory group meetings or other user input forums. That information would be a valuable tool for both ensuring you are meeting your users' needs and to have available for a site team to view to support your procedures related to this criterion.

**For each question, provide or describe the following:**

*1. The written policy, procedure, etc. that addresses how testing is to be conducted to meet the needs of certification candidates and users of the certification system.*

TA2 - Must be Available During Site Visit:

1. A copy of the identified policy, procedure, etc.

2. Information should be available to the site visit team for all locations and variations of testing delivered by the agency, etc.

**CRITERION TA3**

**The agency's facilities and equipment shall be adequate for the testing of all the objectives or JPRs of the applicable standard(s) for which the agency seeks accreditation.**

**For each question, provide or describe the following:**

*1. The policy, procedure, etc. that ensures all facilities and equipment used in cognitive (written) testing provide a valid and safe testing environment for the assessment of all the applicable objectives.*

*2. The policy, procedure, etc. that ensures all facilities and equipment used in psychomotor (skills) testing provide a valid and safe testing environment for the assessment of all the applicable objectives.*

*3. If some skills test facilities are only used to test part of the skills of standards or levels (e.g. a facility that is not capable of testing live fire skills), identify those facilities, their limitations, and provide or describe the policy, procedure, etc. that allows you to ensure that all of the skills for each standard or level are capable of being tested for each candidate.*

*4. If your agency conducts remote certification tests in various ad hoc locations that are determined at the time of scheduling, provide or describe the policy, procedure, etc. that allows you to ensure that the facilities and equipment are adequate to provide valid and safe testing of all of the objectives.*

TA3 - Must be Available During Site Visit:

1. A copy of the identified policy, procedure, etc.

2. A tour of a skills test facility.

3. Information should be provided to the site visit team or each location or variant (format) of testing conducted by the agency.

**CRITERION TA4**

**Procedures shall be in place to ensure a safe environment and safe operations during certification testing.**

Supplemental Information

While the COA does not endeavor to direct entities on how to conduct testing and evaluations, given the number of serious injuries and fatalities each year associated with live fire training, it is the opinion of the Committee on Accreditation that entities have procedures and policies in place to meet or exceed the requirements of the current edition of NFPA 1403 Standard on Live Fire Training Evolutions, during testing and evaluation of live fire skills.

**For each question, provide or describe the following:**

 *1. Does the agency have a written policy, procedure, etc. that ensures compliance with NFPA 1403 during live fire skills assessments? Please answer with “Yes” or “No”.*

**CRITERION TA5**

**Procedures shall be in place to ensure that skills tests are assessed by qualified persons who are not involved in the training of the candidate in the skill being tested; that qualified persons administer (proctor) cognitive tests; and that qualified persons evaluate product/projects, portfolio submissions, or other methodologies.**

**For each question, provide or describe the following:**

**1. Cognitive Test Proctors**

*a. Procedures for identifying prerequisite knowledge of cognitive test proctors.*

*b. Procedures for the selection process of cognitive test proctors.*

*c. Procedures for the training of cognitive test proctors.*

*d. Procedures for the evaluation of cognitive test proctors.*

**2. Psychomotor (Skills) Test Evaluators**

*a. Procedures for identifying prerequisite knowledge of skills test evaluators.*

*b. Procedures for the selection process of skills test evaluator.*

*c. Procedures for the training of skills test evaluators.*

*d. Procedures for the evaluation of skills test evaluators.*

**3. Product/Project Evaluators**

*a. Procedures for identifying prerequisite knowledge of product (project) evaluators.*

*b. Procedures for the selection process of product (project) evaluators.*

*c. Procedures for the training of product (project) evaluators.*

*d. Procedures for the evaluation of product (project) evaluators.*

**4. Process Evaluators**

*a. Procedures for identifying prerequisite knowledge of process evaluators.*

*b. Procedures for the selection process of process evaluators.*

*c. Procedures for the training of process evaluators.*

*d. Procedures for the evaluation of process evaluators.*

**5. Portfolio Evaluators**

*a. Procedures for identifying prerequisite knowledge of portfolio evaluators.*

*b. Procedures for the selection process of portfolio evaluators.*

*c. Procedures for the training of portfolio evaluators.*

*d. Procedures for the evaluation of portfolio evaluators.*

**6. Evaluators of “other” evaluation methodologies**

*a. Procedures for identifying prerequisite knowledge of evaluators.*

*b. Procedures for the selection process of evaluators.*

*c. Procedures for the training of evaluators.*

*d. Procedures for the evaluation of evaluators.*

TA5 - Must be Available During Site Visit:

1. A copy of the identified policy, procedure, etc.

**CRITERION TA6**

**Procedures shall be in place to ensure that skills tests, written exams, product/projects, portfolio submissions, or other evaluation methodologies are administered in a consistent and impartial manner.**

Supplemental Information

**Written instructions for the proctor could include:**

* Checking candidate's identification (ID)
* Spacing of candidates in the testing area
* Ensuring adequate lighting and ventilation if within the proctor's control
* Advising the proctor not to leave the test area
* Information on how to process the test instruments

**Script for the candidates for a written test could include:**

* Warning of consequences if caught cheating
* Advising candidate that once the test begins, he/she may not leave the room
* Advising the candidate how to fill out the answer sheet or test booklet
* Advising of time constraints
* Advising what to do when complete
* Advising that no items should be on the desk, no phones are to be used, no supplemental material is to be used etc.
* Procedure for student bathroom breaks, if allowed.

**Written instructions for skills evaluator could include:**

* No coaching by the evaluator
* How to fill out the assessment sheet
* Stop test if there is a safety concern
* Ensure proper tools and equipment available

**Standard script for the candidates for a skills test could include:**

* A description of the skill(s)
* Time constraints, if any
* Allowance for questions before start
* Explanation of pass-fail criteria
* How the candidate should indicate completion of the skill to the evaluator
* Procedure for student bathroom breaks, if allowed.

**COA Opinion – Computer based testing**
It will be necessary for an entity that desires to conduct computer-based testing for any standard or level, to notify the Committee on Accreditation prior to conducting such testing.

**For each question, provide or describe the following:**

The written policy, procedure, etc. that addresses how evaluation methodologies are administered in a consistent and impartial manner to include, at a minimum, the following:

**1. Cognitive Assessment**

*a. Written instructions for the cognitive test proctor.*

*b. A standardized script to be read verbatim by the cognitive test proctor to the students.*

**2. Psychomotor Assessment**

*a. Written instructions for the skills evaluator.*

*b. A standardized script to be read verbatim by the skills evaluator to the candidate for each skills assessment. (Cut and paste one example of the script)*

*c. A process to assess the accuracy and consistency (inter-rater reliability) of the skills evaluators.*

**3. Product/Project Assessment**

*a. Standardized instructions for the evaluators when using product/project methodology.*

*b. Standardized instructions to the candidates when using product/project methodology.*

*c. A process to assess the accuracy and consistency (inter-rater reliability) of product/project evaluators.*

**4. Process-based Assessment**

*a. Standardized instructions for the evaluators when using process methodology.*

*b. Standardized instructions to the candidates when using process methodology.*

*c. A process to assess the accuracy and consistency (inter-rater reliability) of process evaluators.*

**5. Portfolio Assessment**

*a. Standardized instructions for the evaluators when using portfolio methodology.*

*b. Standardized instructions to the candidates when using portfolio methodology.*

*c. A process to assess the accuracy and consistency (inter-rater reliability) of portfolio evaluators.*

**6. "Other" Assessment Methodology**

*a. Standardized instructions for the evaluators when using "other" methodologies.*

*b. Standardized instructions to the candidates when using "other" methodology.*

*c. A process to assess the accuracy and consistency (inter-rater reliability) of "other" evaluators.*

TA6 - Must be Available During Site Visit:

1. A copy of the identified policy, procedure, etc.

**CRITERION TA7**

**Procedures shall be in place to ensure the confidentiality of a candidate's test performance.**

**For each question, provide or describe the following:**

*1. The written policy, procedure, etc. that addresses how the confidentiality of a candidate's test performance is maintained.*

TA7 - Must be Available During Site Visit:

1. A copy of the identified policy, procedure, etc.

**CRITERION TA8**

**Procedures shall be in place to ensure that the test results for each candidate and the associated test instruments are securely maintained for an appropriate period of time.**

Supplemental Information

Record Retention:

The following is a Committee on Accreditation Opinion regarding the retention of records by accredited agencies:

The Committee on Accreditation recommends that all accredited agencies keep copies of tests created for examinations for a period of five years, and that records of certification candidate scores be kept in perpetuity.

**For each question, provide or describe the following:**

*1. The written policy, procedure, etc. that addresses how test results and the associated test instruments are securely maintained.*

*2. The written policy, procedure, etc. that identifies the retention periods for the candidate results and the associated test instruments and how those retention periods were determined.*

TA8 - Must be Available During Site Visit:

1. A copy of the identified policy, procedure, etc.