

**International Ergonomics Association
Professional Standards and Education Committee**

**Minimum Criteria for the Process of Certification of an
Ergonomist Version 4, October 2001**

1. The IEA suggests that all Federated Societies establish or co-operate with a process of certification of ergonomists. The IEA offers the following guidelines for the process and the minimum criteria to be applied.

Process of evaluation of the applicant

Purpose

2. The purpose of evaluating the applicant is to ensure that they are competent to practise as an ergonomist and can demonstrate an appropriate standard of professional performance.

Reference standards

3. Expected standards of ergonomics practice should be defined clearly by the evaluating body, which itself should meet the requirements of CEN/CENELEC European standard 45013 and any relevant IEA criteria. The standards should relate to defined ergonomics competencies. Reference here could be made to the IEA Core Competencies in Ergonomics. Where certain competencies are required evidence should be sought that would demonstrate that the applicant possessed those core competencies or a defined sub-set of them appropriate to a specific area of expertise and practice.

Methods of evaluation of competencies

4. The certification process must apply a range of effective measures to determine the person's competence as an ergonomist. Competency in core areas of ergonomics may be demonstrated in a variety of ways. An acceptable and feasible combination should be used to ensure appropriate appraisal of core competencies, including but not limited by the following:

- Evidence of completion of an educational program in ergonomics which has successfully demonstrated its coverage and assessment of a set of core competencies (see below).
- Evidence of a defined period of substantial professional experience in ergonomics.
- Presentation of appropriate products, work samples or descriptions of work projects and evidence of their outcomes, to demonstrate specified relevant ergonomic competencies.
- Examination of selected core competencies, which should acknowledge the diverse background of applicants and their abilities to reach a level of competent ergonomics practice by a variety of means. Forms of examination may vary depending on the competencies being evaluated and could include written papers, oral interviews or practical tests.

Assessors

5. Evaluation of applications for certification should be carried out by qualified and multiple assessors and, for each form of evaluation, specified criteria should be applied. In order to establish a panel of such assessors in the first place assistance could be sought from Federated Societies or other bodies which already have a certification process in place.

Minimum criteria to be satisfied by the applicant

Educational Qualifications

6. A number of routes to educational qualifications might be acceptable, as in paragraphs 7 or 8 or 9.

7. Ergonomics qualification from a tertiary (university level) institution. (It is anticipated that, in due course, the educational program would be accredited according to national standards, developed by the relevant Federated Society).

i. Tertiary (undergraduate) qualification in ergonomics of a minimum of three years duration, which has included comprehensive preparation in ergonomics competencies.

OR

ii. Tertiary (postgraduate) qualification in ergonomics of a minimum of one year duration, following prior completion of a tertiary (university level) educational program in a relevant specialist field (involving a minimum of three years education).

8. Tertiary (university level) qualification in a related field of a minimum duration of four years, which has included a major component of ergonomics, has addressed a comprehensive set of core competencies and has required completion of a major ergonomics project.

9. Tertiary (university level) qualification in a related field of a minimum duration of three years, followed by continuing education (CE) programs to ensure comprehensive preparation in ergonomics competencies and substantial experience in the practice of ergonomics. Evaluation of applicants in this category must be designed to ensure that ergonomics competencies can be demonstrated and a variety of evaluative methods should be used for this purpose. If a formal examination is not offered, then other methods such as oral interview, preparation of written essays or examples of work should be required.

Notes:

10. "Related area" or 'relevant specialist field' referred to in clauses 7, 8 and 9 may be in any professional field that prepares the student in a substantial set of the core competencies.

11. Ergonomics competencies which are deemed as necessary and which are not achieved through formal education, should be developed specifically during post-qualification experience and appropriate evidence should be sought to confirm this.

12. It is preferable that the educational program should include appropriate periods of ergonomics practice, supervised and validated by a qualified educationalist and/or a practising ergonomist to achieve competency in specified core areas. Where this has not occurred, evidence of access to a mentor or supervisor during initial periods of professional practice (for example, for no less than two years) should be sought.

Post-qualification experience in ergonomics practice

13. Post-qualification experience may include working as an ergonomics practitioner, educating others about ergonomics or carrying out ergonomics research, where ergonomics practice forms part of the person's total activity.

14. Where supervised training in ergonomics has not occurred during the educational program, the initial two year period of practice should include opportunities for the ergonomist to seek advice from experienced practitioners.

15. The outcome of post-qualification experience should be achievement of competencies in defined core areas to complement those obtained through education.

Recertification

16. The IEA recommends that certification be provided for a finite period (for example five years) and that a suitable process for recertification be defined by the certifying body, in which the applicant must demonstrate their continuing work in ergonomics.

Code of Conduct

17. The IEA recommends that a Code of Conduct for professional ergonomists be applied to those who receive certification. The IEA has established guidelines for a Code of Conduct.