



# Standard Terminology for Accreditation and Certification<sup>1</sup>

This standard is issued under the fixed designation E2708; the number immediately following the designation indicates the year of original adoption or, in the case of revision, the year of last revision. A number in parentheses indicates the year of last reapproval. A superscript epsilon ( $\epsilon$ ) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reapproval.

## 1. Scope

1.1 This terminology defines terms related to accreditation and certification. These terms are compiled from existing ASTM E36 standards and other sources to enable the development of future ASTM documents and to provide guidance on proper usage of the terms. The first edition of this standard contained terms relating to personnel certificate and certification programs and is expanded. The source document for each definition is cited when an appropriate document is available. Many definitions are the product of the committee that compiled this terminology, and as such, are the result of the collected knowledge and experience of the committee members.

1.1.1 Since accreditation and certification are being carried out by many different bodies in many fields, usage of descriptive terms can vary. There is no attempt to include all accreditation and certification terms in this terminology. Rather, this terminology contains those terms most commonly encountered in accreditation and certification programs.

## 2. Referenced Documents

### 2.1 ASTM Standards:<sup>2</sup>

- D4538 Terminology Relating to Protective Coating and Lining Work for Power Generation Facilities
- E1187 Terminology Relating to Conformity Assessment (Withdrawn 2006)<sup>3</sup>
- E1424 Test Method for Determining the Rate of Air Leakage Through Exterior Windows, Curtain Walls, and Doors Under Specified Pressure and Temperature Differences Across the Specimen
- E1605 Terminology Relating to Lead in Buildings
- E1732 Terminology Relating to Forensic Science

<sup>1</sup> This terminology is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee E36 on Accreditation & Certification and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee E36.95 on Terminology.

Current edition approved Feb. 15, 2017. Published March 2017. Originally approved in 2010. Last previous edition approved in 2016 as E2708 – 16. DOI: 10.1520/E2708-17.

<sup>2</sup> For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, [www.astm.org](http://www.astm.org), or contact ASTM Customer Service at [service@astm.org](mailto:service@astm.org). For *Annual Book of ASTM Standards* volume information, refer to the standard's Document Summary page on the ASTM website.

<sup>3</sup> The last approved version of this historical standard is referenced on [www.astm.org](http://www.astm.org).

E1986 Guide for Information Access Privileges to Health Information

E2135 Terminology for Property and Asset Management

E2159 Guide for Selection, Assignment, and Monitoring of Persons To Be Utilized as Assessors/Auditors or Technical Experts

E2161 Terminology Relating to Performance Validation in Thermal Analysis and Rheology

E2659 Practice for Certificate Programs

### 2.2 Other Standards:

ASAE Certification and Accreditation Law Handbook, Second Edition, 2004<sup>4</sup>

ICE Basic Guide to Credentialing Terminology, 2006<sup>5</sup>

ISO 9000 Quality Management Systems—Fundamentals and Vocabulary, 2000<sup>6</sup>

ISO/IEC 17000 Conformity Assessment—Vocabulary and General Principles, 2004<sup>6</sup>

ISO/IEC 17011 Conformity Assessment—General Requirements for Accreditation Bodies Accrediting Conformity Assessment Bodies, 2004<sup>6</sup>

ISO/IEC 17024 Conformity Assessment—General Requirements for Bodies Operating Certification of Persons, 2003<sup>6</sup>

ISO/IEC 17050-1 Conformity Assessment—Supplier's Declaration of Conformity—Part 1: General Requirements, 2004<sup>6</sup>

## 3. Definitions

**access/access to a system or scheme**, *n*—opportunity for an applicant to obtain conformity assessment under the rules of the system or scheme. **ISO/IEC 17000**

**accommodation**, *n*—in the context of personnel credentialing, a reasonable modification in an assessment instrument or its administration made to compensate for the effects of a qualified disability without altering the purpose of the assessment instrument. **ICE**

<sup>4</sup> Available from American Society of Association Executives (ASAE), 1575 I St. NW, Washington, DC 20005, <http://www.asaecenter.org>.

<sup>5</sup> Available from Institute for Credentialing Excellence (ICE), 2025 M Street, N.W. Suite 800 Washington, DC 20036, <http://www.credentialingexcellence.org>.

<sup>6</sup> Available from International Organization for Standardization (ISO), 1, ch. de la Voie-Creuse, Case postale 56, CH-1211, Geneva 20, Switzerland, <http://www.iso.ch>.

**accountability**, *n*—in the context of personnel credentialing, the responsibility of a governing board, committee, or other sponsor of a credentialing program to demonstrate the efficacy and fairness of policies, procedures, and assessment instruments to its stakeholders. **ICE**

**accreditation**, *n*—third-party attestation related to a body conveying formal demonstration of its competence to carry out specific conformity assessment tasks.

**accreditation body**, *n*—authoritative entity/organization that performs accreditation.

**accreditation body logo**, *n*—emblem used by an accreditation body to identify itself.

DISCUSSION—See definition of **accreditation symbol** in contrast to this definition.

**accreditation certificate**, *n*—formal document or a set of documents, stating that accreditation has been granted for the defined scope. **ISO/IEC 17011**

**accreditation scope**, *n*—set of specific conformity assessment activities for which a conformity assessment body is accredited.

**accreditation symbol**, *n*—symbol issued by an accreditation body to be used by accredited conformity assessment bodies to indicate their accredited status.

DISCUSSION—“Mark” is to be reserved to indicate direct conformity of an entity (for example, product, process, system, or person) against a set of requirements.

**adverse action or decision**, *n*—an action or decision signifying opposition.

DISCUSSION—Adverse decisions include:

- (1) Refusal to accept an application,
- (2) Refusal to proceed with an assessment,
- (3) Refusal to grant a credential,
- (4) Any other action that impedes the attainment of a credential, and
- (5) Revoking a credential.

**adverse impact**, *n*—in the context of personnel credentialing, a significantly higher failure rate for candidates in legally protected classes of people, such as females, African Americans, and Hispanic Americans.

**agreement**, *n*—a document that sets forth the terms of an arrangement and to which the parties in the arrangement are signatories.

**agreement group**, *n*—bodies that are signatories to the agreement on which an arrangement is based. **ISO/IEC 17000**

**appeal**, *n*—request by the provider of the object of conformity assessment to the conformity assessment body or accreditation body for reconsideration by that body of a decision it has made relating to that object. **ISO/IEC 17000**

**applicant**, *n*—an individual declaring interest in earning a credential offered by a program, usually through a request for information and the submission of materials. **ICE**

**assessment instruments**, *n*—in the context of personnel credentialing, any one of several standardized methods or tools for determining if individuals possess the necessary knowledge or skill, or both, related to the purpose of the credential. **ICE**

**assessment of conformity**, *n*—a process whereby an individual’s knowledge, experience, and skills are evaluated or measured against a standard.

DISCUSSION—Activities associated with conformity assessment include testing, certification, accreditation, and quality assurance system registration.

**assessor**, *n*—an individual who has the knowledge, experience and skills necessary to perform a comprehensive assessment of another body, which includes assessment of the quality management system, policies, and procedures, etc. **E2159**

DISCUSSION—An assessor/auditor should be fully qualified in the performance of a full assessment/audit, with the exception of evaluating specific technical areas. An assessor may also be qualified as a technical expert and bring such additional skills to the assessment/audit.

**attestation**, *n*—issuance of a statement, based on a decision following a review, that fulfillment of specified requirements has been demonstrated. **ISO/IEC 17000**

*scope of attestation*, *n*—range of characteristics of conformity assessment covered by attestation. **ISO/IEC 17000**

**audit**, *n*—systematic, independent, documented process for obtaining records, statements of fact or other relevant information and assessing them objectively to determine the extent to which specified requirements are fulfilled. **ISO/IEC 17000**

DISCUSSION—While audit applies to management systems, assessment applies to conformity assessment bodies as well as more generally.

**authority**, *n*—a body that has legal powers and rights. **E1187**

**autonomy**, *n*—in the context of personnel credentialing, organizational control over all essential credentialing decisions without being subject to approval by or undue influence from any other body. **ICE**

**board/regulatory board**, *n*—the authority responsible for preparing/developing and adopting regulations, policies, processes, and procedures to carry out the regulation; judging whether an individual or entity has met and continues to meet regulatory requirements; and recognizing the individual (certificant or license holder) or body (certification or licensure) as doing so.

**candidate**, *n*—in the context of personnel credentialing, an applicant who has fulfilled specified prerequisites, establishing eligibility to participate in the credentialing process. **ISO/IEC 17024**

**certificant**, *n*—in the context of personnel credentialing, an individual who has earned a credential awarded through a certification program. **ICE**

**certificate**, *n*—a document (letter, card, or other medium) awarded to certificate holders that designates the successful completion of a credentialing program’s requisites. **E2659**

**certificate holder**, *n*—in the context of personnel credentialing, an individual who has been issued a certificate after successfully completing a credentialing program’s requisites. **E2659**

**certificate of attendance/certificate of participation**, *n*—a document issued after an individual attends or participates in a particular meeting or course. **ICE**

**DISCUSSION**—Typically, there is no knowledge assessed prior to issuing this type of document. A certificate of attendance or participation is not a credential, because the recipients are not required to demonstrate competence through assessment or meet agreed upon professional or trade standards.

**certificate program**, *n*—a nondegree-granting education or training program consisting of (1) a learning event or series of events designed to educate or train individuals to achieve specified learning outcomes within a defined scope, and (2) a system designed to ensure individuals receive a certificate only after verification of successful completion of all program requisites, including but not limited to an evaluation of learner attainment of intended learning outcomes. **E2659**

**certification**, *n*—procedure and action by a duly authorized body of determining, verifying, and attesting in writing to the qualifications of individuals, processes, procedures, or items in accordance with applicable requirements. **E1424**

*professional certification*, *n*—in the context of personnel credentialing, procedure and action by a duly authorized body of determining, verifying, and attesting in writing to the qualifications of individuals in a profession, in accordance with applicable requirements associated with that profession.

**certification agency**, *n*—the organizational or administrative unit that offers or operates, or both, a certification program. **ICE**

**certification board**, *n*—a group of individuals appointed or elected to govern one or more certification programs, as well as the certification agency, and responsible for all certification decision making, including governance. **ICE**

**certification body/entity**, *n*—a body that conducts certifications of conformity. **E1187**

**certification mark**, *n*—the symbol and use thereof which has been authorized by a certification body.

**certification process**, *n*—in the context of personnel credentialing, all activities by which a certification body establishes that an individual fulfills specified requirements, including application, evaluation, decision on certification, surveillance, and recertification. **ISO/IEC 17024**

**certification program**, *n*—the standards, policies, procedures, assessment instruments, and related products and activities through which individuals are publicly identified as qualified in a profession, occupation, role, or skill. **ICE**

**committee/certification committee**, *n*—a group of individuals appointed or elected to recommend and implement policy related to certification program operations. **ICE**

**competence**, *n*—in the context of personnel credentialing, demonstrated ability to apply knowledge and/or skills and, where relevant, demonstrated personal attributes.

**complaint**, *n*—expression of dissatisfaction, other than appeal, by any person or organization to a conformity assessment body or accreditation body, relating to the activities of that body, where a response is expected. **ISO/IEC 17000**

**computer-based testing (CBT)**, *n*—use of computers to deliver assessments, and sometimes the scoring and reporting of these assessments.

**conflict of interest**, *n*—a conflict between the private interests and the official or professional responsibilities of an individual in a position of influence and trust.

**confidentiality**, *n*—the property that information is not made available or disclosed to unauthorized individuals, entities, or processes. **E1986**

**conformity assessment**, *n*—demonstration that specified requirements relating to a product, process, system, person, or body are fulfilled. **ISO/IEC 17000**

**DISCUSSION**—The subject field of conformity assessment includes activities defined elsewhere such as testing, inspection and certification, as well as the accreditation of conformity assessment bodies.

**DISCUSSION**—The expression object of conformity assessment or object is used to encompass any particular material, product, installation, process, system, person or body to which conformity assessment is applied. A service is covered by the definition of a product.

*third-party conformity assessment*, *n*—for purposes of the certification of persons, a conformity assessment activity that is performed by a person or body independent of the person or organization being assessed. **ISO/IEC 17000**

**conformity assessment body**, *n*—entity that performs conformity assessment services such as testing, calibration, inspection, and certification.

**DISCUSSION**—For the purpose of this document, conformity assessment bodies are laboratories, inspection bodies, certification bodies, proficiency testing providers and reference materials producers. An accreditation body is not considered a conformity assessment body since they accredit conformity assessment bodies.

**conformity assessment system**, *n*—rules, procedures and management for carrying out conformity assessment. **ISO/IEC 17000**

**DISCUSSION**—Conformity assessment systems may be operated at international, regional, national or sub-national level.

**conformity surveillance**, *n*—evaluation of conformity to determine the continuing conformity with specified requirements. **E1187**

**consensus**, *n*—general agreement or accord on a matter that all can support; a majority of opinion, but not necessarily unanimity.

**consensus process**, *n*—a formal procedure for reaching general agreement or accord, which includes the elements of due process.

**constructed-response question**, *n*—in the context of personnel credentialing, a type of test item in which the candidate produces the answer (for example, an essay or a fill in the blank) rather than selecting from multiple-choice options.

**consultancy**, *n*—participation in any of the activities of a conformity assessment body (CAB) subject to accreditation.  
**ISO/IEC 17011**

DISCUSSION—Examples include:

(1) Preparing or producing manuals or procedures for a CAB;

(2) Participating in the operation or management of the system of a CAB;

(3) Giving specific advice or specific training towards the development and implementation of the management system or competence of a CAB, or both; and

(4) Giving specific advice or specific training for the development and implementation of the operational procedures of a CAB.

**content domains**, *n*—in the context of personnel credentialing, the set of organized categories characterizing subject matter under which knowledge and skills may be represented in specifications for assessment instruments.  
**ICE**

**continuing competence**, *n*—the ability to provide service at specified levels of knowledge and skill, not only at the time of initial certification/licensure but throughout an individual's professional career.  
**ICE**

**continuing education**, *n*—in the context of personnel credentialing, activities, often short courses, that certified or licensed professionals engage in to receive credit for the purpose of maintaining continuing competence and renewing certification or licensure.  
**ICE**

**credentialing**, *n*—the process by which an entity authorized and qualified to do so, grants formal recognition to, or records the recognition status of individuals, organizations, institutions, programs, processes, services, or products that meet predetermined and standardized criteria.  
**ASAE**

**credentialing (licensing) authority**, *n*—an entity authorized and qualified to do so, that grants formal recognition to, or records the recognition status of individuals, organizations, institutions, programs, processes, services, or products that meet predetermined and standardized criteria.  
**ASAE**

**credentialing process**, *n*—a method for maintaining quality standards of knowledge and performance, and in some cases, for stimulating continued self-improvement.  
**ICE**

**criterion-referenced standard**, *n*—a pass-fail standard determined by characteristics of the test (for example, the difficulty) rather than characteristics of the candidates (for example, the ability).

**decertify/decertification**, *n*—to withdraw certification from an individual.

**designation**, *n*—the title or trademarked label applied to the achievement of a credential.  
**ISO/IEC 17000**

**discipline/disciplinary action**, *n*—in the context of personnel credentialing, a formal, published process for the enforcement of standards governing the professional behavior (that is, ethics, standards of practice) of certificants or licensees.  
**ICE**

**document**—(1) *v*, to confirm (usually in writing) that a document is genuine;

(2) *v*, to bear witness that someone actually signed a document, such as a will;

(3) *n*, documentation as evidence such as policies and procedures, test reports, etc.

**due process**, *n*—a fundamental principle of fairness in all legal matters, both civil and criminal, especially in the courts.

DISCUSSION—In certification, all procedures set by the certification body must be followed for each individual so that no prejudicial or unequal treatment results.

**eligibility criteria**, *n*—in the context of personnel credentialing, published criteria or prerequisites, often benchmarks for education, training and experience, with which applicants must demonstrate compliance in order to qualify for certification or licensure.  
**ICE**

**eligibility requirements**, *n*—the documents that support and show compliance with eligibility criteria.

**endorsement**, *n*—the act of pledging or committing support to a program, proposal, or candidate.

**equating**, *n*—in the context of personnel credentialing, a statistical process for determining comparability of scores across test forms in a given credentialing program.

**equivalence/equivalence of conformity assessment results**, *n*—sufficiency of different conformity assessment results to provide the same level of assurance of conformity with regard to the same specified requirements.  
**ISO/IEC 17000**

**essential element**, *n*—in the context of personnel credentialing, a statement that is directly related to a standard and specifies what a credentialing program must do to fulfill the requirement of the standard.  
**ICE**

**examination/test**, *n*—a mechanism(s) that is part of the evaluation, which measures a candidate's knowledge or skill using one or more means, such as written, oral, practical, and observational.  
**E1187**

*essay*, *n*—an examination that requires a relatively lengthy, written response to the presentation of the writer's topic.

*multiple choice examination/test*, *n*—an assessment of knowledge in which candidates select the correct response from among several choices or alternatives.

*performance examination/test*, *n*—an examination approach wherein candidates must interact with real or simulated systems.

DISCUSSION—Performance examinations/tests can be portfolios, on demand tasks that may be essays or experiments in response to a prompt or a problem, long term projects, demonstrations of work, observations, etc.

*practical examination/test*, *n*—an examination that requires participation in an activity.

**examiner, *n***—in the context of personnel credentialing, an individual with relevant technical and personal qualifications, competent to conduct or score, or both, an examination. **ISO/IEC 17024**

**expert, *n***—an individual assigned by a credentialing body to provide specific knowledge or expertise with respect to the scope to be assessed. **NSI/ISO/IEC 17011**

**DISCUSSION**—An expert in the context of credentialing is usually a subject matter expert that assists in designing the assessments and developing a defensible passing score.

**extending accreditation, *n***—process of enlarging the scope of accreditation. **ISO/IEC 17000**

**fairness, *n***—in the context of personnel credentialing, the principle that all individuals will be treated in an equitable manner throughout the entire credentialing process. **ICE**

**governance, *n***—in the context of personnel credentialing, control or authority; often understood as a structure describing the authority to implement the policies and practices of a credentialing body. **ICE**

**grandfathering, *n***—the process by which individuals are granted a credential without being required to meet all requirements. **ICE**

**DISCUSSION**—This process is occasionally invoked when a credentialing program is initiated as a way of recognizing the experience and expertise of long-term experts or to allow grandfathered individuals to develop the initial examination form(s), or both.

**indefinite, *n***—not fixed or limited in length, size, duration, or quantity as in a lifetime credential.

**inspection, *n***—examination of a product design, product, process or installation and determination of its conformity with specific requirements or, on the basis of professional judgment, with general requirements. **ISO/IEC 17000**

**interested parties, *n***—parties with a direct or indirect interest in accreditation. **ISO/IEC 17000**

**DISCUSSION**—Direct interest refers to the interest of those who undergo accreditation; indirect interest refers to the interests of those who use or rely on accredited conformity assessment services.

**inter-rater reliability, *n***—in the context of personnel credentialing, the degree of consistency with which different raters assign scores to the same observed performance or product of a candidate.

**item analysis, *n***—in the context of personnel credentialing, a statistical report of performance of each test item that provides information regarding difficulty and other characteristics.

**item bank, *n***—in the context of personnel credentialing, the system by which test items are maintained, stored, and classified to facilitate item review, item development, and examination assembly. **ICE**

**items/test items, *n***—in the context of personnel credentialing, the questions or tasks that comprise assessment instruments against which candidates are graded. **ICE**

**DISCUSSION**—The following are elements of a multiple-choice test item:

**Stem** the premise, including the facts/details about which a test question is structured.

**Options** the choices in selected response questions.

**Key** the correct response to a test question, including all scoreable elements.

**Distracter** the incorrect or not best choice options in a multiple-choice item.

**job/practice analysis/role delineation study, *n***—in the context of personnel credentialing, any of several methods used singly or in combination to identify the performance domains and associated tasks, knowledge, or skills, or combination thereof, relating to the purpose of the credential and providing the basis for the validation of any assessments used in the credentialing process. **ICE**

**lead assessor, *n***—the individual who is given overall responsibility for specified assessment activities. **ISO/IEC 17011**

**license by endorsement, *n***—obtaining a license in a U.S. jurisdiction other than the jurisdiction of original licensure (where licensure was likely given at time of examination).

**temporary license, *n***—a practice privilege granted to an individual who is likely to meet practice standards, but who has not yet demonstrated the required level of knowledge or skill, or both.

**license, *n***—a document issued by a governmental agency, granting an individual time-limited permission to engage in a given occupation after verifying that he or she has met predetermined and standardized criteria and offering title protection for those who meet the criteria.

**DISCUSSION**—The purpose of professional/occupational licensing is to protect the public from practitioners who, because of the scope of their job functions, may have the potential to cause harm.

**licensing authority, *n***—a governmental body that reviews new and renewal applications for licenses, may conduct public hearings on new licenses, reviews and investigates alleged violations of state and local codes, and, if necessary, conducts show cause hearings.

**licensing board/entity, *n***—a governmental body that regulates the practice of a profession.

**limitation, *n***—a restriction imposed by accepted standards or organizational policy that cannot be exceeded or sidestepped by a credentialing body.

**nonconformity, *n***—the non-fulfillment of a requirement. **E1605**

**norm-referenced testing, *n***—a pass-fail standard determined by characteristics of the candidates (for example, ability) rather than characteristics of the test (for example, difficulty).

**operational items, *n***—in the context of personnel credentialing, questions on a test that are scored and contribute to the pass/fail decision.

**parent organization, *n***—the legal entity under which a credentialing program is established when the program is governed as part of a larger organization. **ICE**

**peer assessment**, *n*—assessment of a body against specified requirements by representatives of other bodies in, or candidates for, an agreement group. **ISO/IEC 17000**

**penalty**, *n*—in the context of personnel credentialing, a sanction imposed on a certificant or license holder for failure to comply with the policies, procedures, rules, or other regulatory statements imposed as a condition of awarding a credential.

**policy**, *n*—a program of actions adopted by an individual, group or government, or the set of principles on which they are based.

**pretest items**, *n*—in the context of personnel credentialing, non-scorable items that are embedded in order to collect statistical data about their future usability for scoring.

**probation**, *n*—in the context of personnel credentialing, a period during which an individual’s suitability for a job or other role is being evaluated.

**procedure**, *n*—a specified way to carry out an activity or a process. **E1605**

**product**, *n*—Result of a process [ISO 9000:2000, 3.4.2]. **ISO/IEC 17000**

**DISCUSSION**—Four generic product categories are noted in ISO 9000:2000: services (for example, transport); software (for example, computer program, dictionary); hardware (for example, engine, mechanical part); processed materials (for example, lubricant). Many products comprise elements belonging to different generic product categories. Whether the product is then called service, software, hardware or processed material depends on the dominant element.

**proctor/invigilator/test site monitor**, *n*—in the context of personnel credentialing, an individual who supervises a written examination/test to maintain a fair and consistent testing environment, but takes no part in the actual testing process.

**psychometrics**, *n*—(1) the science and technology of knowledge and performance assessment, including elements of psychology, behavioral science, education, statistics, and information technology;  
(2) application of measurement principles to psychological phenomena.

**psychometrician**, *n*—a professional who has been trained and educated to practice psychometrics.

**public member**, *n*—in the context of personnel credentialing, a representative of the general public who consumes the services provided by certificant or license holders, serving as a voting member on the governing board of a credentialing body to insure public protection and public viewpoint. **ICE**

**qualification**, *n*—skills, training, and experience required for individuals to properly perform their duties and execute their responsibilities. **D4538**

**quality**, *n*—total characteristics of an entity that bear on its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs. **E1187**

**quality assurance**, *n*—all the planned and systemic activities implemented within the quality system, and demonstrated as

needed, to provide adequate confidence that an entity will fulfill requirements for quality. **E1732**

**quality audit**, *n*—systematic and independent examination to determine whether quality activities and related results comply with planned arrangements and whether these arrangements are implemented effectively and are suitable to achieve objectives. **E1732**

**quality control**, *n*—operational techniques and activities that are used to fulfill requirements of quality. **E1187**

**quality management/quality management system**, *n*—all activities of the overall management function that determine the quality policy objectives and responsibilities, and implement them by means such as quality planning, quality control, quality assurance, and quality improvement within the quality system. **E1732**

**quality management system**, *n*—management system to direct and control an organization with regard to quality.

**quality manual**, *n*—a document stating the quality policy, quality system, and quality practices of an organization. **E1732**

**quality plan**, *n*—a document setting out the specific quality practices, resource, and sequence of activities relevant to a particular produce, service, contract, or project. **E1187**

**quality policy**, *n*—overall intentions and direction of an organization with regards to quality, as formally expressed by top management. **E1187**

**quality surveillance**, *n*—continual monitoring and verification of the status of an entity and analysis of records to ensure that specified requirements are being fulfilled. **E1187**

**raw score**, *n*—in the context of personnel credentialing, the number of points accrued for correct answers (on a knowledge test) or the actions (on a performance test) before any conversion or scaling formula is applied.

**recertification**, *n*—in the context of personnel credentialing, requirements and procedures established as part of a certification program that certificants must meet in order to ensure continuing competence or renew their certification, or both. **ICE**

**recognition/recognition of conformity assessment results**, *n*—acknowledgement of the validity of a conformity assessment result provided by another person or body. **ISO/IEC 17000**

**reciprocity**, *n*—relationship between two parties where both have the same rights and obligations towards each other. **ISO/IEC 17000**

**DISCUSSION**—Reciprocity can exist within a multilateral arrangement comprising a network of bilateral reciprocal relationships. Although rights and obligations are the same, opportunities emanating from them can differ; this can lead to unequal relationships between parties.

**recognition agreement**, *n*—agreement that is based on the acceptance by one party of results, presented by another

party, from implementation of one of more designated functional elements of a credentialing system. **E1187**

**DISCUSSION**—Typical examples of recognition arrangements are testing arrangements, inspection arrangements, and certification arrangements.

**record (as in candidate record), n**—a body of information or statistics, gathered over a period of time.

**reducing accreditation, n**—process of cancelling accreditation for part of the scope of accreditation. **ISO/IEC 17000**

**reduction in scope, n**—decreasing the scope of a credentialing program in size, extent, or degree.

**registration, n**—in the context of personnel credentialing, the process by which an agency or organization grants a time-limited status on a registry, determined by specified requirements (for example, experience, education, and examinations), thereby authorizing those individuals to practice, similar to licensure. **ICE**

**DISCUSSION**—Its purpose is to maintain a continuous record of past and current occupational status of that individual and to provide title protection or listing of practitioners maintained by an entity, without educational, experiential, or competency-based requirements; for example, maintaining a list of practitioners on a state registry or a professional designation defined by a governmental entity in professional regulations or rules.

**regulatory agency, n**—authority that is responsible for preparing, adopting and enforcing regulations.

**reinstate/reinstatement, v**—to reactivate an accreditation, certification, or license after it has been suspended, withdrawn, revoked, removed, dismissed, or deposed.

**reliability, n**—the theoretical consistency of scores or pass-fail decisions if a test could be re-administered to the same candidates without the effect of the initial exposure.

**renew/renewal, n**—to make a certification or license effective for a longer time period.

**restore, v**—in the context of personnel credentialing, to return an individual to a previously held credential status, rank, office, or position.

**restriction, n**—in the context of personnel credentialing, a limitation imposed by accepted standards or organizational policy that cannot be exceeded or sidestepped by a credentialing/licensure body.

**revoke/revocation, v**—to cancel an accreditation, certification, or license (see also **withdraw/withdrawal**).

**sample, n**—a number of items, for example, documents, records, articles, or actions, selected from a lot for review in order to draw inferences regarding the status of the entire lot. **E2135**

**sampling, n**—the process of drawing or constituting a sample.

**scaled score, n**—raw score converted to a scale to enable certain statistics to be comparable between test forms.

**scheme/certification scheme, n**—certification system as related to specified processes or services to which the same particular standards, rules, and procedure apply.

**scope, n**—in the context of personnel credentialing, the procedures, actions, and processes that are permitted for credentialed individuals.

**scope of accreditation, n**—specific conformity assessment services for which accreditation is sought or has been granted. **ISO/IEC 17000**

**security, n**—in the context of personnel credentialing, the processes and procedures undertaken to restrict access to documents, tests, examinations, test or examination questions, test scores, and personal information of the individuals who are seeking credentials to only those individuals qualified to view these documents and information under the policies of the credentialing body.

**selected-response question, n**—in the context of personnel credentialing, type of test question in which the candidate must choose from options presented, for example, multiple choice, matching, drag and drop, and hot spot.

**self assessment, n**—in the context of personnel credentialing, process by which an assessment instrument is self-administered for the specific purpose of providing performance feedback rather than a pass/fail decision. **ICE**

**specific criteria, n**—an accepted standard used in making a decision or judgment about something.

**specified requirement, n**—a need or expectation that is stated. **ISO/IEC 17000**

**DISCUSSION**—Specified requirements may be stated in normative documents such as regulations, standards, and technical specifications.

**standard, n**—a document established by consensus and approved by a recognized body, which provides for common and repeated use, rules, guidelines, or characteristics for activities or their results.

**standard deviation, n**—a measure of variation or scatter around the arithmetic average or mean. **E2161**

**standard error of measurement, n**—the amount of variation that is expected in a candidate's test score if the candidate were to take a test many times.

**standardization, n**—in the context of assessment instruments: ensuring that the process is conducted according to a specified plan in order to provide the same conditions for all candidates. **ICE**

**DISCUSSION**—In the context of scoring: ensuring that candidate responses are judged using predefined criteria in order to provide a consistent basis for evaluating all candidates.

**standard setting, n**—a procedure for determining the level of test performance considered to be adequate or better.

**supplier's declaration of conformity, n**—first-party attestation of conformity to a set of requirements. **ISO/IEC 17050-1**

**DISCUSSION**—To avoid any confusion, the expression self-certification should not be used.

**surveillance, n**—systematic examination of conformity assessment activities as a basis for maintaining the validity of the statement of conformity. **ISO/IEC 17000**

DISCUSSION—Surveillance includes both surveillance on-site assessments and other surveillance activities such as the following:

- (1) Enquiries from the accreditation body to the certification program on aspects concerning the accreditation;
- (2) Reviewing the declarations of the certification program with respect to what is covered by the accreditation;
- (3) Requests to the certification program to provide documents and records (for example, audit reports, results of internal quality control for verifying the validity of certification program services, complaints records, management review records);
- (4) Monitoring the performance of the certification program (such as results of participating in proficiency testing); and
- (5) Monitoring of certificants' compliance with relevant provisions of the certification scheme.

**suspend/suspension, n**—temporary invalidation of the statement of conformity or all or part of the specified scope of attestation. **ISO/IEC 17000**

**temporary, n**—in the context of personnel credentialing, the granting of a certification or license lasting or designed to last for a limited time.

**terminate/termination, v**—to revoke a certification or license.

**test, n**—see **examination**.

**test adaptation, n**—in the context of personnel credentialing, modifying portions of a test for use in other languages/cultures based on linguistic, cultural, and practice pattern differences.

**testing agency, n**—in the context of credentialing; the department or organization with authority to develop, administer, or score and report examinations, or a combination thereof.

**test/testing vendor, n**—in the context of personnel credentialing, a provider of examination services in the credentialing industry.

**test report/summary, n**—a document that presents examination results and other information relevant to an examination. **E1187**

**third party, n**—an individual or body that is recognized as being independent of the parties involved, as concerns the issue in question. **E1187**

**training, n**—a program developed to ensure that individuals receive the knowledge and skills necessary for qualification. **D4538**

**undue influence, n**—control of decision making over essential credentialing policy and procedures by stakeholders or other groups outside the autonomous governance structure of a credentialing program. **ICE**

**validity, n**—in the context of personnel credentialing, the degree to which accumulated evidence supports specific interpretations of all components of a credentialing program (for example, education, experience, and assessment instruments). **ICE**

**verification, n**—evaluating or testing to assure conformance with a designated specification.

**withdraw/withdrawal, n**—revocation or cancellation of the statement of conformity. **ISO/IEC 17000**

**witnessing, n**—observation of the conformity assessment body (CAB) carrying out conformity assessment services within the scope of accreditation. **ISO/IEC 17011**

**work samples, n**—in the context of personnel credentialing, representative sample of an individual's work or education, sometimes used as an assessment in the credentialing process.

**writing papers, n**—in the context of personnel credentialing, a form of assessment wherein a candidate may write a new paper or submit an unpublished paper written within a specific time period on a technical or management topic of choice.

## 4. Keywords

4.1 certificate; certification; credentialing; definitions; examination; licensure; personnel; registration; terminology; terms; training

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