

# Management System for Certification of LCA Professionals

## 1. Preamble

- 1.1. This document describes how the American Center for Life Cycle Assessment (ACLCA) and its parent, the Institute for Environmental Research and Education (IERE) manage its program for certification of individual LCA professionals in conformance with ISO 17024. IERE is a not-for-profit 501(c)3 organization incorporated under the laws of the United States of America and the State of Vermont. Its principal place of business is in Vashon, Washington.

The mission of the ACLCA is to build capacity and knowledge of LCA.

ACLCA performed a survey to determine whether a certification was desired. The survey was conducted via the internet and had participation from those conducting and commissioning LCA's as well as those using LCA results for decision-making. Over 100 respondents indicated widespread support for a certification (only 17 percent opposed certification).

The formation of this management system was developed by a management committee composed of interested parties. These included representatives of industry, academia, consulting firms, and NGO's, and had participation from non-USA individuals. The charge to this committee can be found at <http://lcacenter.org/management-charge.html>.

The criteria for certification were developed by a Criteria Committee, with similar representation. That committee's charge can be seen at <http://lcacenter.org/criteria-charge.html>. The ongoing functions of these committees are to be combined into a single committee, the certification committee, effective one year from initial implementation of this system.

## 2. Definitions

- 2.1. LCA: Environmental Life Cycle Assessment
- 2.2. LCA Professional: an individual with the knowledge and skills to perform an LCA
- 2.3. LCA Certified Professional: An LCA professional whose skills have been verified through the ACLCA certification procedure.
- 2.4. ACLCA: American Center for Life Cycle Assessment.
- 2.5. Criteria: objective standards used to judge the competence of LCA professionals.
- 2.6. ISO 17024" The international standard Conformity assessment — General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons
- 2.7. NGO: Non-governmental organization

- 2.8. IERE: The Institute for Environmental Research and Education
- 2.9. ACLCA American Center for Life Cycle Assessment

### **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **3.1. Certification Criteria**

- 3.1.1. The technical criteria for the certification are developed and maintained by a criteria committee in the first instance, and by the Certification Committee ongoing.

#### **3.2. Criteria for participation on the Certification Committee**

- 3.2.1. The Certification committee must include representatives of the following stakeholders in the process

- Producers of LCA's
- Consumers of LCA's
- Interested parties

No group should represent more than 50% of the committee

- 3.2.2. Terms of participation on this committee are for 3 years, staggered and renewable.

#### **3.3. Role of the Certification Committee**

- 3.3.1. The certification committee is responsible for maintaining and updating certification criteria and ongoing updating of the certification management system.

#### **3.4. Financial Issues**

- 3.4.1. All financial issues are the responsibility of the Board of IERE, implemented through IERE staff. The IERE board is responsible for hiring, firing and reviewing the IERE executive director, and approving the budget annually. It also receives reports on the status of the certification program at least annually, and makes suggestions for improvement.

#### **3.5. Implementation**

- 3.5.1. All implementation of this certification is the responsibility of the IERE Executive director, directly or through any staff or contractors.

Implementation includes:

- Managing all documentation, including procedures
- Hiring reviewing and replacing any staff, contractors, affiliates or volunteers
- Assuring that examinations are performed in an impartial manner
- Making the certification decision and providing certificates of certification

- Monitoring the function of the program
- Reporting to the IERE board on program status
- Taking corrective action to improve the program as necessary

3.5.2. ACLCA and its parent IERE will not undertake direct training of LCA professionals, although it may facilitate the development of training materials to be used by colleges and universities to train LCA professionals.

### **3.6. Complaints**

3.6.1. From time to time, ACLCA may receive complaints about the performance of a certified individual, or someone falsely claiming certification. These complaints will be investigated and a decision made for corrective or disciplinary action, (including potential revocation of certification and legal action). The body receiving such complaints is the ACLCA Executive Committee, in accordance with their procedure, which is posted on the ACLCA website.

3.6.2. All LCA Certified Professionals are required to sign a document indicating they adhere to the ACLCA ethics statement, as posted on the ACLCA website.

## **4. Certification Criteria**

### **4.1. Prerequisites**

Candidates for certification must meet the prerequisites by one of the methods outlined on the ACLCA website. From time to time these prerequisites and mechanisms for meeting prerequisites may be altered by the criteria committee.

### **4.2. Examination**

The applicant must pass a written examination in English, demonstrating knowledge of the criteria for LCACP. These criteria are available on the ACLCA website, and may be changed from time to time by the Certification Committee.

### **4.3 Maintenance of Certification**

4.3.1 The LCA Certified Professional certification is valid for three years, beginning in the year in which certification was achieved. Certification is maintained through the accumulation of continuing educational units.

4.3.2 The details of the recertification process is described in the LCACP Certification renewal guidelines, which are posted on the ACLCA

website. These guidelines may be changed from time to time by the certification committee.

## **5. Mechanics of the Certification**

### **5.1. Physical Examination Facilities**

Facilities for physical examination will be quiet, provide adequate level writing space and adequate lighting for the candidates. The candidates will be placed at least four feet (1.25 meters) apart or will have visual barriers between candidates. Upon request, the facilities will be adjusted to accommodate the needs of individuals with disabilities.

### **5.2. Advertisement of the Certification Examinations**

5.2.1. In order to assure that the examinations are freely available to all, the examinations will be advertised in the following locations

- The ACLCA website(s), including a website that includes all relevant testing information
- The ACLCA email list
- Potentially, relevant journals and listserves
- Via brochures or flyers at relevant trade shows and conferences.

5.2.2. The advertisement shall include, at a minimum

- The date, time, duration and location of the examination
- The certification to which the examination refers
- Any prerequisites for the examination
- A person and contact information to obtain further information

### **5.3. Documentation Control**

5.3.1. ACLCA maintains all certification documents for at least two years after the expiry of applicability. These documents include

- 5.3.1.1. Versions of all procedures
- 5.3.1.2. Documentation of qualifications of proctors and examiners
- 5.3.1.3. Certification applications
- 5.3.1.4. Testing materials
- 5.3.1.5. Completed tests
- 5.3.1.6. Documents showing certification decisions
- 5.3.1.7. Complaints documentation and resolution
- 5.3.1.8. A current list of all certified professionals
- 5.3.1.9. Monitoring & corrective & preventive action reports

5.3.2. All documents containing personal information shall be maintained confidential, and shared only with the written permission of the person.

- 5.3.3. All documents are stored in a secured location. Documents are stored as either electronic documents or as hard copies, with electronic copies preferred. At regular intervals all electronic copies will be backed up and stored in a secure location.

#### **5.4. Application Documents**

Application forms for certification will be available on the ACLCA website. They will collect information about the candidate including

- 5.4.1. Name
- 5.4.2. Address and other contact information
- 5.4.3. Affiliation
- 5.4.4. Any needed assistance to undertake the examination
- 5.4.5. Confirmation of commitment to the ACLCA code of ethics and compliance with the relevant provisions of the certification scheme,
- 5.4.6. Commitment to make claims regarding certification only with respect to the scope for which certification has been granted,
- 5.4.7. Commitment not to use the certification in such a manner as to bring the ACLCA into disrepute, and not to make any statement regarding the certification which ACLCA may consider misleading or unauthorized,
- 5.4.8. Commitment to discontinue the use of all claims to certification that contains any reference to ACLCA or certification upon suspension or withdrawal of certification, and to return any certificates issued by the ACLCA, and
- 5.4.9. Commitment not to use the certificate in a misleading manner.
- 5.4.10. A photograph

#### **5.5. Certification Documents**

- 5.5.1. Certification certificates contain the following information:
- a) the name of the certified person and a unique certification number;
  - b) ACLCA's name as the certification body;
  - c) a reference to the competence standard or other relevant documents, including issue, on which the certification is based;
  - d) the scope of the certification, including validity conditions and limitations;
  - e) the effective date of certification and date of expiry.

#### **5.6. Qualification of Proctors/examiners**

- 5.6.1. All certifications is based solely on the information gathered during the examination process.
- 5.6.2. All proctors are trained on how to maintain document control and examination conditions per the ACLCA procedure. They will sign a document that confirms they understand the relevant procedures, and that includes
  - their name
  - affiliation & job title

- Contact information
- 5.6.3. All examiners will be trained on the document control procedure and must sign a document that confirms them to
- Be familiar with the ACLCA certification scheme,
  - Have a thorough knowledge of the relevant examination methods and examination documents,
  - Be appropriately competent in the field of LCA,
  - Be fluent both in writing and orally in English, and
  - Be free from any interest so that they can make impartial and non-discriminatory judgments
  - And includes their name, affiliation and background
- 5.6.4. In the event that an examiner has a potential conflict of interest with a particular candidate, efforts will be taken to address the potential conflict, and those efforts documented.
- 5.6.5. Written examinations will be stripped of personal identifiers prior to being evaluated.

## **6. Monitoring, Corrective and Preventive Action**

ACLCA will review the certification program at regular intervals and as needed. These reviews will take place

- 6.1. At the completion of each examination event. ACLCA will discuss the event with the examiner and seek ways to improve the events.
- 6.2. Annually, an internal audit to review the overall program. A report will be submitted to the IERE Board, including any suggestions for improvement. The audit will review documentation of examination events, certification statistics and all open corrective actions.
- 6.3. In the event of complaints being raised. Resolutions of the complaint will include a report to be shared with the source of the complaint.
- 6.4. Complaints will be addressed with the view to permanently correct any problem, and may require modifications of procedures or the management system itself. In the event of the management system being changed, ACLCA will notify the certification committee who may intervene.

## **7. Use of Certification Mark**

### 7.1. Approved Certification Mark

ACLCA Certified individuals may use the following approved ACLCA certification mark to emphasize ACLCA Certification on business media such as letterheads, business cards, website and other appropriate business communication media.



## 7.2. Guidelines of Use

These guidelines must be followed when using the ACLCA certification mark:

- 7.2.1. The certification mark may not be revised or altered in any way. It must be displayed in the same form as produced by ACLCA and cannot be reproduced unless such reproduction is identical to the certification mark provided by ACLCA.
- 7.2.2. The ACLCA certification mark may be used only on business cards, stationary, forms of certificate holders, letterhead, websites, inspection tags, and similar documents on which names and addresses of businesses are prominently displayed.
- 7.2.3. The ACLCA certification mark may not be used in any manner that detracts from the intent of use espoused by ACLCA.
- 7.2.4. The certification mark may not be used in any manner which would tend to imply a connection between ACLCA and the certification which, in fact, may not exist. This includes any use of the certification mark that the public might construe as an endorsement, approval or sponsorship by ACLCA of a certification holder's business, or which might be taken to support or encourage a certification holder's sale of a product or services. You are allowed to print the certification mark on an advertisement or product literature.
- 7.2.5. Without limiting the foregoing restrictions, the certification mark may in no case be shown larger than 4 inches or 100 centimeters in size on a full page (8.5"x 11") or proportionally on a smaller page.
- 7.2.6. No person gains any rights whatsoever in the logo or its use; it remains the property of ACLCA. ACLCA reserves the right in its sole discretion to require the certification mark's removal from any location or object ACLCA feels does not comply with these guidelines, or which could or does discredit

ACLCA. Use of the ACLCA certification mark is prohibited if your ACLCA Certification is expired.

- 7.2.7. It is understood and acknowledged that use of ACLCA's certification mark is a privilege. Permission to use ACLCA's certification mark is granted at the discretion of IERE Board of Directors, or its designee, for permissible uses only. Those persons who have been granted permission to use the certification mark do so pursuant to the rules and guidelines established by IERE Board of Directors. Persons granted permission to use ACLCA's certification mark must familiarize themselves with the established rules and guidelines for use and must execute approved agreements setting forth ACLCA's rules and guidelines for use.
- 7.2.8. ACLCA retains the right, at its sole discretion, to suspend or revoke any person's permission to use its certification mark. In most circumstances, when ACLCA is informed that a person is misusing the certification mark, ACLCA will provide the person notice of the misuse and a reasonable opportunity to comply with ACLCA's rules and guidelines. However, ACLCA retains the right to suspend or revoke privileges without notice and an opportunity to correct, particularly when the violation is of a gross nature and more immediate action is necessary to stop misuse.
- 7.2.9. Actions by ACLCA to suspend or revoke use of the certification mark will be communicated in writing to the person whose privileges are being suspended or revoked and to all other persons affected by the decision. ACLCA may also publicize its actions on its website and/or any other of its publications. Should any person continue use of ACLCA's certification mark after notice of suspension or revocation, ACLCA shall seek full equitable and/or legal remedies through a court of competent jurisdiction.