

FACT SHEET: KEY ELEMENTS OF A CERTIFICATION BODY

1. Purpose & International Standards Alignment

A Certification Body (CB) exists to protect the **public, employers, regulators, and the environment** by verifying that professionals meet established and defensible standards of competence.

- Aligns with **ISO/IEC 17024** (certification of persons), **ISO/IEC 17021** (management systems), and **ISO/IEC 17065** (products, processes, services).
- Certification is distinct from training — the CB's legitimacy rests on **independent assessment** of knowledge, skills, and ethical conduct.

2. Governance, Impartiality & Integrity

- **Independent Governance:** Operates under bylaws, with boards and committees ensuring impartial decisions.
- **Conflict of Interest Safeguards:** Separation from training and commercial interests.
- **Transparency:** Policies, financial stewardship, and decision-making are open to scrutiny.
- **Ethical Oversight:** Includes independent ethics and disciplinary committees.

3. Scheme Development & Maintenance

- **Job Task Analysis (JTA):** Defines the knowledge, skills, and abilities required in practice.
- **Scheme Documentation:** Clear eligibility pathways, exam structure, ethics, and renewal requirements.
- **Regular Updates:** Ensures schemes reflect evolving science, technology, and regulation.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Input from practitioners, regulators, academics, and employers.

4. Certification Process Management

- **Application & Eligibility:** Fair and consistent review of education, experience, and prerequisites.
- **Examinations:** Psychometrically valid, legally defensible, and secure.
- **Certification Decision:** Made impartially, based only on evidence of competence.
- **Records & Confidentiality:** Compliance with data protection standards (e.g., General Data Protection Regulation GDPR, California Consumer Privacy CCPA).
- **Public Registry:** Transparent listing of certificants in good standing for employer/regulator verification.

5. Surveillance, Renewal & Continuing Competence

- **Surveillance Mechanisms:** Ensure certificants continue to meet standards post-certification.
- **Renewal Requirements:** Periodic recertification tied to PDHs/CEUs, ethics attestations, or re-examination.
- **Continuing Competence:** Maintains alignment with emerging regulations, environmental conditions, and technical best practices.

6. Professional Development & Member Support

- **Lifelong Learning:** Recognition of PDHs/CEUs for maintaining credentials.
- **Guidance Materials:** Study guides, handbooks, and technical references (without compromising exam security).
- **Workshops & Webinars:** Ongoing training opportunities to support career growth.
- **Networking Opportunities:** Conferences, peer forums, and directories for collaboration.

7. Standards, Best Practices & Market Intelligence

- **Guidance Documents:** Codes of practice, BMP manuals, and compliance tools.
- **Benchmarking Data:** Reports on industry trends, wages, and practice outcomes.
- **Innovation Promotion:** Support for R&D, new methods, and technological adoption.

8. Records, Confidentiality & Data Protection

- **Secure Records:** Long-term, accessible records for certification history.
- **Confidentiality:** Protection of candidate data and exam materials.
- **Data Protection Compliance:** Adherence to international privacy regulations.

9. Ethical & Public Protection Role

- **Code of Ethics:** Mandatory adherence to professional and ethical standards.
- **Disciplinary Procedures:** Transparent enforcement mechanisms for violations.
- **Public Protection:** Certification designed to safeguard **health, safety, and the environment**.
- **Advocacy:** Represents professional and public interests in regulatory and policy arenas.

10. Financial Stewardship

- **Mission-Driven Operation:** Fees support certification integrity, not commercial training.
- **Independent Audits:** Ensure accountability and trust.
- **Fair Pricing:** Fees benchmarked against other professional credentials.

SUMMARY

A certification body is not a training vendor — it is an **independent authority**, operating under **international standards, impartial governance, and strict ethical obligations**, with the sole mission of **ensuring competence and protecting the public**.