

**Institute of the Certification of the Figures of the Prevention (ICFP)  
(Italy)  
REGISTRATION BOARD OF OCCUPATIONAL HYGIENISTS  
SUMMARY OF THE PROCESS OF ACCREDITATION**

**Introduction**

ICFP accredited itself by the EU “UNI CEI EN ISO/IEC 17024:2003: General requirements for bodies certifying persons”.

ISO/IEC 17024:2003 is an International Standard which sets out criteria for an organization's certification program for individual persons. The standard specifies requirements for a body certifying persons against specific requirements, including the development and maintenance of a certification scheme for personnel.

ISO 17024 is designed to harmonize the personnel certification process worldwide.

ICFP, specifying the criteria that the professional figures must have, guarantees that the certification process of the Industrial Hygienists and Industrial Hygiene Technicians meets the criteria of the EU over cited.

**Application for the ICFP Process**

Candidates must submit an application form detailing education, and work experience, and other professional certifications and memberships.

Two professional references (at least one ROH) must be submitted separately, as well as official transcript(s).

The ICFP verifies all information submitted in the application form: in particular university degree, successive educational curriculum, experience (almost five recent activities have to be well showed); therefore, if the information meet the request, the candidates are accepted for the successive examination.

Once a candidate is deemed eligible to challenge the exam the Registrar issues the candidate a “Candidate Identification Number” which is to be used for the written examination process to ensure there is no bias in grading the examinations.

To reiterate, in dealing with all submissions, and documentation, the ICFP Board follows privacy legislation, as detailed by jurisdiction. Processes have been established for document control and record retention around all aspects of in order to guarantee the registration process and to show always clearly how decision making is other affairs of the Board.

**Summary of Examination Process**

The ICFP examination consists of two parts: a written and then an oral examination

The written examination is made up of essay and a multiple-choice essay questions.

The 2 hours essay and multiple-choice sections of the exam are each one half day (3.5 hours) in duration. The essay section consists of five questions while the multiple-choice section consists of typically 50 questions.

Each examination location has one is guaranteed by an Exam Commission (two Components at least) proctor who is a current ICFP members; the President of this Committee, typically is a current or past member of the Board of Directors of ICFP. The proctor of the Commission verifies the identity of the candidates, provides them with basic instructions, and ensures no outside materials are brought into the exam location.

The proctor returns the exams to the Exam Committee Chair immediately upon the completion of the examinations. The Commission evaluates the responses of the Candidates and then orally communicates the results to the candidates.

Those ones that who successfully complete the written examination are eligible to go on to the oral examination administered by a committee of three ICFP Committee oral examiners. The oral exam is approximately half an hour in duration. The process is similar to an interview and the objective is to evaluate the candidate's breadth and depth of knowledge, professional judgment, as well as problem-solving and communication skills. The candidate is presented with

a set of three or four hypothetical scenarios, one at a time and not necessarily taken directly from his/her own field of expertise. He/she is given an opportunity to gather their thoughts on the scenario, jot down any notes or calculations they wish, and, once prepared, to discuss their thoughts, comments, opinions and conclusions with the group of examiners. The candidate is advised that there are no specific right or wrong answers which must be given, but rather that the process is intended to evaluate the candidate's overall approach to each issue as well as their problem solving and communications skills. The examiners will assess the candidate's competency through evaluation of his or her verbal responses to each successive scenario put forward by the group as well as to further questions elicited by the candidate's initial presentation of thoughts regarding the scenario. Each oral exam scenario has a set of key concepts/factors that it is expected the candidate will touch on in more or less detail, dependant upon their depth of knowledge and experience with the particular hygiene issue(s) involved.

### **Process for Evaluation of Examinations**

The Exam Committee (two components at least) distributes extracted questions and answers (the extraction is on the behalf of the Director of ICFP) Chair photocopies each essay answer and distributes the answers to the members of the committee for marking. Two committee members mark the application form and the questions reported. Otherwise electronic comparison is made, if possible.

All candidate responses for the same question are distributed to the same two members of the Exam Committee for grading. For example, Question 1 will be graded by the same two markers to ensure the answers are consistently evaluated. Members grade independently and do not share grades with each other; however they are encouraged to consult with each other on appropriate content for the answers.

Exam Committee members do not know the identity of the candidates; each exam has only the unique Candidate Identification Number on it. The markers return the results to the Exam Committee Chair by Candidate Identification number and are never aware of the actual identity of the Candidate. The overall pass grade for the essay and multiple-choice questions is established by the Exam Committee Chair prior to the examination, based on the degree of difficulty and breadth of the questions selected and written down.

For 2007, a passing grade on the essay component was 60%, and on the multiple-choice component, it was 50%. Candidates must pass both components to receive an overall passing grade on the written portion of the examination so as to move on to the oral examination.

Grades are collated by the Exam Committee Chair. If a discrepancy between two markers for any single essay question (>20%) occurs, another marker is assigned to review the answer and provide a third opinion (the third marker may be the Chair). The discrepancy will be resolved when two of three agree within 20%. The grade assigned is the average of the two most closely agreeing grades.

The multiple-choice portion of the written examination is marked by the Chair from a preset answer coding sheet.

The Commission Chair submits the results by Candidate Identification Number to the Director of ICFP Registrar who notifies both the Exam Committee Board of Directors and the candidates of the results. The successful candidates are then contacted by the Chief Oral Examiner Exam Committee (via Secretary) to arrange the oral examination.

At least two three oral examiners, including the Chief Oral Examiner, will assess the candidate's competency through evaluation of his or her verbal responses to questions or a scenario put forward by the group. The examiners will meet prior to conducting the oral exam to determine the questions they will ask and the desired responses. The examiners utilize established standards when assessing the candidates. Each examiner will individually assess the candidates on each question and then, following the exam, the examiners will review all assessments and determine the candidate's outcome.

There is an appeal process for candidates to challenge the results of either portion of the examination.

### **Process for Setting Examination**

There is a large data bank of questions that are drawn from each year in setting the exam. The Director of the ICFP evaluates each year the data bank and usually request to the Scientific Committee to analyze the questions and the answers and to adopt adequate questions. ICFP are actively encouraged to submit new questions to the data bank as part of their professional development. The Exam Committee Chair and Chief Oral Examiner evaluate and approve the new questions and their respective answers prior to put in the data bank. Just before the session of the exam the Director of the ICFP extracts the chooses from their respective data bank of the questions each year, in setting the exam needed. The questions are designed to cover a sufficient breadth of knowledge from the expected areas of competency of an Occupational Hygienist.

### **Mechanism for Maintenance of ICFP.**

The registration maintenance process is administered on behalf of the Board of ICFP (President and Director) Directors of the ICFP Maintenance Committee. Their mission is to manage the registration maintenance process to ensure that peoples who are certified maintain their registration through ongoing education and professional development. One ICFP Director acts as the committee chair and is considered the Registration Maintenance Coordinator. All other members are current and active OHs. The Director of ICFP verifies the files; if he/she verifies the agreement with the criteria reported in the decision schema (above, see box), automatically proposes to the President to validate or not the maintenance of the ICFP certification.

The President communicates to the professional the temporally unmaintenance of the ICFP Certification; proposes to the Certification Board the definitive unmaintenance of the ICFP Certification otherwise the request of the auto-skip out from the ICFP Certification Register; on request of the Certification Board disposes in anyone of the two above cases to remove of the ICFP Certification.

The Director of ICFP is eligible to nominate the committee following the accountable for administering the registration maintenance process, under the direction of the Registration Maintenance Coordinator, in a fair and timely manner to maintain the credibility of the title of "Registered Occupational Hygienist" files of the professional that maintain ICFP Certification.

Each ROH must obtain a minimum of 50 registration maintenance points in every 5-year reporting period. Points may be claimed in any of seven individual categories as follows:

- Professional Practice Max 5 points/yr and 25 points total
- Professional Society Membership Max 1 point/yr and 5 points total
- Technical/Professional Committee Service No maximum
- Teaching/Presentations Max of 10 points total
- Conferences and Educational Courses No maximum
- Publications No maximum
- Other Activities No maximum

### **Criteria of the maintenance of Italian ICFP certification**

1. No I.C.F.P. reclamation against; I.C.F.P. request a declaration of absence of reclamation, under direct responsibility of the professional;
2. ICFP surveillance on professional skills: on their responsibility, ICFP requests each year the certified professionals to present an auto declaration concerning as the industrial Hygienist's activities hold during the year before as that the ethic code has been observed.
3. auto declaration of the professional involved to of their participation at least to one professional course concerning the Industrial Hygiene topics;
4. regular annual fee (this permits the envoy of printed/web documentation by decision of ICFP);
5. frequency to the free evaluation course organized by ICFP during the third year of maintenance aimed to individuate any specific useful training for the professional involved to.