



Institute for  
Credentialing  
Excellence™

## Accreditation through ICE: A Benchmark of Quality

Promoting standards for excellence in credentialing.  
Providing the resources and community to achieve excellence.

Learn more online at [credentialingexcellence.org/accreditation](https://credentialingexcellence.org/accreditation)



"The Commission for Case Manager Certification (CCMC®) is dedicated to upholding the highest standards for its certification program. NCCA accreditation demonstrates that CCMC, as an organization, has met rigorous standards and further validates the CCM® credential as the gold standard in case manager credentialing. CCMC has found this distinction to be important to both the CCM certificants and their employers."

—MaryBeth Kurland, CAE, Chief Operations Officer,  
Commission for Case Manager Certification®

# What Is Accreditation?

Accreditation is the process by which a credentialing or educational program is evaluated against defined standards by a third party and is awarded recognition when found in compliance with these standards.

## The Value of Accreditation

By earning accreditation an organization demonstrates to the profession it represents and the general public it serves that its credentialing program has been reviewed by a panel of impartial experts who have determined that the program has met the stringent standards set by the credentialing community.

The Institute for Credentialing Excellence (ICE) offers accreditation for both certification and certificate programs. NCCA accreditation is specifically intended for certification programs, while ACAP accreditation suits the needs of assessment-based certificate programs.

## NCCA Accreditation



In 1977, in cooperation with the federal government, the National Commission for Health Certifying Agencies (NCHCA) was formed to help ensure the health, welfare, and safety of the public through accreditation of certification programs in healthcare. NCHCA evolved into the current NCCA in 1989 to expand the professions it served. NCCA's Standards for the Accreditation of Certification Programs were the first standards for professional certification programs developed by the industry.

AS OF SEPTEMBER 2016



The Standards require demonstration of a valid and reliable process for development, implementation, maintenance, and governance of certification programs. NCCA uses a rigorous peer review process to:

- Establish accreditation standards
- Evaluate compliance with the standards
- Recognize programs that demonstrate compliance
- Serve as a resource on quality certification to ICE and its members

Applicants for accreditation are evaluated based on their governance structure and certification processes and procedures regardless of the nature of their specialty, making the NCCA standards applicable to all professions and industries. NCCA uses The Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing (AERA, APA, and NCME) as a foundation for its accreditation standards.

NCCA accredited programs certify individuals in a range of occupations, including nursing, financial planning, occupational therapy, addiction counseling, crane operation, and others.

For more information, visit [credentialingexcellence.org/NCCA](http://credentialingexcellence.org/NCCA)

# ISO 17024



INTERNATIONAL  
ACCREDITATION  
SERVICE®

**NEW!** ICE has partnered with the International Accreditation Service, Inc. (IAS) to provide accreditation for personnel certification programs to ISO 17024, an international standard for bodies operating the certification of persons. The ICE-IAS partnership offers ISO 17024 accreditation for programs currently accredited by NCCA as well as programs seeking both accreditations at the same time.

There is overlap in requirements for both standards, and there is much efficiency to be gained when accrediting to both standards through ICE; namely, a streamlined application review and reduced costs. Application for accreditation is completed within the current online system used by NCCA, with an additional ISO 17024 section to be completed for standards that are not already satisfied by NCCA Standards compliance.

## ACAP Accreditation



The ICE 1100 Standard, an American National Standard, was developed in 2012 to provide guidance to organizations seeking to develop high-quality, assessment-based certificate programs (ABC). Accreditation for education and training programs provides a third-party validation that your program has met recognized national and international standards for development and implementation of education and training.

The 1100 Standard highlights the essential elements of a high-quality certificate program, focusing on eight main sections:

- Scope of Program
- Organizational Structure, Resources, and Responsibilities to Stakeholders
- Conduct and Oversight of Certificate Program Activities
- Management of Program Records, Documents, and Materials
- Quality Assurance and Program Evaluation
- Development, Delivery, and Maintenance of Education/Training
- Development, Conduct, and Evaluation of Assessments
- Issuance and Use of Certificates

The certificate program review is a rigorous peer-review process. The certification program is evaluated based on process and products, not content. Therefore, the ICE 1100 Standard is applicable to all types of roles.

For more information, visit [credentialexcellence.org/ACAP](https://credentialexcellence.org/ACAP)

# What's Best for My Organization?

Accreditation of either type of program listed below through ICE requires compliance with rigorous standards for development, implementation, maintenance, and monitoring. Independent recognition lends validity and reliability to the process, thus providing defensibility and legitimacy to a credential.

## Certification Program

- Primary focus is on assessing knowledge, skills, or competency already acquired
- Goal is validation through testing
- Independent of a specific learning event
- Best used to assure baseline competencies, differentiate professionals
- Awards designations to recognize achievement
- Broad in scope



## Certificate Program

- Primary focus is to provide instruction and training
- Goal is to acquire specific knowledge, skills, and competencies
- Assessment is used to evaluate the mastery of intended learning outcomes and is linked directly to the learning event
- May be narrower in scope



## Looking for additional help and resources?

ICE has many tools and resources to help support your organization. Whether you are considering accreditation, or are looking to grow existing programs, we are here to help.



**Online Course**  
Foundations of  
ABC Programs



**Webcast**  
Assessment-  
Based Certificate  
Programs: Why  
They May Be  
Preferable



**Webcast**  
NCCA Revised  
Standards Training



**Whitepaper**  
Background Paper  
on the ICE 1100  
2010(E) Standard



**Whitepaper**  
Defining Features of  
Quality Certification  
and Assessment-  
Based Certificate  
Programs

For more information, and to learn more about the application process, please visit [credentialexcellence.org/Accreditation](http://credentialexcellence.org/Accreditation), call (202) 367-1165, or email [info@credentialexcellence.org](mailto:info@credentialexcellence.org).

ICE members receive discounts! *Not a member?* **Join today.**