



# ACADEMY CERTIFICATION EXAMS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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## Academy Certification Exams (ACE)

Academy Certification Exams (ACE) aims to provide fire sprinkler professionals with an up-to-date, industry-corroborated, and professionally relevant assessment process. Our Water-Based Fire Protection exams for Inspector I and Inspector II have been developed by Academy Certification Exams through collaboration with leading industry specialists and have been reviewed for accuracy, significance, and viability. The exam itself is generated from a large database of approved, peer-reviewed questions, and through randomization, each exam is statistically unique. Our exams are administered by Academy Certification Exam staff or a neutral third-party professional proctor. Exams are held in various locations with every attempt made to provide convenient and timely access to our certification process.

## Certifications

The ACE Inspection and Testing of Water-Based Systems certification program is for technicians working in the inspection and testing of existing water-based fire protection systems.

Eligibility for ACE Certification is based on different factors depending on which certification level is sought. Please note both continuing education **and** work experience requirements must be met to be eligible to sit for an exam.

Certification is specific to the individual qualifying and not to the organization or employer.

### Water-based Inspector Level I

A Level I Inspector certification is designed for ITM technicians who perform ITM duties under supervision.

#### Prerequisites for Certification

- A minimum of 16 hours of relevant continuing education in the previous 24 months prior to the exam

#### Prerequisites for Recertification

- A minimum of 16 hours of relevant continuing education since the last certifying exam
- A minimum of 2,000 hours of ITM of Water-based Fire Protection experience since the certifying exam date.

### Water-based Inspector Level II

A Level II certification is designed for ITM technicians who work independently to perform normal ITM duties.

### Prerequisites for Certification

- A minimum of 32 hours of ACE approved continuing education in previous 24 months prior to the exam.
- A minimum of 2,000 hours of work experience in the field of inspection and testing of water-based fire protection systems in the previous calendar year.

### Prerequisites for Recertification

- A minimum of 16 hours of relevant continuing education since the last certifying exam
- A minimum of 2,000 hours of ITM of Water-based Fire Protection experience since the certifying exam date.

All prerequisites must be met PRIOR to the exam date. If a participant does not complete the prerequisites prior to the exam, a \$150 late fee may be assessed. ACE will allow a seven-calendar day grace period to meet the prerequisites and upload documentation to their account. If the prerequisites are not provided within the grace period, the test will be void and the participant will have to pay to test at a future date.

### **Continuing Education Requirements**

Training is essential to growing within the industry. Good training can provide an increased knowledge and improved job performance. ACE places a high value on training and requires training for certification and recertification.

ACE does not require a specific training provider or training program. We do partner with several training organizations to provide testing opportunities following a training course. However, ACE does not review or approve training courses. ACE recognizes industry approved continuing education credits towards certification or recertification. Proof of completion is required for all continuing education credits used for certification. ACE reserves the right to request the course description and objectives for training submitted.

Continuing education should be specific to Inspection, Testing or Maintenance (ITM) of Water-based Fire Protection Systems or NFPA 25. For those testing for Level II only, a maximum of eight (8) continuing education credits can be applied for training specific to other certifications such as backflow, alarms, OSHA, etc. For example, only a maximum of 8.0 continuing education credits could be applied specific to backflow inspections or repair even if the course was more than 8.0 hours. **Those testing for Level I and ALL recertifications must have 16 hours of training specific to ITM or NFPA 25.**

1 Contact Hour = 1 Continuing Education Credit

At a minimum, training documentation should contain:

- Date(s) attended,
- Location of the training
- Name of the company or organization that sponsored the sessions,

- Title and/or Subject matter of the sessions
- Signature of the training provider
- If necessary, a brief description of the subject matter’s relevance to the practice area if it is not clear from the title of the session.

### Work Experience

ACE requires work experience to test for an Inspector II or higher as well as for all recertifications. Work experience is documented using the Work Experience Validator Form. The Validator must be able to verify and confirm that the participant has met the necessary qualifications and shows understanding in the use of NFPA 25. A Validator can be a work manager, immediate supervisor, human resources representative or in some exceptions the participant if they are the owner of the company.

### Exam Information

Exams consist of multiple-choice questions, with each question having one correct answer. Each exam is automatically generated from a test bank containing hundreds of exam-level appropriate questions.

Refer to the content overview for topics covered for each certification.


Certification	Exam Questions	Time
Inspector I	75 questions	100 minutes
Inspector II Next Step	125 questions	170 minutes
Inspector II Direct	145 questions	195 minutes


A score of 70% or higher is required to pass for all ACE certifications.

### Materials Permitted in the Exam

Due to the nature of both the profession and the assessment, Academy Certification Exams’ Inspector I and Inspector II exams are “open-book”, allowing the use of various materials for reference. Exam takers will receive a list of allowed materials, including those specific to the State where applicable. Unless otherwise indicated in the confirmation email, only official bound or copies in binders, of the materials listed will be allowed into the exam room.

ACE allows the following materials to be used during the exam:

 **NFPA 25 Standard for the Inspection, Testing, and Maintenance of Water-based Fire Protection Systems**

 **State specific Reference Materials** (Available on the ACE website and provided onsite)

Please refer to the ACE website “About the Exam” page to ensure you have the correct edition of the NFPA standard for the exam.

NFPA Handbooks are not permitted. Only bound copies of the NFPA codes and standards books will be allowed. Any employer-issued copies of these materials MUST be spiral bound or in a binder. NO LOOSE PHOTOCOPIES. Books may contain *minimal* handwritten notes. Highlighted passages and *permanent* tabs are allowed.

You will also be allowed to bring in one programmable calculator. You will NOT be allowed to use the calculator function on cell phones, laptops, tablets, or other media-devices. Any electronic device other than the allowed calculator must be powered down and put away during the entirety of the exam.

ALL materials will be checked for appropriateness by the proctor prior to AND following the exam. No notes or comments about the exam, topics, questions, format, scoring, etc., will be allowed to leave the exam room. The exam and details surrounding it are confidential. This will be outlined in our Academy Certification Exams Non-Disclosure Statement, which must be signed before turning in your exam. Without your signature on this agreement, your exam will not be graded.

### **Proctoring**

Integrity of the Exam and the process is of the highest priority. Exams are administered by Academy Certification Exam staff or a neutral third-party proctor. Proctoring during the exams will be multi-level and thorough. Proctors will require valid state-issued photo identification, check all reference material coming in and leaving the site, employ the use of seating charts, and physically supervise the testing site.

### **Exam Registration**

To register for an exam, applicants are required to create an account with ACE at [www.academyexams.com](http://www.academyexams.com). Once the account is created, a confirmation email will be sent to the email address provided with a link to confirm the account. Once the account is confirmed, the applicant will use this account to schedule exams, apply for recertification, provide any necessary required information and to update contact information.

**Please note:** The email address provided in the Account Profile will be the email address Academy Certification Exams (ACE) uses to communicate important information to the applicant. This includes exam results and other exam-related correspondence. Using a generic

work email or someone else's email address may result in giving other people access to private information regarding exam performance.

Upon registration, an Exam Enrollment File will be created in our database and the information provided will be used to determine eligibility for the exam selected. The eligibility review will not be started until payment is received. As previously noted in the Certification section, if verification of both continuing education hours AND required work history is not completed by the date of the exam, the exam will NOT be graded until all eligibility requirements have been met. If the eligibility requirements are not provided by the date of the exam, the participant will be required to pay a late fee of \$150.00 and will have seven calendar days to provide all required information or the exam will be void.

All fees must be paid in full by the exam date to sit for the exam. If payment is not received by the exam start time, the participant may not be able to take the exam and may be required to reschedule.

By remitting payment, the applicant agrees to the terms and conditions outlined in this document, as well as to the process discussed in previous sections. We recommend reviewing the entire Policies and Process document and submit any questions to Academy Certification Exams (ACE) before remitting payment.

## Official Results and Certificates

### Exam Results

Participants must achieve a score of 70% or higher to successfully pass the exam.

Exam results will be provided within 3 – 5 business days of the completion of the exam as long as all required documentation has been submitted and approved. All initial result notifications are made via email. Official certificates of certification will be mailed to the physical address on file.

Certification requires valid continuing education, valid work verification (if required) and at least a 70% passing score on the exam.

Academy Certification Exams (ACE) considers exam results to be private and confidential. The certification is specific to the individual and not the organization/employer. Exam results will only be provided to the test taker.

Once the paper exams are completed, exams are graded, checked for any challenges, and results emailed to each registrant. Upon successfully passing the exam, an official results letter and certificate will be mailed to the address provided in the Account Profile. Electronic copies of the certificate are available, under the participants ACE account, to download immediately.

Official results and certificates, all bearing a unique Academy Certification Exams (ACE) inspector number, will be sent by mail. Once these documents are received, the passing score will have been confirmed and recognition as an Inspector I or Inspector II is official. It is important to note that all Academy Certification Exams (ACE) issued certificates are property of Academy Certification Exams (ACE) and may be revoked and recovered for misuse or misrepresentation. (See more on this below in “Cheating, Misrepresentation, and Falsification”).

If a passing score was not achieved, applicants have the opportunity to retake the exam. If the participant does not pass the exam after three attempts, the participant will not be permitted to take the exam for 90 days from the latest attempt. A participant may not test more than four times in a 365-day period.

Exam results are considered confidential, Academy Certification Exams (ACE) will not discuss performance with any other person (including your employer). If you wish to allow someone else access to this information, please contact us directly, via writing or email, to grant permission. Certain metadata will be retained to provide AHJ’s, trainers, and others with high-level information not able to be connected with any individual.

### **Maintaining Certification**

Academy Certification Exams (ACE) results will expire on the date specified on the certificate. In most cases, both ACE Inspector I and Inspector II recognitions are valid for two (2) years from end of the month of issue. Certification-holders are responsible for keeping certifications up to date. Prior to the end of the expiration month, certification-holders must present proof of continuing education, work history, and other required information necessary for re-certification and complete a recertification process online. Visit [www.academyexams.com/recertify/](http://www.academyexams.com/recertify/) for details.

Certifications which have expired will be permitted to recertify until the certification is cancelled. Certifications will be cancelled if the process for certification has not been *completed* within one year of expiration. Once a certification expires, late fees will be assessed for recertification.

### **Academy Certification Exams (ACE) Recognition of NICET Certification**

If a valid NICET certification is currently held and the applicant is up to date on continuing education hours, they may be eligible for Academy Certification Exams (ACE) recognition.

Please create an account on the ACE website and enter all necessary information. Once the account is confirmed, we can begin the recognition process. With valid documentation of



certification, Academy Certification Exams (ACE) will recognize your NICET Level I or II with an equivalent Academy Certification Exams (ACE) certificate. The fee for certification is the same as sitting for the exam.

All other rights and responsibilities outlined in this document regarding Academy Certification Exams (ACE) Certificate holders will be applicable.

## Exam Integrity

To maintain the validity and effectiveness of our exams, Academy Certification Exams (ACE) requires that applicants, exam-takers, and anyone else involved agree to hold the content of the exam confidential. On exam day, the exam packet will include an agreement to this end, and the agreement must be signed for Academy Certification Exams (ACE) to process the exam. The content of our exams is considered the intellectual property of Academy Certification Exams (ACE), and it is made available to the exam-taker solely to test their knowledge for the purpose of certification. No part of the exam may leave the testing site or may be reproduced elsewhere without the express permission of Academy Certification Exams (ACE).

### Challenging Exam Questions

If during the exam, an applicant comes across a question they feel is improperly worded or without an available correct answer, he/she may make a challenge. Any challenge shall be made within the pages of the test and shall consist of an explanation of why the applicant feels the question, or its answers, are not appropriate. The applicant must describe their understanding of the question's topic and/or provide an answer that they feel is accurate. All challenges will be reviewed individually by Academy Certification Exams (ACE). If it is determined that the challenge has validity, the question will be omitted from the test and not considered when calculating the final grade. If the challenge is not found to be valid, but the applicant describes a complete understanding of the topic, credit will be given. If the challenge is not found to be valid, and the applicant does not demonstrate a complete understanding of the topic, no special considerations will be made regarding the question or grading.

## Cheating, Misrepresentation, or Falsification

### Cheating

If during an Academy Certification Exams (ACE) exam there is conduct, or appearance of conduct considered by the proctor to be suspicious, cheating-related behavior (including copying exam questions), examinees involved may be asked to leave the exam site immediately. Examinees will be subject to administrative actions and a full review by Academy Certification Exams (ACE). Refunds will not be provided for participants found cheating, misrepresenting or falsifying information.

If cheating-related behavior is discovered, those effected will be formally notified by Academy Certification Exams (ACE). Exam scores will be nullified, all exam related payments forfeited, and those caught cheating will be ineligible for future Academy Certification Exams (ACE) assessments. Those involved will have 14 calendar days from receipt of formal notification to appeal the Academy Certification Exams (ACE)' decision.

Appeals must be in writing. Those effected are responsible for ensuring any email correspondence is received by Academy Certification Exams (ACE). Failure to follow the appeal process will forgo rights to an appeal. No refunds will be issued.

### Falsification

The accuracy and completeness of the information the applicant provides is his or her responsibility. Academy Certification Exams (ACE) will make every effort to verify all information provided on the application, with the resources provided (validator, employment history, continuing education records, etc.). If it is found that any of the information has been falsified, the applicant risks forfeiting their opportunity to take an Academy Certification Exams (ACE) exam now or in the future. Please be sure that all information given on the application is true and verifiable.

### Professional Conduct

Should Academy Certification Exams (ACE) receive reports or complaints about behavior that we feel does not represent our objectives or that could undermine our reputation, we reserve the right to investigate the conduct in question. Certification-holders will be formally notified if an investigation into their conduct is to be initiated. Along with formal notification, Academy Certification Exams (ACE) will provide the procedures for responding.

If it is determined that work ethic, work quality, or compliance with recognized codes is unacceptable, or that the certification-holder is not representing themselves in a professional manner, we reserve the right (pending a formal investigation) to take appropriate actions, which may include revocation of Academy Certification Exams (ACE) certification or conferring ineligibility for future Academy Certification Exams (ACE) certifications.

### Fee Structure

Certification	Exam	Recertification
Inspector I	\$400.00	\$250.00
Inspector II Next Step	\$300.00	\$250.00
Inspector II Direct	\$600.00	\$250.00

### Late Exam Registration

Registrations should be completed at least seven days prior to the exam start date. Any registrations received after this point will be charged a late fee of \$150.00.

### Cancellations, Rescheduling and Refunds

Academy Certification Exams (ACE) understands that unexpected conflicts may come up. ACE will make every effort to transfer participants to new test dates should the participant be unable to take the exam as scheduled. Participants can transfer the registration to a future exam date at no fee. Please note, that dates/exam transfers are subject to availability. Transfers should be requested at least three business days prior to the exam if possible. One transfer per participant is permitted. Additional transfers may result in a change fee being applied. Please note, if any of the verified eligibility terms change prior to the next exam date, the participant must requalify for the exam and may be required to pay an assessment fee.

Cancellations made ten or more business days prior to the exam will receive a full refund. Cancellations made at least three business days prior to the exam date will be refunded minus a \$50 cancellation fee. **No refund will be provided if cancelled within the three business days of the exam date, however, the registration can transfer to a new test date at no charge. No refund will be provided for No Shows.**

No refunds are provided for recertifications. Additionally, if a participant fails to provide the necessary support documentation for a recertification and the recertification expires, any required late fee or re-take requirements will apply.

### Expired Certification

All Academy Certified Inspectors are responsible for recertifying before their certification expiration date. This date is printed on your Certificate and your official results letter. Once a certification expires, late fees will be assessed as follows:

Certification Status	Timeframe	Eligible for renewal?	Recertification Fee
Active - Eligible for Renewal	Effective 90 days prior to certification expiration	Yes	\$250.00
Expired - Eligible for Renewal	1 - 60 days from expiration	Yes	\$350.00 (\$250 recertification fee + \$100 late fee)
Expired - Eligible for Renewal	61 days - 364 days from expiration	Yes	Inspector I: \$400.00 Inspector II: \$600.00
Canceled – Not eligible for Renewal	Over 1 year from expiration	No	Must recertify through the certification process

## **Insufficient Funds**

Any checks or payments returned for insufficient funds will be assessed a fee equal to the amount charged to Academy Certification Exams (ACE) by the banking institution. At the resolution of the situation, an additional processing fee of \$100 may be charged.

Pending the outcome of any payment dispute, certificates and wallet cards may be withheld or repossessed, eligibility for future Academy Certification Exams (ACE) assessments may be denied, and charges for additionally incurred processing and service fees may be imposed.

*Terms & Conditions: By remitting payment, you agree to the process, policies, terms and conditions outlined. Questions about any portion of Academy Certification Exams (ACE) process or policies must be submitted to Academy Certification Exams (ACE) in writing before accepting terms and processing a payment.*