

ALABAMA FIRE COLLEGE

Student Orientation to Skills Testing

Revised: November 27, 2015

WHAT IS CERTIFICATION?

- ▶ Certification is the verification that a candidate has successfully completed an evaluation of his/her knowledge, skills and abilities against a consensus standard by an accredited certification system/agency.
- ▶ The Individual Fire Fighter gets ***CERTIFIED***. Qualified people gain **certification**.
- ▶ The consensus standards used by the AFC are the NFPA standards.



WHAT IS ACCREDITATION?

- ▶ Accreditation serves as an affirmation that the certification courses of the Alabama Fire College meet the standards of excellence as defined by the national accrediting body.
- ▶ Testing procedures must uniformly and consistently measure the performance of candidates to those skills, abilities and knowledge in the job performance requirement, requisite knowledge and requisite skill of the applicable professional standard.



WHY IS ACCREDITATION IMPORTANT?

- ▶ Affirms that the emergency services responder has been through a program that has been validated by a third party accrediting body.
- ▶ Opens mobility opportunities to candidate.
- ▶ Increases job marketability.
- ▶ Increases promotional opportunities.
- ▶ Improves safety and health for firefighters and citizens they serve.



ACCREDITATION CRITERIA (REQUIRED OF THE AFC)

- ▶ Testing procedures must uniformly and consistently measure the performance of candidates to those skills, abilities and knowledge in the job performance requirement, requisite knowledge, and requisite skill of the applicable professional standard.



AFC MISSION STATEMENT

- ▶ Our continuing commitment is to facilitate excellence in education, training, certification, and support services for the emergency response community.



AFC DEFINITION OF TESTING

- ▶ The act of giving certification candidates an examination to determine what the candidate knows, what they have learned, or their level of competency as compared to a National Fire Protection Association standard using either a:
 - ▶ Written (cognitive) exam
 - ▶ Skills-based performance exam
 - ▶ Project work, or
 - ▶ A combination of these test methodologies



SKILLS TESTING

- ▶ Skill performance involves the translation of knowledge into action.
- ▶ Learning is defined as a change in behavior and skills allow a person to demonstrate that changed behavior.
- ▶ Skills testing is the demonstration phase of the students training process and professional development.
- ▶ Skills testing can be completed through:
 - ▶ Performance skills testing at skills stations
 - ▶ Performance skills testing through scenario worksheets (Fire Inspector I & II)
 - ▶ Project-based assessment (Fire Officer I-IV, Fire Inspector III, Fire Instructor I-III, PFLSEI, FDSO- ISO & HSO)



SKILLS TESTING PROCEDURES

- ▶ Candidates will be tested utilizing the current skills sheet packages.
 - ▶ See the Curriculum Master Resource Page on our website for current skills sheets packages, syllabus, etc. for which you will be tested.
- ▶ Candidates will be directed when training has ended and testing is beginning.
- ▶ Candidate may be tested individually on a skill, tested individually within a team, or both, depending on the skills that were randomly drawn for skills testing.
- ▶ Candidate will be oriented to the Testing area layout prior to skills testing.



PROJECT-BASED SKILLS

- ▶ All project work must be completed and submitted in the olc.alabamafirecollege.org platform.
- ▶ Project work must be original, individual or team-based submissions completed during the class.
 - ▶ Fire Officer I & II, Fire Instructor I & II require individual original work submissions.
- ▶ Project work is graded by an AFC-approved Evaluator.
- ▶ Grades for this type evaluation require extra completion time.



SKILLS TESTING SAFETY PROCEDURES

- ▶ Appropriate PPE will be worn.
- ▶ Stopping the skills testing when unsafe situation occurs.
 - ▶ Student will not be penalized for safety questions.
- ▶ Same safety concerns in testing as in training.



SKILLS TESTING PROCEDURES

- ▶ The testing station is a chance for the candidate to demonstrate what they know.



SKILLS TESTING NUMBER ASSIGNMENT

- ▶ Candidates will be assigned a number and a group.
- ▶ Example: For a class of 20 students there may be 5 groups of 4 candidates. Group 1 will have candidates 1-1, 1-2, 1-3, and 1-4. Group 2 will have candidates 2-1, 2-2, 2-3, and 2-4. ETC.
- ▶ Each candidate will wear a number visible to their evaluator.



SKILLS TESTING RETEST INFORMATION

- ▶ Each candidate will be given an initial attempt at each skill.
- ▶ Evaluators will not indicate if the candidate has passed or failed.
- ▶ When all skills are completed, the candidates will be instructed to leave the testing area.



SKILLS TESTING RETEST INFORMATION

- ▶ If a candidate fails the initial attempt at any skill, a retest will be administered after all candidates have completed initial testing.
- ▶ Retesting will be scored by a different evaluator than the initial attempt.
- ▶ Remediation can occur between attempts.
- ▶ Failure on the second attempt will require the candidate to retest at a different testing site after a 30 day waiting period.



TEAM SKILL TEST SECURITY

- ▶ You are to communicate during any team skill as you normally would to complete the JPR. Candidates are to complete their portion of the team skill.
- ▶ Candidates are not allowed to correct or assist others with a portion of the team skill that is not assigned to them.



TESTING/RETESTING/CERTIFICATION POLICIES

- ▶ Academic fraud will not be tolerated in any form. (AFC Policy # 705.20)
- ▶ Candidates are not to observe other candidates performing individual skills testing. This is considered cheating.
- ▶ Students will conduct themselves in a respectful manner to avoid hampering the ability of fellow students. (AFC Policy # 705.20)
- ▶ Students auditing a course will not be issued a test. (AFC Policy # 705.35)
- ▶ All certification testing and retesting must be completed within 12 months of the course completion date.



ACADEMIC FRAUD

(AFC POLICY # 704.21)

Academic fraud will not be tolerated in any form during any type of evaluation. Candidates will be held to the highest degree of conduct. The AFC takes the issue of cheating and unethical conduct seriously and all incidents will be investigated. (AFC Policy # 704.21)

- ▶ It is the responsibility of all representatives of the AFC to actively deter academic dishonesty. Apathy or acceptance in the presence of academic dishonesty is not a neutral act. All members of the agency – students, staff, instructors, test proctors and practical skills evaluators, all share the responsibility of challenging and making known acts of apparent academic dishonesty.
- ▶ Academic fraud: Acts such as cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, and plagiarism, See policy for further definitions of these acts.



CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

- ▶ The skills evaluation is a component of the certification process. Certification is issued once skills and written components are compiled, along with course prerequisites and requirements.



SUMMARY

- ▶ Accreditation requires that the students have a fair, safe and equal opportunity when testing in both the cognitive and psychomotor environment.
- ▶ Our goal is to eliminate any issue or obstruction to fair testing.



QUESTIONS

- ▶ All questions regarding this training or testing issues should be directed to the Certification Unit of the AFC
 - ▶ CERTIFICATION@ALABAMAFIRECOLLEGE.ORG
 - ▶ (205) 391-3745

THANK YOU!

