



Intelligence Fundamentals Professional Certification

Frequently Asked Questions, Component
2017

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Program Overview

What is the Intelligence Fundamentals Professional Certification (IFPC) Program?

The IFPC program establishes a common standard of the fundamental knowledge and skills expected of all who serve, and those who hope to serve, in the Department of Defense (DoD) Intelligence Enterprise (DIE). The Defense Intelligence Fundamentals Standards are cross-cutting and enterprise-wide, depicting the DoD's core expectations of what all Defense Intelligence Professionals, regardless of Service/Agency, Function/Specialty and experience level, must know and/or be able to do to successfully execute and/or contribute to the execution of intelligence missions, functions, and activities at the fundamental level.

Why is there an IFPC program?

The 2014 report from the Inspector General, "Evaluation of DoD Intelligence Training and Education Programs for the Fundamental Competencies of the DoD Intelligence Workforce," indicated critical skill gaps and a lack of knowledge and skill standards for entry-level/developmental intelligence professionals. From these findings, the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence (OUSDI) determined to develop and institute standards based on a common essential body of knowledge (EBK). The EBK would serve as the foundation of a certification program that would determine and track the attainment of these standards by our personnel. OUSDI now meets that challenge with the launch of the IFPC program.

What is the difference between a certification and an exam?

A certification is a credential that an individual is awarded for completing program requirements. In many cases, one of the requirements for achieving certification is passing an exam based on the knowledge an individual is expected to have on the area in question. For the IFPC, qualified candidates must pass an 80-item exam.

What content does the IFPC cover?

The IFPC covers basic intelligence information that all entry level intelligence employees are expected to know, as captured in the following eight topic areas:

- What is intelligence?
- What are the intelligence disciplines?
- Who is involved in intelligence?
- Why does intelligence require oversight?
- How is intelligence conducted?
- How are classified and controlled materials protected?
- How are classified and controlled materials shared?
- How do my actions affect my status as an intelligence professional?

How were the knowledge topics identified?

Professional Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) across the DIE collaborated to identify the fundamental knowledge and skills expected of all who serve and support, and those who hope to serve and support, in the DIE. While the IFPC content may not apply equally to all personnel, it was developed so the majority of content is understood by all who work in the DIE.

Is there a study guide for the IFPC exam?

The topics and subtopics covered on the IFPC exam are contained in the IFPC Essential Body of Knowledge (EBK). The EBK also contains a list of the source references used to create the exam content. The EBK can be found on the IFPC website (<http://DoDCertPMO.defense.gov/>).

Who qualifies to participate in the IFPC Program?

The IFPC is available to U.S. citizens who meet the following requirements:

- Government: MIL/CIV personnel currently employed by the Department of Defense (waivers can be provided to personnel currently employed by a federal, state, tribal, or local government entity supporting DoD-recognized intelligence missions).
- Academia: Individuals enrolled and/or employed in the last six months at a U.S.-based, accredited, post-secondary academic institution that has a formal relationship with the Department of Defense (i.e., institutions participating in the DoD Voluntary Education MoU program).
- Industry: Individuals employed by an organization eligible to pursue contracts with the U.S. Intelligence Community (i.e., organizations that hold a CAGE code). *Note: This includes individuals currently working on contract with a Component of the U.S. Intelligence Community.*

How does a candidate achieve this certification?

Qualified candidates must prove their knowledge of the Defense Intelligence Fundamentals Standards by successfully passing the IFPC exam. There are no other requirements.

How long is the IFPC exam?

The IFPC exam contains 80 items (questions). Candidates have two hours to complete the exam.

What is a passing score?

Due to accreditation requirements, the exact score required to pass the exam is not made public. However, in the pilot phase of program development, over 70% of candidates passed the exam on the first try.

Program Benefits

Why should my component participate in the IFPC Program?

Component participation in the IFPC Program:

- Provides a reference point for determining which individuals possess the appropriate understanding and ability to apply the facts, concepts, and principles of defense intelligence deemed critical to the successful execution of intelligence missions and functions.
- Promotes the improved synchronization and alignment of individual capabilities with specific organizations across the DoD.
- Serves as an easy identifier for competent professionals within the defense intelligence discipline.

Are there other benefits to the IFPC program?

For the Intelligence profession, the IFPC:

- Defines standards and drives accountability for all defense intelligence professionals.
- Documents the Intelligence Fundamentals essential body of knowledge (EBK) as the professional standard.
- Ensures all defense intelligence professionals have met the established standard through a formal standardized evaluation.
- Supports continuing competence of certificants through recertification every three years.

Why should my personnel take the IFPC?

For individuals, the IFPC:

- Measures candidates' understanding and ability to apply the facts, concepts, and principles of defense intelligence deemed critical to working within the DIE.
- Promotes professional development which will enhance candidates' expertise in the defense intelligence field.
- Increases the number of employment opportunities available to candidates across the DIE.
- Provides candidates with a sense of pride and professional accomplishment.
- Demonstrates candidates' commitment to the defense intelligence profession.

Component Role

What role does the Component play in executing the IFPC program?

The IFPC is administered locally at Component locations. Therefore, the IFPC Program Management Office (CPMO) relies on Components to deliver the following support:

- Securing an exam location that meets IFPC standards.
- Informing candidates about exam availability, logistics, and support materials such as the Candidate handbook and the Essential Body of Knowledge (EBK); communication materials are provided by the CPMO.
- Providing qualified proctors to administer each exam session; proctors will be trained by the CPMO.

More information about Component responsibilities is found in the Component Handbook.

How are Component responsibilities to be executed?

Each Component will select a Component Point of Contact (CPOC) to work and communicate directly with the CPMO. With CPMO support, CPOCs are responsible to perform the Component requirements.

Component Reports

How will I find out how my Component is performing on the IFPC exam?

Results will be provided to Component representative to the Certification Governance Council (CGC) on a quarterly basis. The quarterly results received will include an overall pass rate, plus detailed summaries of the pass rate broken into key demographic categories (e.g., rank, age, education, years of intelligence experience, etc.).

If my quarterly results do not have all of the information I want, how do I request that additional information?

The results provided on a quarterly basis are a format as approved by the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence (OUSDI). Additional report requests can be submitted to the IFPC Program Management Office (CPMO) and will be subject to an approval process. Submit all requests to osd.pentagon.ousd-intel.mbx.ifpc-pmo@mail.mil

Can I receive results for other Components?

No. Each Component will receive information about their own personnel only.

Will I receive results on individual candidates?

The names of individual candidates who pass the exam results will be provided to the Component representative at the CGC. Names of those who do not pass and detailed results for each individual will not be provided.

Program Organization

Who sets policy for the IFP Program?

The Intelligence Fundamentals Professional Certification Governance Council (CGC) is an oversight body charged with ensuring the certification program is carried out in a professional manner and meets all applicable standards. The CGC is autonomous and does not answer to internal or external direction. The CGC consists of # voting members and # non-voting members. Voting members include representatives from the 1) DIE Components, including each of the Armed Forces and the Combat Support Agencies, 2) industry, and 3) academia. Non-voting members include DoD Intelligence Functional Managers, Intelligence Community Partners, Allied Partners, DoD Functional Leads, Regional Combatant Commands, and Functional Combatant Commands. Non-voting members can be subject matter experts, functional and career managers, and senior human capital or human resource officials.

Who administers the IFPC exam process?

The IFPC Program Management Office (CPMO) has the primary responsibility for managing the IFPC program and exam details. This team supports the Component and the Component Point of Contacts (CPOCs) with all program and exam requirements. The CPMO:

- Serves as the primary point of contact on all things related to the IFPC Program.
- Outlines the processes and procedures for candidates and Components to participate successfully in the IFPC Program.
 - Component processes are compiled in the Component Handbook, available on the IFPC website (<http://DoDCertPMO.defense.gov/>).
 - The Candidate Handbook is located on the IFPC website as well; this handbook provides information regarding the purpose and benefits of the program, along with information to help candidates prepare for the exam.
- Supplies materials for Component use to communicate about the program with their personnel.
- Provides the candidate exam codes required for accessing the exam.
- Provides Components with the results of their candidates' performance.
- Works closely with CPOCs to ensure that the IFPC exam process is efficient and successful.

Operational Requirements

Preparation and Scheduling

How does the Component Point of Contact (CPOC) schedule an IFPC exam?

To schedule an exam date and time, contact the IFPC Program Management Office (CPMO) at osd.pentagon.ousd-intel.mbx.ifpc-pmo@mail.mil five (5) working days prior to your desired date. The CPMO will support almost any timing requests, but needs sufficient time to prepare for an exam session.

What are classroom/schoolhouse requirements?

Classroom/Schoolhouse facilities must meet the following standards:

- Be available for allotted amount of time for exam completion (at minimum 2.5 hours).
- Be free of any noise or outside distractions.
- Provide a proctor station (desk) that has full view of candidates.
- Contain a storage area for candidate belongings.
- Be free of any material that may give unfair advantage during testing.
- For online testing: Contain one unclassified, internet connected computer per candidate; computers must meet [IFPC systems requirements](#).

What is required after an exam is scheduled?

The major activities required of a CPOC once an exam is scheduled include:

- Communicate the exam timing and location to the CPMO
- For Online Testing: Confirm Computer System Compatibility (if this is not already complete)
- For paper-and pencil delivery:
 - Order Exam Booklets (if you do not already have them)
 - Print Exam Answer sheets from the pdf form provided by the CPMO
- Identify a proctor to administer the exam; forward this information to the CPMO
- Communicate the availability of the exam to candidates; provide them with information about the Candidate Handbook and FAQs, as well as the information regarding how to register
- Print the exam sign-in sheet
- Deliver all required exam materials to the proctor(s) assigned to the exam session the day before the exam is scheduled

What do I do if I need to change my exam date?

Components that need to change an exam date should contact the CPMO immediately at osd.pentagon.ousd-intel.mbx.ifpc-pmo@mail.mil. The CPMO will work with the CPOC to accommodate a new exam date that meets the Component's needs.

Exam/Requirements

How will the IFPC be administered?

The IFPC will be administered via an online exam portal from Fast Test Web at <https://app.fasttestweb.com/ftw/PR?app=9999&action=1>. A Component proctor will prepare the room, sign in candidates, and monitor the exam session. Testing facilities that do not meet the requirements for online testing, can be offered a paper and pencil option.

What are the computer requirements for the IFPC exam?

Each computer must meet the following requirements:

- Unclassified
- Internet connection
- Fast Test Web accessible at <https://app.fasttestweb.com/ftw/PR?app=9999&action=1>
- Current Web browser; Internet Explorer is NOT recommended and may not support the exam. To verify current web browser:
 - **Mozilla Firefox** - Go to "Menu," click "Help," and then select "About Mozilla Firefox." The browser will update automatically if one is available.
 - **Google Chrome** - Highlight and select "Customize and control Google Chrome," then select "Help." After that, click "About Google Chrome" if the browser version is not up to date, there will be an update option.

- **Microsoft Edge** - Click the “Start” icon, select the “Settings” icon, choose “Update & Security,” then select “Windows Update;” lastly select “Check for Update” if an update is available, it will download automatically.
- **Safari** - Click the “Apple” icon, select “App Store,” then choose “Updates”. If an update is available it will show up in the “App Store,” select the update for it to start downloading.
- Cookies and Javascript enabled (for instructions on how to check this requirement, go to the Component Handbook)
- Screen resolution 1024 x 768+ (for instructions on how to check this requirement, go to the Component Handbook)
- Adobe Flash Plug-in version 9.0.115+ (for instructions on how to check this requirement, go to the Component Handbook)

How much time should be scheduled for the exam?

CPOCs should block off two and a half (2.5) hours for the exam session. During the first 30 minutes, proctors will check candidates in, distribute Unique Candidate Exam Codes (UCEC), and read the proctor briefing script. The remaining two (2) hours are provided for the exam.

What are candidate requirements for exam day?

Candidates are required to arrive at least 30 minutes prior to scheduled exam time. Candidates must provide a form of identity and U.S. citizenship (e.g., U.S. passport or a birth certificate and a government-issued photo ID: driver’s license (except from MN and MO), military ID card, or another ID card issued by a federal, state, or local government agency as long as it contains a photograph or information such as name, date of birth, gender, height, eye color and address).

Candidates cannot have access to any personal items during the exam.

Proctors

What is the role of a proctor?

The role of the proctor is critical in the exam administration process. The proctor helps ensure a smooth, incident-free exam experience, working to provide an exam environment that is fair and secure for all candidates. Proctors also help protect the integrity of the certification program during the delivery and administration of the IFPC exam by watching for and reporting any instances of cheating, inappropriate disclosure of exam data, or other violations of the disciplinary policy

What are the proctor requirements?

Proctors must be reliable, punctual, detail-oriented, and able to deal effectively with people in difficult situations. Proctors must also be neutral parties in terms of test certification results, meaning the candidates success or failure does not benefit or hinder the proctor. To ensure there is no real or perceived conflict of interest regarding candidate performance, proctors must:

- NOT be a Rater (anyone that has input on candidate career progression), Reviewer (anyone that has input on candidate performance), or Direct Report (subordinate) of any candidates they are proctoring.
- NOT be an Instructor who designs preparatory materials or conducts individual or group reviews related to the certification test.
- NOT be a Mentor or Mentee, office co-worker, teammate, or staff member of a candidate in the proctored test session.

In order to be eligible to proctor the IFPC, individuals must:

- Sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA).
- Sign a Conflict of Interest Form and recuse themselves from any exam session in which there is a perceived conflict.
- Pass the IFPC exam prior to becoming a proctor or agree not to take the IFPC exam for two years after proctoring an IFPC exam session.
- Participate in IFPC proctor training on an annual basis.

For more information on the role and requirements of a proctor, please refer to the Component Handbook.

Day of the Exam

What are the proctor responsibilities on an Exam Day?

The proctor(s) assigned to the exam event are responsible for the following:

- Ensure testing rooms meet testing requirements (e.g., number of computers, computer system requirements, etc.)
- Confirm identity and U.S. citizenship for each candidate
- Ensure candidates leave personal belongings in a designated area of the testing room.
- Deliver a unique candidate exam code (UCEC) to each candidate.
- Deliver briefing script (available in Component Handbook).
- Monitor candidates continuously throughout the testing period.
- Upon test completion, collect all testing material from candidates (e.g., UCEC code, the exam form and booklet, etc.)

For more information regarding proctor responsibilities on an exam day, please refer to the Component Handbook.

After the exam, what does the proctor do with the completed registration/sign-in form?

The completed application/registration form should be submitted to the CPMO within 24 hours of exam completion via a password protected document.

Reasonable Accommodations

What responsibility does the Component have to provide reasonable accommodations?

The CPMO will work with the CPOC to provide reasonable accommodations whenever possible. In the Candidate Handbook, candidates are directed to request reasonable accommodations at least 30 days prior to a scheduled exam by contacting the CPMO. Upon receipt of such a request, the CPMO will contact the CPOC to discuss what can be done to meet the request. At a minimum, CPOCs are asked to identify resources to use in the following situations:

- Candidates with visual impairment: provide a reader, a separate space for testing to ensure the primary test facility remains quiet and free of distractions, and a separate proctor.
- Candidates with audio impairment: provide a written copy of the proctor script so instructions can be provided.
- Candidates who require additional time for testing: provide up to an additional hour for testing, including reserving the room for the additional time and providing the proctor for the full testing time period.

Candidate Information

Results

How will candidates receive their results?

Candidates will receive an immediate pass/fail result with their scaled score and a performance break down in each of the eight knowledge domain areas. Candidates will also receive this information in email format directly following exam completion.

How is the IFPC exam scored?

The IFPC scores provided are *scaled scores*. A scaled score is the total number of correctly answered questions (raw score) converted into a consistent and standardized scale. The program not only uses scaled scores to provide candidates more meaningful information, but to also ensure that scores from one form of the exam are equivalent to those from another form of the exam. This ensures that the meaning of a score from the exam would indicate the same level of performance no matter which form a candidate receives.

Do candidates who successfully pass the exam immediately receive their proof of certification?

No, the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence (USD(I)) has to sign off of each candidate that passes the IFPC. Exam results are sent to the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence (OUSD(I)) on a monthly basis for review and conferral decision (conferral is the act of bestowing the certification on candidates; a conferee is the person who receives the conferral). Candidates who meet all eligibility requirements and pass the IFPC assessment will have the certification conferred. Once the USD(I) confirms the status of all candidates, a notice of conferral will be issued via email to conferees. The conferral notice will include access to a digital badge, which serves as proof of conferral to 3rd parties (see Digital Badge detail below).

How long must a candidate wait to retest if they fail the exam?

If a candidate fails the IFPC exam, they must wait three (3) months before a second attempt. Every attempt after the second carries a 6-month waiting period before retesting.

Conferral/Retesting

How long is the conferral period for the IFPC?

IFPC conferral lasts for three (3) years, unless a higher-level certification is acquired. If a candidate acquires a certification of a higher level, the IFPC will follow the higher certifications conferral path.

What are the requirements to maintain the certification?

The IFPC can be maintained two (2) different ways:

1. IFPC certificants may choose to re-take the IFPC examination. Certificants who re-take the IFPC examination and pass are deemed to have renewed their certification, at which point their credential is automatically extended another three (3) years.
2. IFPC certificants may choose to obtain a USD(I)-conferred or recognized intelligence certification. IFPC certificants who meet all the requirements of a USD(I)-conferred or recognized intelligence certification are deemed to have renewed their certification on the date the secondary certification is conferred. At that point, the IFPC credential is maintained as long as the certificant continues to maintain the USD(I)-conferred or recognized intelligence certification. IFPC certificants must submit a copy of their USD(I)-conferred or recognized certification (with conferral and expiration date clearly visible) to the IFPC CPMO as evidence; all submissions should be sent to osd.pentagon.ousd-intel.mbx.ifpc-pmo@mail.mil.

What is the retest policy?

A candidate who does not pass the exam must wait a minimum of three (3) months to take the IFPC exam again. If the candidate fails the exam a second time, he/she must wait an additional six (6) months to retake the exam. After the second failed attempt, the candidate must wait a minimum of six (6) months for each additional attempt.

Badging

What is a Digital Badge?

Digital badges are tokens that appear as icons or logos on a web page or other online venue signifying accomplishments, such as conferral of a certification or mastery of a skill. The IFPC digital badge is provided by BadgeCert.

What viewable information will badges have?

Badges will have the issuer's name (i.e., USD(I)), the certificant's name and email address, a link to the certification criteria, a short description of the badge, and the issue/expiration date.

What happens once a Badge expires?

Candidates will be notified via email prior to badge expiration date that their badge needs maintenance. Once a badge has expired, it will change colors (certified = full color badge, expired = black and white badge).

Miscellaneous

I have additional questions about the IFPC Program that are not answered here.

Who should I contact?

If you still have need additional information please feel free to direct those questions to the CPMO at osd.pentagon.ousd-intel.mbx.ifpc-pmo@mail.mil.

Acronyms

CGC	Certification Governance Council
CPMO	IFPC Program Management Office
CPOC	Component Point of Contact
DoD	Department of Defense
EBK	Essential Body of Knowledge
IE	Intelligence Enterprise
IFPC	Intelligence Fundamentals Professional Certification
NDA	Non-Disclosure Agreement
OUUSD(I)	Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence
UCEC	Unique Candidate Exam Code
USD(I)	Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence