

INTRODUCTION TO THE QUALIFIED COURSE PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES

As the challenge course industry matures, it becomes more important to designate those who are qualified to deliver services. For this reason, this document was developed as an expansion of earlier work on this topic.

A Qualified Course Professional (QCP) is an individual who delivers installation, inspection, training, and/or certification testing services to the challenge course community. The QCP may be employed by a course vendor or operate such an organization.

Two levels of professionals are designated—Qualified Person and Competent Person. (See the list of Definitions in the *8th Edition ACCT Standards for Challenge Courses and Canopy/Zip Line Tours*.) A challenge course vendor employs QCPs of specific types, which may include one or more of the following: Qualified Designer, Qualified Installer, Qualified Inspector, and Qualified Trainer/Tester. These organizations may also employ a Competent Designer, Competent Installer, Competent Inspector, and Competent Trainer/Tester.

A professional course vendor shall have a minimum of one Qualified Person who shall act in a lead position for each service the vendor offers. This designation replaces the former “Lead” designation commonly used in the industry. One person may fill all of these roles for a vendor.

In addition, each professional course vendor may have any number of Competent Persons who work under the direction, mentorship, and supervision of the Qualified Person. Competent Persons sent into the field shall conduct services as assigned and as fully fits their training and experience.

The vendor, whether a business or an individual, shall be set up with appropriate safeguards, such as proper insurance, legitimate business practices, and a proven history of successful provision of course services.

The QCP recognizes the way in which course design, installation practices, operating procedures, training, certification, and inspection work together to form an effective course facility and program. While it may be possible that a single person holds all of the skills and competencies to deliver all of these services, it is also possible that an organization providing challenge course services employs a team of specialists who hold competencies in one or more of these areas. In this guideline, criteria are laid out for Qualified Course Professionals who:

- Deliver training/testing that leads to certification
- Install course facilities
- Provide professional inspections on courses
- Design course facilities

SECTION A: CERTIFICATION TRAINER/TESTER

A1 Each Certification Trainer/Tester SHALL meet the criteria listed below and SHALL have Mastery of all the standards listed in the *8th Edition ACCT Challenge Course and Canopy/Zip Line Tour Standards*, Chapter 2: Section B: Operations Management.

Certification Trainer/Testers for Course Managers SHALL also have Mastery of all of the standards listed in the *8th Edition ACCT Challenge Course and Canopy/Zip Line Tour Standards*, Chapter 2: Operations Standards, Section C: Staff Competencies.

***EA1** Practitioners at the Mastery Level possess a great depth and breadth of knowledge, understanding, and skill. The practitioner has significant program delivery experience and well-developed teaching and testing skills, which he/she applies to effectively train others to ACCT Standards. These include using appropriate teaching progressions and strategies, modeling leadership techniques, and managing risk for certification candidates during hands-on learning experiences. In some organizations, tester and trainer may be the same person; in other organizations, they may be different people.*

A2 There are three levels of Certification Trainer/Tester. Each advancing level of qualification requires an equally advancing level of expertise, training, and experience on the part of the trainer/tester.

A3 The individual doing the testing is acting as an agent for the certifying body.

A4 The Certification Trainer/Tester SHALL:

A4.1 Be a minimum of 21 years old.

A4.2 Provide documentation of trainings attended.

- Level I Certification Trainer/Tester: 120 cumulative hours;
- Level II Certification Trainer/Tester: 160 cumulative hours;
- Course Manager Certification Trainer/Tester: 200 cumulative hours.

These trainings SHALL include content and adequate skills practice to cover all standards for the appropriate level of certification.

***EA4.2** The hours of training in this standard refer to courses completed as a PARTICIPANT. Training hours may include both external and in-house trainings. The following are also acceptable forms of training: attending professional conference workshops, relevant college courses, and challenge course management trainings. At the Course Manager Certification Trainer/Tester Level, training SHALL include hours specific to management skills.*

A4.3 Have 800 hours of documented COURSE PROGRAM delivery experience. Course Manager Certification Trainer/Testers SHALL have an additional 600 hours of experience in tasks specific to course management. Course Manager Certification Trainer/Testers SHALL have a total of 1400 total hours of experience.

A4.4 Provide documentation of experience delivering training to practitioners:

- Level I Certification Trainer/Tester: 280 hours of delivering training to practitioners;
- Level II Certification Trainer/Tester: 500 hours of delivering training to practitioners;
- Course Manager Certification Trainer/Tester: 800 hours of delivering training to practitioners of which 60 hours SHALL be in delivering course manager workshops.

EA4.4 These hours refer to the delivery of training to challenge course practitioners. Course management hours may be accumulated in the management of a training program. Hours of training can be accumulated by co-teaching.

A4.5 Be able to mentor and train practitioners and other trainers in course skills and a broad range of operating procedures.

A4.6 Be able to execute appropriate high course rescues and train others to ACCT Standards.

EA4.6 The Certification Trainer/Tester who is unable to execute a rescue because of a permanent disability or physical limitation may be certified at the level he/she is seeking with the creation of an appropriate modification and/or a plan to satisfy the standard. The plan may include the use of additional trained practitioners who can complete needed technical skills, or the use of specialized equipment.

A4.7 Be able to perform SELF-BELAYED climbing and train others to ACCT standards.

EA4.7 The Certification Trainer/Tester who is unable to do SELF-BELAYED climbing because of a permanent disability or physical limitations may be certified at the level he/she is seeking with the creation of an appropriate modification and/or a plan to satisfy the standard. The plan may include the use of additional trained practitioners who can complete needed technical skills, or the use of specialized equipment.

A5 The Certification Trainer/Tester SHOULD further the level and scope of practice in the industry. This may be accomplished by any combination of the following:

- Training practitioners
- Continuing direct program delivery to clients
- Publishing articles or books
- Presenting workshops and seminars at conferences and trade shows
- Sharing best practices with others in the industry
- Serving on committees or filling leadership roles in professional organizations

- Adding to his/her own level of experience and knowledge by attending conferences and trainings

A6 Course vendors SHALL maintain records of qualifications for Certification Trainers/Testers.

A7 Certification Trainers/Testers SHALL be reevaluated by their organization every three (3) years.

A8 To maintain qualification as a Certification Trainer/Tester, the practitioner SHALL document 300 hours of experience delivering training to others; 80 hours of additional, relevant training completed within the previous three (3) years; and evidence of efficacy as a trainer.

***EA8** Additional training may include retaking original or advanced courses, attending professional conference workshops, taking relevant college courses, delivering professional presentations, writing and publishing, training with other training organizations, and in-house training participation.*

Evaluation of efficacy as a trainer is required. This may consist of PARTICIPANT evaluation of the trainer, evaluation of PARTICIPANTS' skills, performance evaluation by training organization, and/or peer review.

SECTION B: INSTALLER

The Qualified Installer SHALL have significant installation experience and SHALL employ well-developed installation techniques, which are applied to effectively install course ELEMENTS according to the current edition of the ACCT standards. The Qualified Installer installs and repairs challenge course facilities with indirect supervision from the Course Designer. Course installations vary in terms of the type of support structures, materials, size and scope of projects. A Qualified Installer may work alone or be responsible for supervising other qualified or competent installers or other skilled workers involved in the installation process. The Qualified Installer is considered a COMPETENT PERSON in areas for which he/she has received appropriate training and experience. These areas may include fall protection systems and worker safety.

B1 Each Qualified Installer SHALL meet the criteria listed below and SHALL have Mastery of the standards listed in the *8th Edition, ACCT Challenge Course and Canopy/Zip Line Tour Standards*, Chapter 1: Design Performance and Inspection Standards.

B2 The Qualified Installer SHALL:

B2.1 Act as an agent of the challenge course vendor and work in collaboration with the Qualified Designer.

B2.2 Be a minimum of 21 years old.



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B2.3 Demonstrate skill, experience, and training to be considered a COMPETENT PERSON with regard to worker safety and fall protection.

B2.4 Have a demonstrated ability to install course ELEMENTS in accordance with ACCT Challenge Course Standards.

B2.5 Understand and apply relevant regulations and standards, such as those from the American National Standards Institute (ANSI), Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA), European Union (EU), or similar regulations and standards in other jurisdictions.

B2.6 Demonstrate in-depth knowledge of a wide variety of course designs, techniques, equipment, materials, and systems.

B2.7 Demonstrate ability to execute worker rescue.

B2.8 Demonstrate participation in ongoing professional development.

B2.9 Fully understand the various challenge course ELEMENTS he/she installs including their operational procedures.

B2.10 Have a minimum of 150 documented course builder days.

EB2.10 *These days assume a minimum number of days (35) for each type of installation provided by the organization, such as, trees, poles, indoor, steel structures, and/or specialty builds. (Types of installations—reference the 8th Edition, ACCT Challenge Course and Canopy/Zip Line Tour Standards, Chapter 1: Design, Performance and Inspection Standards, Section D: Element Support Structures)*

B2.11 Maintain ongoing documentation of installations completed.

SECTION C: INSPECTOR

The Qualified Inspector SHALL have significant installation experience. The Qualified Inspector SHALL also have significant knowledge and understanding of the operational requirements of the course ELEMENTS he/she inspects. The Qualified Inspector SHALL be familiar with a wide variety of course designs and operating systems beyond those used by his/her own company, have familiarity with the types of structures to be inspected, have a clear understanding of his/her own limitations, and consult other professionals when required.

C1 Each Qualified Inspector SHALL meet the criteria listed below and SHALL have Mastery of all the standards listed in the 8th Edition, ACCT Challenge Course and Canopy/Zip Line Tour Standards, Chapter 1: Design, Performance and Inspection Standards. Qualified Inspectors may also possess an ACCT Inspector Certification in good standing.



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C2 The Qualified Inspector SHALL:

C2.1 Act as an agent of the challenge course vendor.

C2.2 Be a minimum of 21 years old.

C2.3 Demonstrate skill, experience, and training to be considered a COMPETENT PERSON with regard to worker safety and fall protection.

C2.4 Have a demonstrated ability to inspect course ELEMENTS in accordance with ACCT Challenge Course Standards.

C2.5 Demonstrate in-depth knowledge of a wide variety of challenge course and canopy/zip line tour designs, building techniques, equipment, materials, and systems.

C2.6 Demonstrate participation in ongoing professional development.

C2.7 Have a minimum of 150 documented course builder days.

C2.8 Have performed a minimum of 12 inspections under the supervision of a Qualified Inspector.

***EC2.8** These days assume a minimum number of inspections **for each type** of installation to be inspected, such as trees, poles, indoor, steel structures, and/or specialty builds. (Types of installations—reference the 8th Edition, ACCT Challenge Course and Canopy/Zip Line Tour Standards, Chapter 1: Design Performance and Inspection Standards, Section D: Element Support Structures)*

C2.9 Have a full understanding of the various course ELEMENTS he/she inspects including the operational procedures.

C2.10 Demonstrate his/her ability to consult with course designers and other professionals.

SECTION D: DESIGNER

The Qualified Designer is responsible for designing individual challenge course ELEMENTS as well as full course structures/facilities. The Qualified Designer SHALL have the ability to translate a client's desired programmatic outcomes into a challenge course facility. As such, the Qualified Designer SHALL have significant experience in installation, program design and delivery, and practitioner training/certification. The Qualified Designer SHALL have an advanced understanding of materials, site requirements, and installation techniques. The Qualified Designer SHALL act as the QUALIFIED PERSON in areas for which he/she are trained and experienced. Such areas may include fall protection systems and worker safety. The Qualified Designer SHALL be aware of his/her own limitations and

consult other qualified people, such as professional engineers or arborists, when necessary.

D1 The Qualified Designer SHALL be familiar with all ACCT Standards.

D2 The Qualified Designer SHALL:

D2.1 Act as an agent of the course vendor.

D2.2 Be a minimum of 21 years old.

D2.3 Demonstrate skill, experience, and training to be considered a QUALIFIED PERSON with regard to worker safety and fall protection.

D2.4 Have a demonstrated ability to design course ELEMENTS in accordance with ACCT Challenge Course Standards.

D2.5 Demonstrate in-depth knowledge of a wide variety of course designs, techniques, equipment, materials, and systems.

D2.6 Demonstrate participation in ongoing professional development.

D2.7 Be expected to further the level and scope of practice in the industry.

D2.8 Have worked as a Lead Installer on a minimum of 30 projects and/or have two years full-time experience.

ED2.8 *These days assume a minimum number of projects **for each type** of installation, such as trees, poles, indoor, steel structures, and/or specialty builds. (Types of installations—reference the 8th Edition, ACCT Challenge Course and Canopy/Zip Line Tour Standards, Installation and Equipment Standards, Section B: Element Support Structures)*

D2.9 Have a full understanding of the various course ELEMENTS he/she designs including the operational procedures.

D2.10 Have performed a minimum of 12 inspections.

ED2.10 *These days assume a minimum number of inspections **for each type** of installation to be inspected, such as trees, poles, indoor, steel structures, and/or specialty builds. (Types of installations—reference the 8th Edition, ACCT Challenge Course and Canopy/Zip Line Tour Standards, Design, Performance and Inspection Standards, Section D: Element Support Structures)*



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D2.11 Demonstrate an ability to consult with appropriate professionals, based on type of installation, such as trees, poles, indoor construction, steel structures, and/or specialty builds.