



Department of War (DOW) Professional Certification and Credentialing Handbook

SPeD PROGRAM MANAGEMENT OFFICE

CDSE Center for Development
of Security Excellence

February 2026

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STARTING YOUR JOURNEY

Congratulations on beginning your path toward achieving a Department of War (DOW) certification or credential. The SPêD Program Management Office (PMO) oversees three programs — SPêD, Adjudicator Professional Certification (APC), and Certified Insider Threat Professional (CITP). This handbook is your primary source of information for understanding the certifications and credentials managed by the SPêD PMO. It is designed to support your professional growth by clearly outlining the requirements for obtaining and maintaining certifications and credentials.

PURPOSE OF THE HANDBOOK

This document details the procedures, requirements, and available resources for obtaining SPêD certifications and credentials. It serves as a guide for candidates in the security workforce.

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

The SPêD PMO does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, national origin, handicapping condition, religion, political affiliation, or sexual orientation.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For general program inquiries or assistance please use the following resources:

SPêD Program Website:

<https://www.cdse.edu/certification/>

SPêD PMO Support:

dcsa.spedcert@mail.mil

Component Service Representative:

<https://www.cdse.edu/Certification/Additional-Certification-Credential-Assistance/>

DAU Account Login:

<https://id.dau.edu/>

DAU Help Desk Ticket:

lmshelp@dau.edu

Test Rescheduling/Cancellation:

Pearson VUE: 1-888-477-0284 or

<https://www.pearsonvue.com/us/en/test-takers/customer-service.html>



SPeD PROGRAM OVERVIEW

WHAT IS THE SPeD PROGRAM?

The SPeD Program is part of the DOW's initiative to professionalize the security workforce. This initiative ensures there is a common set of competencies among security practitioners that promotes interoperability, facilitates professional development and training, and develops a workforce of certified security professionals.

GOVERNANCE

DOD Instruction (DODI) 3305.13, "DOD Security Education, Training, and Certification," establishes the DOD Security Training Council (DSTC) as an advisory body on DOD security education and training and serves as the governance board for the SPeD Certification Program. The DSTC is comprised of security professionals and senior managers representing DOW entities with security responsibilities, and others as determined by the DSTC Chair. The DSTC represents the shared interests of the Defense Security Enterprise and the respective workforce in certification design, management, and maintenance.

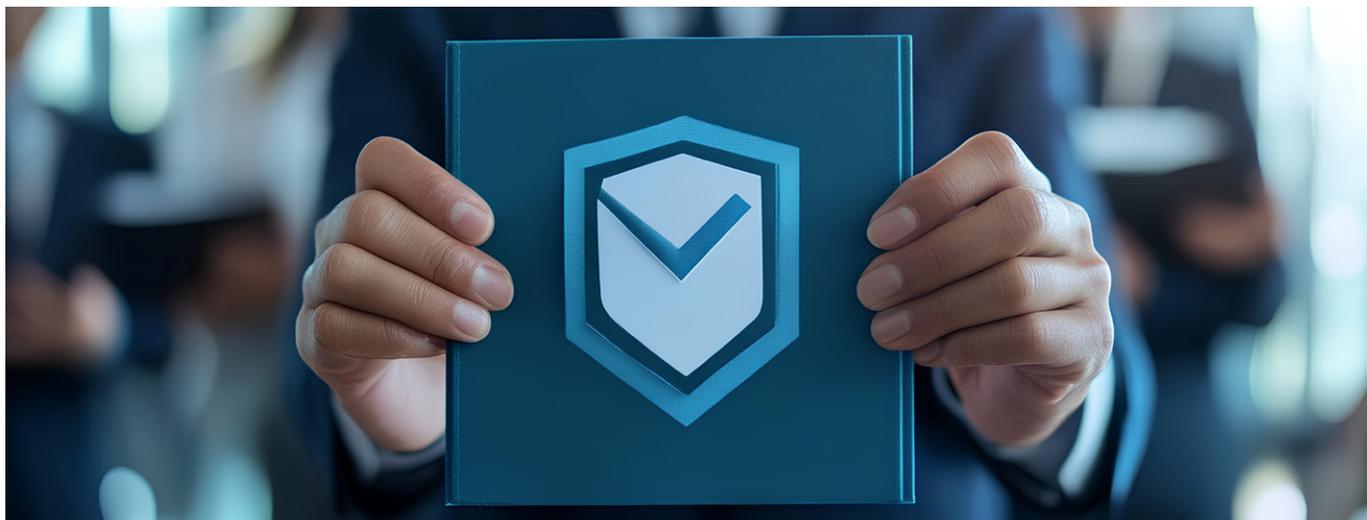
Specifically regarding SPeD governance, the DSTC is responsible for:

- Certification administration oversight
- Technical development oversight
- Certification governance

ACCREDITATION

The SPeD Program is an essential element of the DOW initiative to professionalize the security workforce. Per DOD Manual (DODM) 3305.13, "DOD Security Accreditation and Certification," all certifications must be accredited and maintain accreditation by meeting the published standards of the national recognized certification accreditation body, the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA). Accreditation is the process by which certifications are evaluated against defined standards and, when in compliance with these standards, are awarded recognition by the NCCA. Accreditation is proof the program has been reviewed by a panel of impartial experts and has met the stringent standards set by the NCCA. The NCCA uses established standards to assure programs meet threshold expectations of quality and validates improvement over time.

The Security Fundamentals Professional Certification (SFPC), Security Asset Protection Professional Certification (SAPPC), Security Program Integration Professional Certification (SPIPC), and Physical Security Certification (PSC) are nationally accredited with NCCA. Achieving a SPeD certification publicly confirms certificants meet comprehensive professional standards and are prepared for success in the security profession.



WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR SP&D CERTIFICATION?

Candidates are eligible to pursue a SP&D certification if: 1) they are DOW personnel, federal employees of a participating agency that have a job requirement or condition of employment to complete the program; 2) work in a specific job category (0080/0086 OPM job series); 3) have written supervisor validation for SP&D certification or contractors assigned to a security position supporting DOW (either as Facility Security Officers or those with certification requirements outlined in their Performance Work Statements or Statement of Work).

Specific Instructions for Contractors:

- Complete the "Contractor Eligibility Verification Form," available at: <https://www.cdse.edu/Certification/SP%C4%93D-Resources/>
- Submit the completed form, along with your assessment request, to your Component Service Representative (CSR).
- Contact the CSR for the specific component or agency you are supporting. (For example, contractors supporting an Air Force contract should contact the Air Force CSR.)
- CSR contact information is available at: <https://www.cdse.edu/Certification/Additional-Certification-Credential-Assistance/>

For detailed eligibility information, refer to: DODM 3305.13, Enclosure 4, Paragraph 5a: <https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/DODm/330513m.pdf>.



APC PROGRAM OVERVIEW

WHAT IS THE APC PROGRAM?

The SP&D PMO oversees the Adjudicator Professional Certification (APC) Program. The APC Program is part of a holistic effort to professionalize the adjudication workforce by requiring personnel security adjudicators to demonstrate proficiency in a common set of competencies through training, initial testing and certification, and approved continuing education.

The APC certifies that adjudicators are qualified to perform all essential adjudicative functions related to determining the eligibility of a government employee, military service member, or contractor employee under the National Industrial Security Program (NISP) for access to classified information or assignment to sensitive duties. Certified APC Adjudicators are authorized to perform all adjudicative functions, except security review proceedings determinations. Adjudicators must acquire the Security Review Proceedings Credential (SRPC) to issue security review proceedings determinations.

The APC Program serves as a valid and reliable indicator of an adjudicator's mastery of facts, concepts, and principles the DOW community deems critical to successfully perform functions, implement programs, and pursue missions necessary to manage risks and protect DOW assets.

The APC and SRPC programs make certain:

- Only fully-qualified and appropriately trained professionals make clearance determinations.
- The developmental program matches job requirements and provides adjudicators with the knowledge and skills needed to perform duties at a high level of proficiency.
- Adjudicators have the opportunity and incentive to continue their professional education in order to keep themselves current on new policies, national security trends, job-related technologies, and industry trends.

GOVERNANCE

DODI 5200.02, "DOD Personnel Security Program," establishes requirements for DOW personnel security adjudicators to obtain relevant certifications. Requirements are explained in DODM 5200.02, "Procedures for the DOD Personnel Security Program (PSP)."

The Adjudicator Certification Governance Board (ACGB) is chaired by the Office of Under Secretary of War for Intelligence and Security (OUSW(I&S)) Branch Chief for Personnel Security and includes voting members from the Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency (DCSA) Adjudication and Vetting Services (AVS), National Security Agency (NSA), Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA), DCSA Academy, and representatives from the Air Force, Army, Navy, and Fourth Estate.

The ACGB represents the shared interests of the DOW adjudication mission and the respective workforce in certification design, management, and maintenance. The ACGB serves as the entity responsible for making the program's essential certification decisions consistent with the Standards for the Accreditation of Certification Programs published by the NCCA.

ACCREDITATION

The APC Program is an essential element of the DOW initiative to professionalize the security workforce. Per DODM 3305.13, "DOD Security Accreditation and Certification," all certifications developed under the direction of this Manual must be accredited and maintain accreditation by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA). Accreditation is the process by which certifications are evaluated against defined standards and, when in compliance with these standards, are awarded recognition by the NCCA. Accreditation is proof the program

has been reviewed by a panel of impartial experts and has met the stringent standards set by the NCCA. The NCCA uses established standards to assure programs meet threshold expectations of quality and validates improvement over time.

The APC Program is nationally accredited with NCCA. Achieving an APC Program certification or credential publicly confirms the program meets comprehensive quality standards and that certificants are prepared for success in the adjudication mission.

ELIGIBILITY

Candidates must be a personnel security adjudicator at an organization accepted to participate in the APC Program. Organizations accepted to participate in the APC Program include DCSA AVS, DIA, NGA, NSA, and other federal agencies. Specific APC certification requirements are summarized in this handbook on page 17.

Note: Eligibility for certification of non-DOW federal agencies requesting inclusion in the APC Program will be coordinated with the requesting agency, the ACGB, and the SPeD PMO.

Candidates may contact their APC Program CSR if they have questions about their eligibility (<https://www.cdse.edu/Certification/Additional-Certification-Credential-Assistance/>).

If a candidate successfully takes and passes an APC certification or credential assessment and it is discovered they were not eligible to take the assessment, the certification or credential will be rescinded.



SECURITY FUNDAMENTALS PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION (SFPC)

Description: Demonstrates understanding of foundational security concepts, principles, and practices for protecting DOW assets. Its recent re-accreditation in February 2024, reaffirms its alignment with NCCA standards.

Ideal Candidate: Full-time security personnel or those performing security functions as an additional duty.

Assessment: 96 multiple-choice questions (68 scored), 2 hours and 15 minutes allotted.

Prerequisite: None



Area of Expertise	
Information Security Exam Weight: 28%	
Information Security Program	Classification Markings
Information Protection Principles	Marking Procedures
Classification Concepts	Policies and Procedures for Handling Special Types of Information
Classification Duration	Downgrading and Upgrading Classified Information
Derivative Classification Concepts	Safeguarding
Special Classification Considerations	Storage, Disposition, and Destruction
Declassification Concepts	Transmission and Transportation
Controlled Unclassified Information	Security Incidents
Release of Classified Material to Foreign Persons	Cyber and Information Security Concepts
Personnel Security Exam Weight: 25%	
Personnel Security Concepts and Principles	Personnel Security Investigations
Position Sensitivity Designations	Personnel Security Investigative Requirements
Special Personnel Security Clearance Requirements	Adjudication
Unfavorable Administrative Actions	Safeguarding Personnel Records
Physical Security Exam Weight: 12%	
Physical Security Concepts	Physical Security Concepts for Storage of Classified Info
Facility Access Control	Site Design Strategies
Protective Barriers	Site Lighting
Key, Combinations, and Lock Control	Security System Devices
Antiterrorism (AT) Concepts and Principles	Law Enforcement (LE) Concepts and Principles
Search and Seizure	
Industrial Security Exam Weight: 13%	
Contracts and Contract Administration	Industrial Security Concepts
Personnel and Facility Security Clearance Under the National Industrial Security Program (NISP)	Visits and Meetings

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General Security		Exam Weight: 22%
Counterintelligence (CI)	Inspections and Assessments	
Operations Security (OPSEC) Concepts	Protected Information Categories	
OPSEC Threat Analysis, Indicators, and Measures	Research and Technology Protection Concepts	
Insider Threat Concepts and Principles	Special Access Program (SAP) Concepts	
Risk Management Framework (RMF)	Basic Security Forms	
Information Technology (IT)/Information Security (IS) Security Functionality and Controls	Security Briefings	

COURSES

Candidates are encouraged to familiarize themselves with courses addressing the topics noted in the SFPC Areas of Expertise above. Courses can be accessed through the Security Training, Education, and Professionalization Portal (STEPP): (<https://securitytraining.dcsa.mil/login/index.php>). The following courses may be helpful in preparing for the SFPC assessment:

- Introduction to Industrial Security, IS011.16
- Introduction to Information Security, IF011.16
- Introduction to Physical Security, PY011.16
- Introduction to Personnel Security, PS113.16
- Introduction to National Security Adjudication, PS001.18
- Special Access Programs (SAP) Overview, SA001.16
- Introduction to the Risk Management Framework (RMF), CS124.16
- Cybersecurity Awareness, CS130.16
- Foreign Disclosure Training for DOD, GS160.16
- DOD Security Specialist, GS101.01



SECURITY ASSET PROTECTION PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION (SAPPC)

Description: Demonstrates ability to apply foundational security concepts to protect DOW assets. Its recent re-accreditation in February 2024, reaffirms its alignment with NCCA standards.

Ideal Candidate: Full-time security personnel or those performing security functions as an additional duty.

Assessment: 110 multiple-choice questions (74 scored), 2 hours and 15 minutes allotted.

Prerequisite: SFPC



Area of Expertise	
Information Security Exam Weight: 31%	
Information Security Fundamentals	Classification and Declassification Concepts
Classification Management	Information Protection Requirements
Cyber for Security Professionals	
Personnel Security Exam Weight: 28%	
Personnel Security Fundamentals	Personnel Security Standards
Physical Security Exam Weight: 10%	
Physical Security Concepts	Physical Security Standards
Industrial Security Exam Weight: 13%	
Industrial Security Concepts	
General Security Exam Weight: 18%	
Threat, Vulnerability, and Risk Assessment / Management	Cyber for Security Professionals
Program Security	General Security Tools and Methods

COURSES

Candidates are encouraged to familiarize themselves with courses addressing the topics noted in the SAPPC Areas of Expertise above. CPTs and courses can be accessed through the STEPP: (<https://securitytraining.dcsa.mil/login/index.php>). The following courses may be helpful in preparing for the SAPPC assessment:

- Introduction to Industrial Security, IS011.16
- Introduction to Information Security, IF011.16
- Introduction to Physical Security, PY011.16
- Introduction to Personnel Security, PS113.16
- Introduction to National Security Adjudication, PS001.18
- Special Access Programs (SAP) Overview, SA001.16
- Introduction to the Risk Management Framework (RMF), CS124.16
- Cybersecurity Awareness, CS130.16
- OPSEC Awareness for Military Members, DOD Employees and Contractors, GS130.16

SECURITY PROGRAM INTEGRATION PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION (SPIPC)

Description: Demonstrates understanding and ability to apply risk management and security program management principles. Its recent re-accreditation in February 2024, reaffirms its alignment with NCCA standards.

Ideal Candidate: Full-time security personnel or those performing security functions as an additional duty.

Assessment: 75 multiple-choice questions (all scored), 1 hour and 40 minutes allotted.

Prerequisite: SFPC



Area of Expertise	
Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Concepts	Exam Weight: 8%
Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution (PPB&E) Process, Concepts, and Principles	
Risk Assessment	Exam Weight: 41%
Risk Management Benefits and Costs	Sources of Threat and Vulnerability Information
Risk Assessment Concepts and Principles	
Risk Management	Exam Weight: 35%
Strategies for Controlling and/or Managing Risks	
Program and Mission Assurance	Exam Weight: 16%
Approaches and Criteria for Evaluating Effectiveness of Security Policies, Plan, and Program Activities	Essential Functions of a Security Program

COURSES

CPTs and courses can be accessed through the Security Training, Education, and Professionalization Portal (STEPP): (<https://securitytraining.dcsa.mil/login/index.php>).



PHYSICAL SECURITY CERTIFICATION (PSC)

Description: Demonstrates mastery of foundational knowledge and skills for performing physical security functions. Its recent re-accreditation in April 2021, reaffirms its alignment with NCCA standards.

Ideal Candidate: DOW, Industry, and federal personnel performing physical security functions.

Assessment: 110 multiple-choice questions (70 scored), 1 hour and 40 minutes allotted.

Prerequisite: None



Area of Expertise	
Physical Security Concepts	Exam Weight: 22%
Physical Security Concepts	Facility Access Control
Physical Security Standards	Exam Weight: 24%
Physical Security Standards for Storage of Classified Information	Physical Security Standards for Sensitive Conventional Arms, Ammunition, and Explosives
Physical Security Standards for Special Assets/Resources	
Standards, Countermeasures, and Planning	Exam Weight: 41%
Protective Barriers	Site Lighting
Keys, Combinations, and Lock Controls	Site Design Strategies
Security Systems Devices	
Physical Security Planning and Implementation	Exam Weight: 13%
Physical Security Planning and Plan Implementation	Emergency Management/Emergency Response

COURSES

Candidates are encouraged to familiarize themselves with courses addressing the topics noted in the PSC Areas of Expertise above. CPTs and courses can be accessed through the STEPP: (<https://securitytraining.dcsa.mil/login/index.php>). The following courses and shorts may be helpful in preparing for the PSC assessment:

- Antiterrorism Officer (ATO) Level II, GS109.16
- DOD Locks Approved to Safeguard Classified and Sensitive Materials, PY001.16
- Electronic Security Systems, PY250.16
- Exterior Security Lighting, PY109.16
- Introduction to Physical Security, PY011.16
- Lock and Key Systems, PY104.16
- Physical Security and Asset Protection, PY201.PR
- Physical Security Measures, PY103.16
- Physical Security Planning and Implementation, PY106.16
- Storage Containers and Facilities, PY105.16

INDUSTRIAL SECURITY OVERSIGHT CREDENTIAL (ISOC)

Description: Demonstrates mastery of foundational knowledge and skills for performing industrial security oversight functions.

Ideal Candidate: DOW, Industry, and federal personnel under the National Industrial Security Program (NISP).

Assessment: 113 multiple-choice questions (76 scored), 1 hour and 40 minutes allotted.

Prerequisite: None



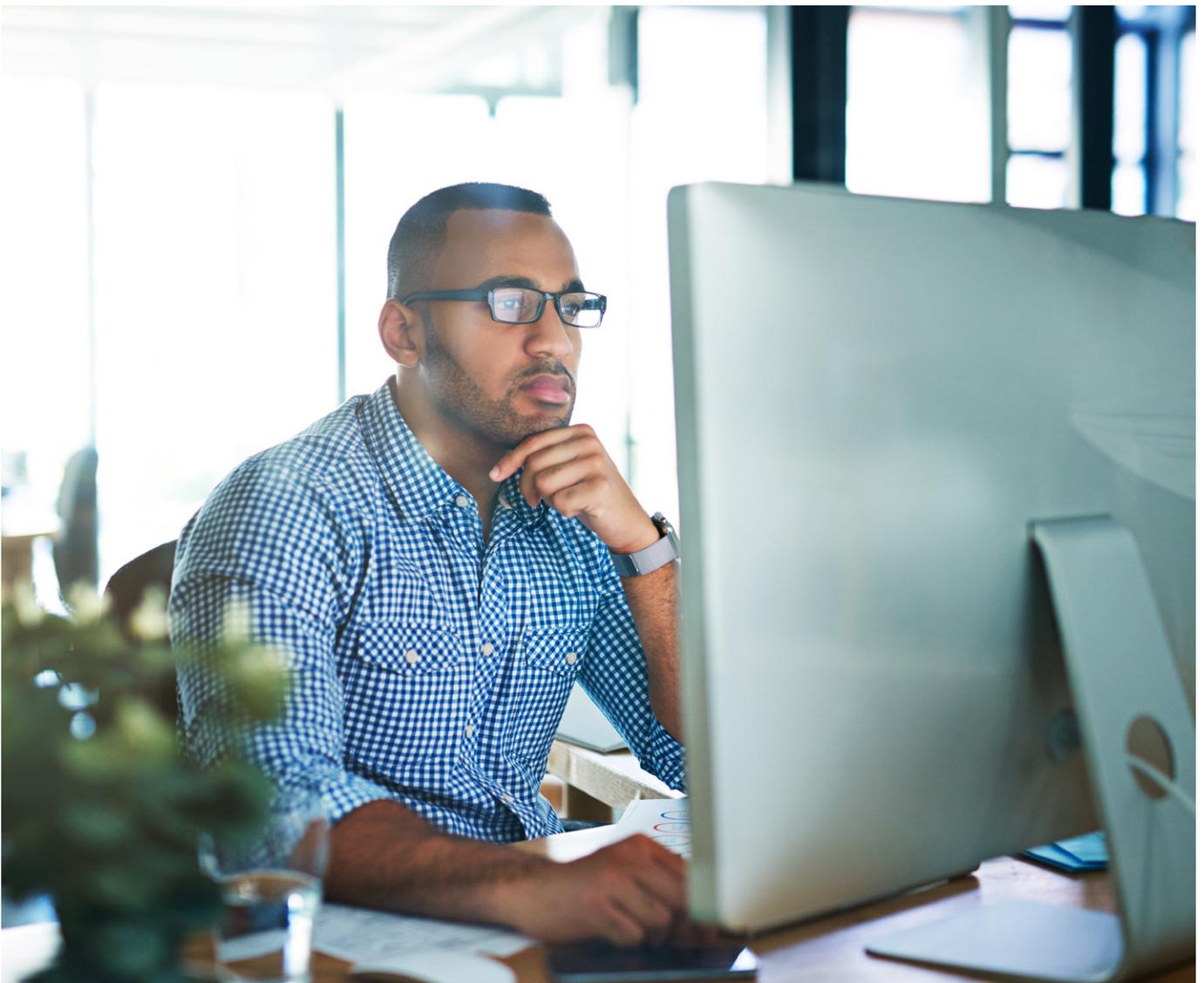
Area of Expertise	
Industrial Security Basics Exam Weight: 33%	
Facility Clearance Requirements and Procedures	Personnel Security Concepts
Business Structures	Foreign Ownership, Control or Influence (FOCI) Fundamentals
Contractor/Sub-Contractor Reporting Responsibilities	
Security Reviews and Inspection Exam Weight: 27%	
Security Review Procedures	Pre-Security Review Research
Security Violations and Administrative Inquiry Procedures	Post-Security Review Actions
Security Systems and Requirements Exam Weight: 40%	
Security-Related Systems and Databases	Counterintelligence Integration
International Security Requirements	Information Systems Security
Specialized Mission Areas	Specialized Briefings/Education
Classification and Retention	Safeguard/Storage and Classified Material Controls
Classified Visits and Meetings	Security-Related Systems and Databases

COURSES

Candidates are encouraged to familiarize themselves with courses addressing the topics noted in the ISOC Areas of Expertise above. CPTs and courses can be accessed through the STEPP: (<https://securitytraining.dcsa.mil/login/index.php>). The following courses and shorts may be helpful in preparing for the ISOC assessment:

- Preparing the DD Form 254, IS128.16
- Basic Industrial Security for the Government Security Specialist, IS050.CU
- Business Structures in the NISP, IS051.16
- Clearances in Industrial Security: Putting it All Together, IS125.16
- Facility Clearances in the NISP, IS140.16
- Foreign Ownership, Control or Influence (FOCI), IS170.16
- FSO Orientation for Non-Possessing Facilities, IS020.CU
- FSO Program Management for Possessing Facilities, IS030.CU
- Getting Started Seminar for New FSOs, IS121.10
- Industrial Security Basics, IS122.16

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- Industrial Security Databases and Systems, IS124.16
 - Industrial Security for Non-Security Government Personnel, IS230.CU
 - International Visit Requests, IS005.16
 - Introduction to Industrial Security, IS011.16
 - National Interest Determination (NID), IS155.16
 - NISP Reporting Requirements, IS150.16
 - NISP Security Violations and Administrative Inquiries, IS126.16
 - NISP Self-Inspection, IS130.16
 - Personnel Clearances in the NISP, IS142.16
 - Safeguarding Classified Information in the NISP, IS109.16
 - Security Support to International Programs in Cleared Defense Industry, IS181.16
 - Transmission and Transportation for Industry, IS107.16
 - Understanding Foreign Ownership, Control or Influence (FOCI), IS065.16
 - Visits and Meetings in the NISP, IS105.16



ANTITERRORISM CREDENTIAL (ATC)

Description: Demonstrates understanding and ability to apply knowledge of the Antiterrorism (AT) Plan and contribute to an effective AT program.

Ideal Candidate: Current ATOs or those in full-time security positions where the credential is a requirement.

Assessment: 100 multiple-choice questions (75 scored), 2 hours allotted.

Prerequisite: DOW personnel or contractors holding an Antiterrorism Officer (ATO) position and having completed AT-Level II training.



Area of Expertise	
AT Planning Exam Weight: 17%	
AT Program Elements	Budget Support to AT Plans
AT Plan Fundamentals	
Risk Management Exam Weight: 33%	
FPCON and RAM Planning, Development, and Execution	Physical Security Fundamentals
AT Risk Assessment and Risk Management Process	
AT Standards and Training Exam Weight: 29%	
Antiterrorism Officer	AT Training
AT Exercises	DOW Enterprise-Wide AT Standards
Reporting and Reviewing Exam Weight: 21%	
AT Working Groups	Use of Appropriate Information Reporting System or Tool (e.g., eGuardian System)
Use of AT Program Review	

COURSES

Candidates are encouraged to familiarize themselves with courses addressing the topics noted in the ATC Areas of Expertise above. CPTs and courses can be accessed through the STEPP: (<https://securitytraining.dcsa.mil/login/index.php>). The following courses may be helpful in preparing for the ATC assessment:

- Antiterrorism Level 1 Training, DS104.16
- Physical Security Planning and Implementation, PY106.16
- Antiterrorism Officer (ATO) Level II, GS109.16
- Risk Management Project and Advanced Studies, ED603.PR

SPECIAL PROGRAM SECURITY CREDENTIAL (SPSC)

Description: Demonstrates mastery of foundational knowledge and skills for performing Special Access Program (SAP) functions.

Ideal Candidate: Personnel performing Security Officer functions for DOW SAPs.

Assessment: 94 multiple-choice questions (76 scored), 2 hours and 15 minutes allotted.

Prerequisite: SFPC



Area of Expertise	
Personnel Security	Exam Weight: 6%
Physical Security	Exam Weight: 11%
Program Security	Exam Weight: 14%
Vulnerabilities Assessment and Management	Exam Weight: 14%
Cybersecurity	Exam Weight: 11%
Information Security	Exam Weight 14%
Classification Management	Exam Weight: 11%
SAP Security and Policy	Exam Weight: 12%
Security Education and Awareness	Exam Weight: 7%

COURSES

Candidates are encouraged to familiarize their selves with courses addressing the topics noted in the SPSC Areas of Expertise noted above. CPTs and courses can be accessed through the STEPP: (<https://securitytraining.dcsa.mil/login/index.php>). The following courses may be helpful in preparing for the SPSC assessment:

- Special Access Program Personnel Security Official (SPO) Training, SA106.16
- Introduction to Special Access Programs, SA101.PR or SA101.10.PR
- Orientation to SAP Security Compliance Inspections, SA210.PR
- SAP Mid-Level Security Management, SA201.PR or SA201.10.PR
- Sensitive Compartmented Information (SCI) Security Refresher, SCI100.16
- Special Access Program (SAP) Security Annual Refresher, SA002.06
- Special Access Programs (SAP) Overview, SA001.16
- ICD 705 Physical Security Construction Requirements for SAP, SA501.16

ADJUDICATOR PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION (APC)

Description: Demonstrates mastery of foundational knowledge and skills for performing adjudication functions. Holds NCCA accreditation. Its recent re-accreditation in 2023, reaffirms its alignment with NCCA standards.

Ideal candidate: Personnel security adjudicators in DCSA AVS, DOW IC, and other participating agencies.

Assessment: 114 multiple-choice questions (80 scored), 2 hours and 15 minutes allotted.

Prerequisite: Be a personnel security adjudicator, completion of specific training (Introduction to National Security Adjudication- PS001.18 and Fundamentals of National Security Adjudications-PS101.10) and owning organization on-the-job experience requirements.



Candidates that already have two years of adjudication work experience may with the approval of their employing organization substitute that adjudication experience in lieu of completing the requirements described above.

Area of Expertise	
National Security & Personnel Security Program Exam Weight: 29%	
National Security & Personnel Security Program	Type and Scope of Investigations
Types of Information Sources	
Adjudication Process Exam Weight: 56%	
Adjudication Process Using the Whole Person Concept	Procedures for Security Review Proceedings
Adjudicative Guidelines	Critical Terminologies
Reciprocity	
Personnel Security Process Exam Weight: 15%	
Pertinent Statutes, Executive Orders, and Regulations Governing the Personnel Security Process	Levels of Eligibility to Occupy a Sensitive Position and/or Access Classified Information

COURSES

Candidates are invited to familiarize themselves with courses addressing the topics noted in the APC Areas of Expertise. CPTs and courses can be accessed through the STEPP: (<https://securitytraining.dcsa.mil/login/index.php>).

Candidates are also encouraged to familiarize themselves with the CDSE-offered Adjudicator Toolkit available here: <https://www.cdse.edu/Training/Toolkits/Adjudicator-Toolkit/>.

SECURITY REVIEW PROCEEDINGS CREDENTIAL (SRPC)

Description: Demonstrates understanding and application of knowledge and skills for performing security review proceedings adjudicator tasks.

Ideal Candidate: Personnel security adjudicators in DCSA AVS, DOW IC, and approved federal agencies performing security review proceedings functions.

Assessment: 60 multiple-choice questions (all scored), 2 hours allotted.

Prerequisite: APC, Completion of specific training (Introduction to National Security Adjudication- PS001.18, Fundamentals of National Security Adjudications-PS101.10, and Advanced National Security Adjudications-PS301.10), and fulfill on-the-job experience requirements.



Area of Expertise	
Adjudication Process Using the Whole Person Concept (WPC)	Exam Weight: 57%
Procedures for Security Review Proceedings	Exam Weight: 36%
Pertinent Statutes, Executive Orders, and Regulations Governing the Personnel Security Process	Exam Weight: 7%

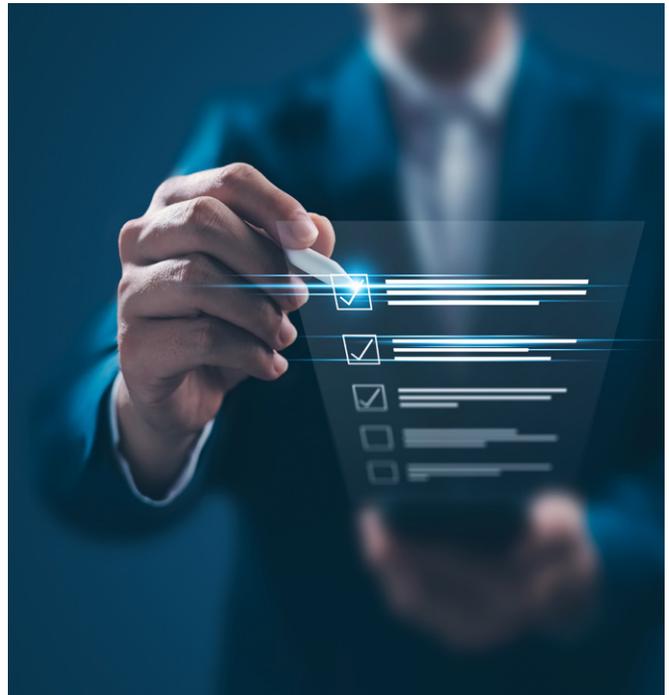
COURSES

Candidates are also invited to familiarize themselves with courses addressing the topics noted in the SRPC Areas of Expertise. CPTs and courses can be accessed through the STEPP: (<https://securitytraining.dcsa.mil/login/index.php>).

CERTIFICATION AND CREDENTIALING

ASSESSMENT DEVELOPMENT

The initial step in developing a fair and objective SPêD Certification and APC assessment was to conduct a job/practice analysis. A job/practice analysis was conducted to assure that the knowledge and skills identified were representative of those required by professionals across the DOW, including tasks and functions performed by civilian, military, and contractor personnel. The job/practice analysis, divided into four phases, was designed and facilitated by DCSA contractors, DOW leaders, and subject matter experts (SMEs) from the uniformed services and multiple DOW agencies. These phases included a detailed review of previous studies, defining specific work performed and required knowledge and skills necessary to perform that work, verifying the results with SMEs, and approval by the appropriate governance board.



The job/practice analysis led to the creation of the DOW Security Skill Standards (DS3), which clarifies DOW expectations of what personnel security professionals must know and successfully perform to support DOW security functions. This information was then used to generate the certification test outline (blueprint) that specifies objectives associated with the knowledge and skill topics and sub-topics measured by each specific SPêD Certification and APC Program assessment.

DETERMINING PASSING SCORES

The Angoff method was used to set the minimum passing score for the SPêD certification and credential assessments. The Angoff method has a well-established history of determining credible passing standards for multiple-choice examinations and is easily adapted by the SPêD certification, APC, CITP, and credential assessments.

The method involves two basic elements: conceptualization of a minimally competent examinee and using SMEs to estimate whether a minimally competent examinee will answer an item correctly or incorrectly. Minimally competent examinees demonstrate behaviors that are sometimes correct, but often not. They have a 50/50 probability of passing or failing the exam, which places them just at the cut-off score for an assessment. SMEs define the characteristics of a minimally competent examinee and then try to estimate if a minimally competent examinee is likely to successfully perform each item on the assessment.

A panel of SMEs made predictions for each item (represented as a percentage) and used the average of the ratings on the items to set the minimum passing score for the assessment. Results of the Angoff method inform the provisional cut score. The provisional cut score is then calibrated using data collected during the beta test phase.

CERTIFICATION AND CREDENTIALING PROCESS



CANDIDATE MANAGEMENT PLATFORM

NOTE: Profile changes in the Virtual Campus may take up to two hours before they are reflected within the system.

DEFENSE ACQUISITION UNIVERSITY (DAU)

CREATE AN ACCOUNT

1. Create new DAU account at <https://saar.dau.edu>. Using Microsoft Edge or Google Chrome is recommended.
2. Under "Request/Reestablish DAU Platform Access", select either "Department of Defense Agency" or "Other Federal Agency (Non-DOD), whichever is applicable.
3. Read the Warning Notice and select "Continue" if you agree.
4. Select your authentication certificate when using your DOD Common Access Card (CAC).
5. Read the information regarding your DAUID and answer the question accordingly.
6. Select "Virtual Campus (Online Training)."
7. Enter the reason you are requesting access to the system, i.e. "to obtain a SPeD certification and/or credential."
8. Complete all of the demographic information.
9. Read and accept the User Agreement
10. Enter the Security Code and select "Submit."

You will receive a "Welcome" email within 24 hours. Be sure to check your junk mailbox. If you do not receive an email within 24 hours, contact the DAU Help Desk at (866) 568-6924 for assistance.

ACCOUNT LOG IN

1. Log in to your DAU account at <https://dau.csod.com/>.
2. The login window will pop up. Select the "Sign in with CAC" button at the bottom of the screen.
3. If you do not use your CAC, enter your Username (government email address) and Password.
4. If "Select a Certificate" appears on the screen, use the authentication option.
5. Once you have completed the single sign on (SSO) process, DAU should open up with your agency logo in the upper left corner.

UPDATE USERNAME AND EMAIL ADDRESS

1. Log in to your DAU account at <https://dau.csod.com/>.
2. Hover your mouse over the Home tab at the top left and select "Universal Profile."
3. Once the page loads, select "Update User Record Form" at the top.
4. Locate the email field and enter your new email address. This email address will also be your DAU Username.
5. After you have finished making updates, select "Submit" to save the changes.
6. Hover your mouse over the Home tab at the top left and select "Welcome" to return to the main screen.

UPDATE ACCOUNT INFORMATION

1. Login to your DAU account at <https://dau.csod.com/>.
2. Hover your mouse of the Home tab at the top left and select Universal Profile.
3. Once the page loads, select "Update User Record Form" at the top.
4. Locate the Organization section and click on the box with the "X". This will clear the field.
5. Select the box again and enter your agency in the search box and select the search button.
6. Results will display on the screen. Select the title associated with your organization and it will automatically be entered on your profile.

NOTE: *If no results populated after your search, select, "Cancel." Select the box again by Organization and use the page numbers and arrows at the bottom right to scroll through all of the available organizations. You will not be able to save your profile until an Organization has been selected.*

7. Once complete, select "Submit" to save the changes.
8. Hover your mouse over the Home tab at the top left and select "Welcome" to return to the main screen.

RESET YOUR PASSWORD

1. Select the "Need help signing in" and then "Forgot password" buttons.
2. The reset password window will pop up. Enter the email address associated with your DAU account.
3. Select "Reset via SMS" (if a mobile number has been configured) or "Reset via email."
4. You will receive an email to reset your password. Follow the instructions within the email. If you do not receive the reset password email in your inbox, check your junk mailbox.

Contact the DAU Help Desk at (866) 568-6924 if you require assistance resetting your password.



PREPARING FOR YOUR ASSESSMENT

COMPETENCY PREPARATORY TOOLS (CPTS)

CPTs are valuable resources aligned with the DOW Security Skill Standards (DS3) and the Defense Security Essential Body of Knowledge (D-SEBOK). They offer a comprehensive overview of topics potentially covered in your assessment, drawing from the D-SEBOK's extensive knowledge base for security professionals.

Access CPTs through your STEPP account at securitytraining.dcsa.mil/ (search "CPT" and follow enrollment instructions).

NOTE: CPTs provide a broad scope; not all topics covered will necessarily appear on the assessment. Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) regularly review and refine assessment content to align with National Accreditation Standards.

REQUESTING ACCOMMODATIONS FOR YOUR ASSESSMENT

SPeD is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Rehabilitation Act, and DOW policy.

What is a Reasonable Accommodation?

Accommodations are adjustments or changes made to the assessment process to ensure equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities. This may include auxiliary aids, procedural modifications, or alternative formats.

Available Accommodations

SPeD offers various accommodations, including:

- Extra time: Half time, 30 minutes, or double time.
- Testing supplies: Glucose testing supplies.
- Separate testing room: With or without a reader, recorder, or sign language interpreter.
- Sign language interpreter: For communication purposes only.

How to Request an Accommodation

1. Indicate your needs: When completing the assessment enrollment form, select the required accommodations.
2. SPeD PMO Confirmation: The SPeD PMO will reach out to confirm the requested accommodations.
3. Approval and Scheduling: Once approved, you will receive a confirmation email from DAU to schedule your assessment.

Important Notes

- Refer to the Pearson VUE Comfort Aid List at <https://www.pearsonvue.com/us/en/test-takers/accommodations/comfort-aid-list.html> for pre-approved items that do not require formal accommodations.
- The SPeD PMO may request additional documentation to determine the necessity and feasibility of specific accommodations.
- Every effort will be made to provide reasonable accommodations.

Grievances:

If you believe your accommodation request was unfairly denied, you may file a grievance with the DCSA Office of Equal Employment Opportunity:

- Email: DCSA.quantico.DCSA-hq.mbx.eeo@mail.mil
- Phone: 571-305-6737

ASSESSMENT-TAKING TIPS

Preparation and Mindset:

- Relax and arrive at the test center early
- Maintain a positive attitude throughout the session

Question Strategies:

- Read each question carefully
- Trust your initial instinct
- Avoid overanalyzing
- Skip challenging questions and return to them later
- Don't look for patterns or assume answer length indicates correctness

Time Management:

- Pace yourself and use your time wisely
- Answer all questions

TEST CENTER POLICY

Confirmation: Upon scheduling, you'll receive a confirmation email outlining test center policies.

Arrival: Arrive at least 30 minutes early with two forms of identification (as specified in the confirmation email).

Materials: You'll be provided with blank paper/whiteboards, writing instruments, and a computer for the assessment.

Prohibited Items: Leave personal items (electronics, bags, outerwear, notes, etc.) outside the testing room or in a designated secure area.

TAKING YOUR ASSESSMENT

CERTIFICATION AND CREDENTIAL ENROLLMENT

Follow these steps to request enrollment for your SPêD certification or credential assessment:

1. Access the Enrollment Request Form: Go to the CDSE website at <https://www.cdse.edu/Certification/Request-to-take-an-Assessment/> and locate the certification or credential enrollment form.
2. Complete the Form: Fill out all required fields, including the assessment accommodations request section, if applicable. **Note:** Enter the two-letter state abbreviation in the "State" field.
3. Select Your Desired Assessment: Check the box next to only one SPêD certification or credential you are requesting. **Note:** Certifications and credentials you are currently pursuing or already hold will be pre-selected. Do not uncheck these boxes.
4. Review and Attach Documents:
 - Click "Next" at the bottom of the form.
 - Attach any required supporting documentation.
 - Contractors: Complete and attach the Contractor Eligibility Verification form.
5. Submit Your Request: Click "Submit for Approval" at the bottom of the form.
6. Await Approval: Your CSR will review your form and provide approval within seven business days.

SUBMITTING AN ASSESSMENT REQUEST FORM

Submit one of the following forms to earn your certification and credential:

Enrollment Request Form

Purpose: Initiates the certification or credential assessment process.

Process: After you submit the form, upon approval by the CSR and DAU, an authorization request is sent to Pearson. This constitutes one authorization attempt, regardless of the assessment outcome (pass, fail, no-show, cancellation, 180-day assessment authorization lapse).

Re-authorization Request Form

Purpose: Required for all certification or credential assessment attempts after the initial authorization.

Trigger: This form is necessary regardless of the previous assessment outcome (pass, fail, no-show, cancellation, 180-day assessment authorization lapse).

Re-enrollment Request Form

Purpose: Used when a certificant has previously held a certification or credential assessment, but the certification or credential has now expired.

Note: This form is specifically for certificants with expired certifications or credentials that require retaking the assessment.

SCHEDULE YOUR ASSESSMENT

Ready to schedule your SP&D certification or credential assessment? Follow these easy steps:

1. Request Assessment Authorization:
After you have submitted the correct assessment request form to your CSR along with any required supporting documentation. Your CSR will grant you authorization to proceed.
2. Access Your DAU Transcript:
 - Log in to your DAU account: <https://dau.csod.com/>
 - Hover over the "Learning" tab and select "View Your Transcript."
 - Click on the "Active" tab to view your enrolled certifications and credentials.
3. Locate Your Certification/Credential:
 - Find the certification or credential you want to schedule.
 - Select "Manage" to view details.
 - Under "PearsonVue Exam", select "Launch" next to the desired assessment.
4. Launch and Schedule:
 - Once the assessment launches, click "Next."
 - Carefully review the information provided.
 - Within 24 hours, you will receive an email from PearsonVue with instructions on how to schedule your assessment.

Note: Allow up to 24 hours for your assessment authorization to appear on your transcript.

CANCEL OR RESCHEDULE YOUR ASSESSMENT

Need to cancel or reschedule your SPēD assessment? Here's what you need to know:

Cancellation/Rescheduling Policy:

- You can cancel or reschedule your assessment without penalty up to 24 hours before your scheduled test date and time.
- Cancellations made less than 24 hours in advance will result in a 90-day hold, during which you will be unable to reschedule your assessment.

How to Cancel or Reschedule:

- Manage Directly: Cancel or reschedule through your Pearson VUE account.
- Contact Pearson VUE: Call 1-888-477-0284 or visit <https://home.pearsonvue.com/Test-takers/Customer-service.aspx>.

Notes:

- *The SPēD PMO, DOW SPēD CSR, and test centers cannot cancel or reschedule assessments on your behalf.*
- *You can only reschedule existing appointments within your 180-day authorization period.*
- *If extenuating circumstances prevent you from providing 24-hour notice, please contact your SPēD Program CSR.*

WHAT HAPPENS YOU MISS YOUR SPēD ASSESSMENT? (NO-SHOW POLICY)

You will be considered a "no-show" for your assessment if you:

- Miss your scheduled appointment: Do not arrive at the testing center on the scheduled date and time.
- Cancel too late: Cancel your appointment less than 24 hours before the scheduled time.
- Arrive late: Arrive at the testing center after your appointment time.
- Lack proper identification: Arrive at the testing center without the required identification documents.

Consequences of a No-Show: If you are considered a no-show, you will be placed on a 90-day hold and will not be able to take the missed assessment until this period has passed.

ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

The assessment consists of multiple-choice questions, some of which are scored while others are unscored for testing purposes. You will not know which questions are scored. Each correct answer on a scored question earns points. It is highly recommended to attempt all questions, as unanswered questions will be marked as incorrect.

RETAKING AN ASSESSMENT

- Required Waiting Period: If you do not pass, are a no-show, or do not complete an assessment, you must wait a specific period before retaking it.
 - APC/SRPC: 30 days after the first attempt, 60 days after the second, and 90 for each subsequent attempt.
 - All other certifications/credentials: 90 days after each attempt.
- Sitting Limit: You are limited to a total of 8 attempts (sittings) per certification or credential.
- "Sitting" Defined: A "sitting" occurs when you receive an assessment authorization attempt and take or miss the appointment.

"By accessing and participating in the SPēD Program, you accept the responsibility to protect the integrity of these assessments by not disclosing, disseminating, copying, publishing, or transmitting any parts of the assessment in any form to any person without prior written consent of the DOW SPēD PMO."

SCORING

- **Passing Score:** You must achieve a scaled score of 650 or higher (out of 800) to pass.
- **Preliminary Results:** You will receive preliminary pass/fail results immediately after completing the assessment at the test center and later in your DAU account history.

FEEDBACK

Your feedback report contains two sections:

1. **Performance Compared to Passing Score:** This section shows your scaled score and whether you achieved the passing threshold.
2. **Performance Compared to Other Candidates:** This section provides insights into your performance on different topic areas compared to others who have taken the assessment. This feedback can help you identify areas for improvement.

Note: *While comparative feedback is helpful, remember that it is not definitive and should not be your sole guide for improvement. Strive to enhance your knowledge and skills across all topic areas.*

FEES ASSOCIATED

All assessments are currently offered at no cost to candidates or their organizations.

ASSESSMENT SECURITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality Agreement: You must sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) before taking SPêD and APC assessments, agreeing to protect the confidentiality of assessment content.

Secure Environment: Assessments are proctored and delivered in secure environments to maintain integrity.

Information Release: Your personal information and assessment results are confidential and will not be disclosed without your written consent except as required by law.

Feedback and Questions: Direct any feedback or questions about assessment content to the SPêD PMO at dcsa.spedcert@mail.mil, adhering to the NDA terms.

AFTER THE ASSESSMENT

USING CERTIFICATION OR CREDENTIAL ACRONYMS

You may use the appropriate acronym for your SPêD or APC certification (e.g., SFPC, SAPP, SPIPC) on business cards, resumes, and signature lines only while your certification or credential is active.

CERTIFICATION AND CONFERRAL REVOCATION

Per DOWM 3305.13, OUSW(I&S) holds the authority to revoke certification credentials based on recommendations from the Director of DCSA.

DIGITAL CREDENTIALING

ACCESSING YOUR DIGITAL BADGE

Your achievement is recognized with a digital badge hosted on Credly found at: <https://www.credly.com/earner/earned>.

1. **Receive your Credly email:** After being conferred, you'll receive an email from Credly providing access to

your digital badge.

2. Accept your badge: Click the "Accept" button and log in to your existing Credly account or create a new one.

SHARING YOUR DIGITAL BADGE

Once you've claimed your badge:

- Share on social media: Easily share on platforms like LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook directly from Credly.
- Email your badge: Send a direct link to your badge via email.
- Download and embed: Download the badge image or embed it on your personal website.
- Print a free copy: Follow the instructions below.

PRINTING OPTIONS

Free Printing:

1. Log in to Credly: Visit <https://www.credly.com/earner/earned>.
2. Access the "Share your badge" page: This page appears after you receive and accept a badge or by clicking the "Share" button on a badge.
3. Click the print icon: Located on the far right of the page, this allows you to download and print your certificate.

Purchase a Printed Certificate:

For a high-quality printed certificate, purchase one through American Registry:

1. Log in to Credly: Visit <https://www.credly.com/earner/earned>.
2. Click "Recommendations": Find this link on your digital badge's metadata page.
3. Log in to American Registry: You'll be redirected to <http://www.americanregistry.com/dcsa> to select and purchase your certificate.
4. Future purchases: After your first visit, you'll receive a unique URL for convenient future orders.

LINKING YOUR EMAIL ADDRESSES FOR DIGITAL BADGES

To ensure you receive all your digital badges, link both your government and personal email addresses to your Credly account:

1. Access Credly Settings: Sign in to your Credly account (<https://www.credly.com/earner/earned>) and click the "Settings" tab in the navigation bar.
2. Go to "Email Addresses": In the left-hand panel, click "Account" and then select "Email Addresses."
3. Add Email Address: Click "Add an email address."
4. Enter and Verify: Type in your government or personal email address and click "Add." You'll receive a verification email from Credly.
5. Repeat for Additional Addresses: Follow the same steps to add and verify any other email addresses associated with your DAU account.

MERGE MULTIPLE CREDLY ACCOUNTS

Do you have SPeD digital badges spread across multiple Credly accounts? Combine them into a single account for easy management:

MAINTAINING YOUR CERTIFICATION AND CREDENTIAL

On March 13, 2025 the DCSA Security Training Directorate initiated a pause of on the requirement to track and report professional development units as part of an ongoing review of the SPeD Certification Program. This pause allowed the SPeD Program Management Office (PMO) to evaluate and improve the certification maintenance process.

What this means for program participants:

- The SPeD program remains active. You should continue to register, apply for, and attempt certification tests using the candidate management system (CMS).
- The maintenance and renewal requirement is paused. You are not required to track or submit PDUs in the CMS for certification renewal until further notice.
- Certification maintenance periods will reset. All certificants will receive a new expiration date when the pause concludes. *No active credentials and certifications will expire or be lost during this pause.*

For more information, visit Certification Renewal Program at <https://www.cdse.edu/Certification/What-is-the-SPeD-Program/Frequently-Asked-Questions/>



APPEALS PROCESS AND PROCEDURES

GROUNDS FOR APPEAL

You can file an appeal for the following:

- Examination Results: Disputed scores, challenging exam content, or questioning the cut-score.
- Candidate Registration: Issues related to the registration process.
- Test-Taking Protocols: Complaints about testing center incidents or allotted exam time.
- Eligibility Decisions: Appeals for denials based on alleged cheating, inaccurate application information, or violations of professional conduct.
- Certification Maintenance and PDUs: Disagreements over awarded PDU credits, issues with the Certification Renewal Package, or challenges to the renewal time-frame.
- Certification Disciplinary Matters: Appeals related to decisions made by the Board.

DECISIONS NOT ELIGIBLE FOR APPEAL

The following are outside the scope of the SPêD PMO and are not appealable:

- DOW Component employment policies.
- Eligibility criteria for specific certifications and credentials within a Component.
- DOW Component affiliation.

For these matters, contact your CSR.

APPEAL SUBMISSION

Timeframe: Submit your appeal within 90 calendar days of receiving the decision or completing the assessment (whichever comes first).

Form and Submission: Use the Appeal Request Form (https://www.cdse.edu/Portals/124/Documents/certification/appeals_form.pdf) and send it to the SPêD PMO at: dcsa.spedcert@mail.mil.

APPEAL REVIEW

1. Preliminary Review: The SP&D PMO reviews appeals within 15 business days to ensure timeliness, completeness, and valid grounds.
2. Appeals Board Review: Allowable appeals are forwarded to the Certification Appeals Board for a decision.
3. Decision and Notification: The Appeals Board's decision is final. You, your CSR, and the SP&D PMO will be notified of the outcome.

Withdrawal: You can withdraw your appeal in writing at any time before the Appeals Board reaches a decision.

Appeals may be filed challenging the following:

Appeals Type	Examples of Allowable Appeals	Examples of Non-Allowable Appeals
Examination Results	Candidate requests verification that examination score was accurately recorded and calculated.	Candidate challenges content and/or validity of examination questions, scenarios, and/or answer options. Candidate challenges method used for examination cut-score.
Candidate Registration	N/A	N/A
Test-taking Protocols	Candidate has a valid documented complaint associated with incident(s) at testing center.	Candidate challenges time allowed to complete examination.
Eligibility decisions related to inaccurate information on the application form or alleged cheating or alleged violation of professional rules of conduct or the law.	Candidate appeals eligibility denial based on alleged cheating, inaccurate information on the application form, or violation of professional rules of conduct or the law.	N/A
Certification maintenance and PDUs	Candidate appeals number of PDU credits awarded to activities.	Candidate improperly uses Certification Renewal Package (CRP). Candidate is unable to verify submission of CRP. Candidate does not maintain their DAU account in accordance with instructions in DOW Certification and Credentialing Handbook. Candidate challenges two-year renewal time frame.
Certification disciplinary matters	Candidate appeals determination made by Certification Discipline Board.	N/A

WAIVERS

CIRCUMSTANCES FOR WAIVER

You can request a waiver to extend your certification expiration date due to:

- Deployment
- Hospitalization/Medical leave
- Other extraordinary circumstances preventing you from fulfilling certification maintenance requirements.

Note: *Waivers are not permitted after your certification has expired.*

WAIVER REQUEST SUBMISSION

Timeframe: Submit your request before your certification expires.

Form and Submission: Use the Waiver Request Form (https://www.cdse.edu/Portals/124/Documents/certification/waiver_form.pdf?ver=rkSsN3zJLX7HKWPsc7oVSg%3d%3d) and send it to your CSR.

WAIVER DECISION AND NOTIFICATION

You will receive notification of the decision within 10 business days of your request being received.

APPROVED WAIVERS TIME FRAME

The approved waiver period will vary depending on the circumstances but will not exceed 180 days.



GLOSSARY

ADJUDICATOR CERTIFICATION GOVERNANCE BOARD

The authority for the governance and policy for the APC Program rests with the OUSW(I&S). The ACGB serves as an advisory group for the OUSW(I&S). The ACGB is the sole authority for the APC Program and represents the interests of all parties concerned with the certification program design, management, and maintenance. The ACGB serves as the ultimate decision-making body for certification policy coordination and oversight of the APC Program.

APPLICANT

An individual with an established and up-to-date DAU account is eligible to take a SPêD or APC Program assessment.

CANDIDATE

An individual scheduled to take an APC or SPêD assessment.

CENTER FOR DEVELOPMENT OF SECURITY EXCELLENCE

The nationally-accredited, award-winning directorate within DCSA providing security education, training, and certification products and services to a broad audience supporting the protection of national security and professionalization of the DOW security enterprise.

CERTIFICANT

An individual who fulfilled conditions outlined in the policy matrix for certification and conferred by the OUSW(I&S).

CERTIFICATION RENEWAL PACKAGE

An online tool to record PDUs earned during a two-year certification maintenance and renewal cycle.

COMPETENCY PREPARATORY TOOLS (CPTs)

CPTs are references that are aligned with the DOW Security Skill Standards (DS3) and the Defense Security Essential Body of Knowledge (D-SEBOK), which is the DOW security community's expectations of what security professionals need to know to perform various aspects of their jobs. CPTs indicate what may be covered by an assessment, but it cannot be assumed that every topic will be on the assessment.

DOW SECURITY SKILL STANDARDS

Establishes DOW expectations of what security professionals must know and successfully perform to support DOW security functions relative to each SPêD Program certification or credential. DOW Security Skill Standards also provide certification blueprints specifying objectives associated with the knowledge and skill topics and sub-topics measured by each assessment.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANT

An individual eligible to apply to take a SPêD or APC Program assessment after gaining approval from their employing agency or the SPêD PMO.

FOURTH ESTATE

Components of the United States DOW that are not considered to be affiliated with armed services, Intelligence Community (IC) agencies, or Combatant Commands (CCMD), to include the defense agencies and other DOW field activities.

DEFENSE ACQUISITION UNIVERSITY

The system of record for the SPêD and APC Program and the gateway to testing and managing a certification and/or credential. An applicant's DAU account must be active and up to date to register for or maintain certifications and credentials (<https://dau.csod.com/>).

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR CERTIFYING AGENCIES

The Commission responsible for reviewing professional certification programs and determining whether they meet certification standards for program development, implementation, and maintenance while guaranteeing health, welfare, and safety of the public. Commission reviews programs to determine whether their practices are consistent with the Standards for the Accreditation of Certification Programs.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT UNITS

Professional development activities falling under approved professional development categories. A certification holder is responsible for obtaining 100 PDUs before the end of their two-year maintenance cycle. At least 50 of the 100 PDUs must be acquired through approved security-related professional development activities.

SECURITY TRAINING, EDUCATION, AND PROFESSIONALIZATION PORTAL

STEPP is the learning management system where DOW employees are able to access the CDSE course catalog and view their course transcripts. These courses are intended for use by DOW and other U.S. Government personnel and contractors within the National Industrial Security Program. (<https://securitytraining.dcsa.mil/login/index.php>).

SPêD PROGRAM MANAGEMENT OFFICE

Establishes and implements policies and procedures to manage and support the SPêD and APC Program, including the application process, certification and credential assessments and testing protocols, candidate record retention, the DS3, and national accreditation through the NCCA. The SPêD PMO acts as the CSR for Industry, contractors (such as Facility Security Officers), as well as for agencies that do not have a CSR in the SPêD or APC programs.

ACRONYMS

AAA	Access Approval Authority	DS3	DOW Security Skill Standards
ACGB	Adjudicator Certification Governance Board	DSTC	DOW Security Training Council
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act	EO	Enterprise Objective
APC	Adjudicator Professional Certification	FOCI	Foreign Ownership, Control, or Influence
AT	Antiterrorism	FS	File Series
ATC	Antiterrorism Credential	FSO	Facility Security Officer
ATO	Antiterrorism Officer	IC	Intelligence Community
CDSE	Center for Development of Security Excellence	IS	Information Security
CPT	Competency Preparatory Tool	ISOC	Industrial Security Oversight Credential
CRP	Certification Renewal Package	IT	Information Technology
CSR	Component Service Representative	NCCA	National Commission for Certifying Agencies
DAU	Defense Acquisition University	NDA	Nondisclosure Agreement
DCSA	Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency	NGA	National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency
DCSA AVS	DCSA Adjudication and Vetting Services	NID	National Interest Determination
DHRA	Defense Human Resources Activity	NIS	National Intelligence Strategy
DIA	Defense Intelligence Agency	NISP	National Industrial Security Program
DOD	Department of Defense	NSA	National Security Agency
DOW	Department of War	OPSEC	Operations Security
DOW IC	DOW Intelligence Community	OUSW(I&S)	Office of the Under Secretary of War for Intelligence and Security
DODI	Department of Defense Instruction	PDA	Personal Digital Assistant
DODM	Department of Defense Manual	PDU	Professional Development Unit
DOHA	Defense Office of Hearings and Appeals	PMO	Program Management Office

PPB&E	Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution
PSC	Physical Security Certification
PSP	Personnel Security Program
RMF	Risk Management Framework
SAPPC	Security Asset Protection Professional Certification
SAP	Special Access Program
SAPCO	SAP Central Office
SAPF	SAP Facility
SAPNP	SAP Nomination Process
SCI	Sensitive Compartmented Information
SFPC	Security Fundamentals Professional Certification
SME	Subject Matter Expert
SP&D	Security Professional Education Development
SPIPC	Security Program Integration Professional Certification
SPSC	Special Program Security Credential
SRPC	Security Review Proceedings Credential
STEPP	Security Training, Education, and Professionalization Portal
TPI	Two-Person Integrity
USW(AT&L)	Under Secretary of War for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics
USW(I&S)	Under Secretary of War for Intelligence and Security
SOR	Statement of Reasons
