

IAOIP Policy 1021: Grandfathering of Certification Exams

In all new certifying organizations, there is a period at the beginning of their history where the foundation knowledge must be developed and documented. This creates an unusual situation whereby the writers of certification exams must either recuse themselves or be grandfathered into the exam. The International Association of Innovation Professionals has adopted a policy to avoid the appearance of conflicts of interest by grandfathering individuals who have significant inside knowledge (through preparation of an exam or active membership in a working group as they formulate the first exam) into the first certification exam developed by their working group.

We have adopted this policy largely because there are individuals who have been seminal in the development of the GISH, a certification exam, and the exam bank, which would imply three main things, 1) they already maintain requisite levels of innovation related knowledge that they could otherwise pass the exam, but 2) they likely have what could be considered an unfair amount of insight into the exam that would create a conflict of interest or unfair advantage, and thus in order for IAOIP to maintain high levels of integrity, they should likely be excluded from being eligible from taking the exam, and thus 3) IAOIP should not exclude these experts from being certified due to their inclusion, involvement, and contributions to the certifications, or risk losing the contributions of these individuals for future exams for their fear of becoming ineligible.

When considering the policy, the main points of consideration included, but were not limited to, whether or not an individual has:

- contributed materially to the creation of exam bank questions,
- contributed to reviewing exam bank questions,
- had access to exam bank questions,
- was an author of chapter(s) which were used as part of the body of knowledge from which the exam was created

In the event an individual has met any of the criteria above, they would be eligible to apply to the Certification Committee and the IAOIP Board, to be granted grandfather status for the exam in question. There may be other criteria that can be employed to further warrant grandfathering, such as the degree to which the individual was involved in creating the study guide or teaching certificate exam courses, but these should likely play an ancillary or supporting role in justifying the exclusion in question.

Accordingly, for application of these criteria, it was proposed that these criteria be applied per individual and with respect to each and every exam or future exam. Thus by way of exam, we consider two scenarios:

1. an individual contributes significantly to the exam bank and reviews a subset of the other exam bank questions for the base-level certification exam (i.e., CIP). Said individual could apply to be grandfathered and thusly be awarded the certification.
2. an individual was not involved in the exam bank creation, but was deeply involved in a working group and the resultant exam bank. Said individual would thusly be grandfathered into said working group's certification level. Moreover, since said individual was not involved in the exam, said individual would be required to take and pass the CIP exam prior to being awarded for the exemption earned via their involvement with the working group. Thus, said exemptions are intended to increase the overall participation rate, which is consistent with other certifying bodies in the first generation of exam preparation.

Example proposals related to the above would include the following:

- a) Objective: Recruitment and retention of Committee Chairs. Proposal: The Chair and Co-Chair of the Certification Committee will propose every three months to the Board of Directors, the grandfathering of individual Committee Chairs based upon recommendations and supported by meeting attendance, participation in said meetings and chairing of regular meetings of their working group. The individual must hold the base level certification.
- b) Objective: Recruitment and retention of Committee Members. Proposal: The Chair and the Co-Chair of a committee will propose every three months to the Certification Committee the grandfathering of individual Committee Members based on 12 months of active participation, to be determined by and agreed upon by the Certification Committee. Initial recommendation to include preparation in test questions, regular meeting participation, etc. The individual must hold the base level certification.
- c) Objective: To encourage Certified Members to continue participation in working groups, some number of CPE credits (based on the CPE/CEU Policy) will be proposed to the Certification Committee to be awarded to active members of working groups at the discretion and recommendation of the Chair and Co-Chair. Details of CPE will be determined by the Certification Committee but will only be awarded to individuals holding at least a foundation level certification.
- d) Objective: To encourage Board participation. Proposal: Active Board members may be awarded grandfathered certification based on the recommendation of the Chair and Co-Chair of the Certification Committee. This will generally be based on the contributions to the certifications, including test preparation, inside information and other mitigating factors that would otherwise disqualify the Board member or officer.

The intention of the policy is to create a positive effect for the IAOP, both from a membership base increase, and more importantly, as a method to increase involvement in the working groups during their early and most formative years, and

in ongoing years to help drive evolution of the working groups and exams to keep up with the ever changing innovation marketplace and ecosystem. The risk associated with this is minimal and only temporal in that once the majority of exam banks have been created, few, if any additional people would likely need access to the test bank, and thus a minimal number of members would be grandfathered into any particular certification exam. Moreover, since most individuals would likely only be seminally involved in one or two exam banks, it is unlikely that any specific individual would obtain 'full' certification on all exams via the proposed exemption.

Note that this policy is not specifically aimed at granting the grandfathering exemption for other specific and worthy cases, such as the granting of an 'honorary' certification. It is suggested these honorary cases be addressed case-by-case and be brought before the executive board for discussion and a majority vote.

Adopted: July 18, 2018

Amended: