

# **ISTQB Certified Tester Expert Level Certification Extension Policy**

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**Produced by the 'Expert Level Working Party'  
International Software Testing Qualification Board**

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## Foreword

Once certification for a module at Expert Level has been achieved, a Certification Extension Program (CEP) shall provide a guideline for re-certification. This document provides specific information on the Certification Extension process, including the requirements and timelines.

If a person holds Expert Certifications for multiple modules, the Certification Extension process must be followed for each specific module. For instance, extension of certificate A does not extend the validity of certificate B. However, activities used to accumulate Certification Extension Credits for certificate A can also be submitted for certificate B.

The entry and exit criteria for achieving initial certification at Expert Level are regulated by the ISTQB in the respective Expert level module syllabi.

## 1. Introduction

The Expert Level certificate is initially valid for **5** years. After the initial 5 years, individuals may extend their current level of certification for another **5** years period. There is no limit to the number of times that a certification can be extended.

Extension is achieved by re-taking the exam for the Expert Level certificate or by completing activities in at least two Activity Categories (as defined in the Activity Credit Table in Chapter 7) in such a way that they accumulate a minimum of **200** Certification Extension Credits (CEC) before their current certification expires.

Expired certificates must not be returned to the ISTQB.

The Certification Extension Program is under the overall jurisdiction of the ISTQB. National Boards perform auditing of individual extension submissions and may appoint a National Certification Body for performing basic submission screening and administration of the certification. The following description assumes this form of organisation. However, the National Board may also perform the administration of the Certification Extension Program itself.

National Boards shall set the fee for the extension of the certification.

## 2. Description

1. An individual who is currently certified is responsible to submit an application for certification extension up to 4 months before the certification expires. National Certification Bodies may choose to inform (via email or letter) a person who is currently certified of the certificate's expiry in advance.
2. The individual has 2 options for the Certification Extension:
  - a) Take the current exam to continue his/her Certification (become "re-certified"). This option eliminates the requirement for any additional education, experience or training classes for that individual.
  - b) Complete the required Certification Extension Credits (CECs).
3. If the individual decides for option 2, it is his/her responsibility to submit all relevant CEC details to the National Certification Body. It shall not be permitted to make partial submissions during the certification period, and the administration of individual CEC accounts by the National Certification Body is not provided. Applicants must ensure that clear and verifiable evidence is provided for all CECs applied for. In particular, evidence of professional activity in the field of testing must be supported by a written summary and confirmed by a person in authority (e.g. superior), who may be contacted by the National Board for auditing purposes.
4. The National Certification Body screens the CECs using the rules set out below (see Activity Credit Criteria and Activity Credit Table). The time taken by the National Certification Body to perform the formal checks described shall not exceed 2 weeks.
5. If the criteria are fulfilled, the National Certification Body submits all relevant documentation to the National Board for auditing. Otherwise the National Certification Body issues the applicant with a founded rejection notification.
6. The National Board provides experts for auditing part or all of the application. The time taken by the National Board to perform the audit checks described shall be typically 1 month. If this period is exceeded (e.g. where written material such as white papers or books are submitted), this period may be extended by a maximum of 2 weeks. Multiple authorized individuals may be involved in auditing an applicant's CEC documentation. No individual may in any way be involved in reviewing his/her own CEC documentation.
7. The audit result is communicated by the National Board to the National Certification Body, which issues the applicant with either a certification extension (the certificate will have a "valid until" date on it) or a founded rejection.
8. In the case of a rejection, the applicant may resubmit once (only) before the certification period expires. This shall allow the applicant to gain the CECs needed in the remaining time before expiry of the certification. If this resubmission is again rejected by either the National Certification Body (formal check) or the National Board (audit), the applicant may only renew certification by retaking the exam. Within 1 month of receiving notification of rejection, applicants may appeal once (only) to the National Certification Board to review their application. The certification remains valid until the appeal has been completed.

### Expert Level - Certification Extension Process

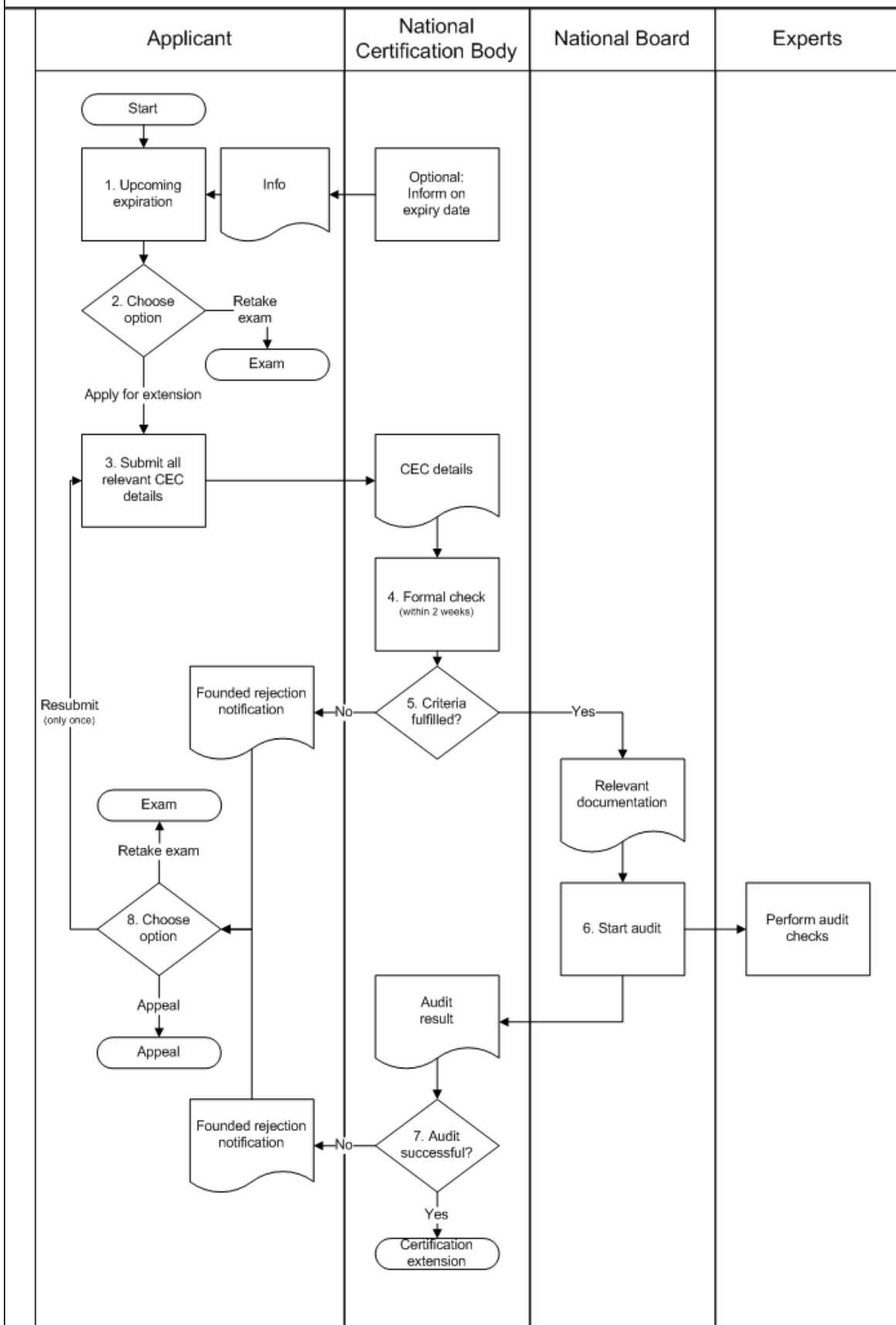


Fig.1 Workflow

### 3. Improvement of Scheme

It is the ISTQB's responsibility to consider suggestions from the National Boards and to ensure that the Certification Extension program remains current. Change management procedures must be in place and adhered to by all National boards.

### 4. Improvement of Course Syllabus

A change in course syllabus by the ISTQB shall not affect a person's CECs or require mandatory re-examination. CECs may, however, be gained by attending an accredited course covering the new syllabus.

### 5. Cancellation of Scheme

The ISTQB reserves the right to change or discontinue the Certification Extension program at any time and with a period of notice of six months. The ISTQB must then communicate a migration plan which takes into account the current status of individual's applications and CECs.

### 6. Activity Credit Criteria

In order to qualify for a certification extension, individuals must meet the Activity Credit Criteria described below:

Nr.	Criteria
1	Individuals must accumulate CECs from at least two (2) different Activities listed in the Activity Credit Table. There is no limit to the number of Activities from which CECs may be accumulated. Individuals are not required to accumulate CECs from any particular Activity.
2	Individuals must accumulate a minimum of <b>200</b> CECs in the defined eligibility period.
3	There is no limit to the number of CECs that may be credited to an individual activity.
4	All applications and supporting documentation submitted must be in one of the languages required by the National Board.
5	An individual has <b>5</b> years from the date that he/she becomes certified (or recertified) to accumulate sufficient CECs to have their certification extended. An applicant may submit an application for certification extension up to four months before the certification expires.
6	Any CECs accumulated in the final year of the certification period beyond the minimum required for the certification extension can be applied to the next extension (carryover CEC) up to a maximum of one-third of the CECs required for the certification extension (i.e. 67 CECs).

## 7. Activity Credit Table

The following table identifies the primary activities that may be used to accumulate CECs, as well as the value for each activity. It shall be possible for the National Boards to customize this table, but only with the approval of the ISTQB.

National Boards are responsible for auditing submissions and must be able to verify that activities have actually been performed (e.g. via documentation or other evidence).

Activity	Description	Credits	Maximum Credits per extension period of 5 years
1	Perform a professional testing activity (see note #1)	3 credits per completed month	120
2	Take a training course on a testing subject or one with direct testing significance (see note #2)	5 credits per half-day (4 hours)	110
3	Attend a testing conference or special interest group (SIGIST) meeting (see note #2)	5 credits per half-day (4 hours)	110
5	Present a track (related to expert subject) at a testing conference	20 credits per new presentation (repetitions not allowed)	80
6	Teaching a training course / tutorial (inhouse or external) on a testing subject or one with direct testing significance (see note #2)	5 credits per half-day (4 hours) per new course. 2.5 credits per half-day for 2nd and 3rd time running of course. No credits for further repetitions.	110
7	Write a testing article (related to expert subject)	25 credits for each article published independently (i.e. not posted to a web-site or printed in a journal unless peer reviewed by an independent test expert not under the applicant's direct or indirect control)	50
8	Write or participate on a book (related to expert subject)	10 credits per 25 pages written by the applicant (at an average of 350 words per page)	160
9	Participate in a Working Party for a National Board, a SIGIST or ISTQB (see note #2)	5 credits per half-day (4 hours)	80



**Note #1:** The following shall be regarded as “professional testing activity”

Activity / Role	Remarks
Test Strategist, Test Architect, Quality Manager	Senior role with a direct interest in the strategic management of testing
Test Leader / Test Manager	As described in the ISTQB Foundation Syllabus, chapter 5.1.2
Tester	As described in the ISTQB Foundation Syllabus, chapter 5.1.2
Test Coordinator, Test Environment Manager, Test Analyst, Test Designer, Fault Manager	The activities performed must relate to testing
Test Consultant / Adviser	The activities performed must relate to testing
Trainer/Coach in testing	

**Note #2:** A list of recognised training courses, conferences and working parties will be published by the national board, but this shall not be to the exclusion of other items. These other items can be submitted and a decision taken by the board on the points to be allowed. By these means local meetings and specific conferences relevant to the expert subject shall be encouraged.

## 8. Examples

### Example 1

Description	CEC earned
Perform a professional testing activity for 5 years	120 (limit)
Training course on testing attended (total 3 days)	30
Training course on project management attended (total 2 days)	20
One testing conference attended (3 days)	30
Attending a special interest group meeting (half-day)	5
Present a track at a testing conference	20

Carry over: 25

### Example 2

Description	CEC earned
Performed a professional testing activity for 5 years	120 (limit)
Two training courses on testing attended (total 5 days)	50
Two testing conferences attended (5 days)	50

Carry over: 20

### Example 3

Description	CEC earned
Performed a professional testing activity for 5 years	120 (limit)
One training courses on testing attended (total 2 days)	20
Attending 5 special interest group meetings	25
Write a book	50
Participate in a Working Party for ISTQB (total 5.5 days)	55

Carry over: 67 (max)