Recertification Guidelines

What is Recertification?

Knowledge within the software engineering industry is dynamic and rapidly changing. A CSDP certificate holder has demonstrated their knowledge of the CSDP body of knowledge at the point of time of the examination. In order to maintain their proficiency in the field as knowledge, methods, and techniques develop, a certificate holder must be actively engaged in professional practice, seek opportunities to stay aware of and learn emerging practices, and develop and enhance their skills throughout the duration of their careers.

To assure that certificate holders are maintaining knowledge and skills that are state of the art in the software engineering field, certificate holders must earn Professional Development Units (PDUs).

The recertification process begins immediately upon achieving certification. A certificate holder must either 1) retake the CSDP examination for US $345 (member) or $445 (nonmember) or 2) obtain and report a minimum of 30 PDUs and pay a US $200 (member) or $300 (nonmember) recertification fee every three (3) years as long as the certificate holder continues the fulltime practice of software engineering.

Failure to meet recertification requirements by the recertification deadline results in a loss of the CSDP credential. To become certified again requires retesting. In this way, the IEEE Computer Society Certification Committee is assured that the candidate has maintained a professional knowledge base in spite of a failure to report continuing education through the recertification process.

Recertification Deadline

Recertification is required every three years on the anniversary of the date the certificate was originally issued. Original certification dates can be found on CSDP issued correspondence, certificates, and credentials. For example, if you were originally certified on 20 January 2011, your recertification deadline is 20 January 2014.

Recertification Applications (RA) and fees must be postmarked 30 days prior to the certificate holder's recertification deadline. RAs postmarked less than 30 days prior to the certification holder's recertification deadline will be accessed a late fee of US $100.

Do not send in RAs as you complete an activity. Individual pages for each relevant recertification category should be summarized on the RA, collected in a package with all supporting documentation, and sent in one package along with the appropriate fee.

Tracking Professional Development Units (PDUs)

It is the responsibility of the certificate holder to properly record and document all activities during the three year certification period that will be used to satisfy the PDU requirement. For ease in reporting and to reduce the amount of paperwork required at reporting time, it is recommended that records be kept on a worksheet throughout the three-year period so that the worksheet need only be summarized and submitted to satisfy the recertification requirement by the reporting deadline. Incomplete or undocumented activities are not acceptable for reporting purposes.

Please note: 1 PDU = 1 CEU

Qualifying PDU activities are divided into seven (7) categories. Each activity must clearly apply to at least one of the areas outlined in the SWEBOK Guide. To maintain a balance in recertification activities, some categories or activities have a maximum number of credits that can be reported in a recertification period. These caps are noted in the descriptions of the categories. The seven categories eligible for PDUs are:

1. Active Practice
2. Learning Activity
3. Writing
4. Presenting
5. Peer Reviewing
6. Professional/Technical Service
7. Other

Obtaining Recertification

After receipt and review of the submitted recertification application, certificate holders are notified as to whether or not the submitted package satisfies the recertification requirements. If the recertification application (RA) is satisfactory, a certification credential update is issued to the certificate holder. If the RA is found to be unacceptable, the entire package is returned to the certificate holder for further processing and resubmission. It is the certificate holder's responsibility to assure that all reprocessing is completed prior to the recertification deadline. Rejected RAs may be appealed to the Certification Committee.

Recertification Auditing (RA)

Each year, 5% of the RAs submitted are audited. The audit selection is made on a random basis. The audit is not intended to question the credibility of the certificate holder but to provide validation of the activities listed on the RA and to meet the program standards for professionalism, ethics, and fairness.

If an RA is selected for audit, the certificate holder will be notified by letter and asked to supply, within 30 days, supporting documentation for each activity listed on the RA. Examples of supporting documentation can be found in the category descriptions included in this document.

Rejected RAs

The CSDP Program may find that a certificate holder's RA does not fulfill the 30 PDU requirements. PDU credit will be disallowed for activities and subject matter outside of what is defined in this document and for audited credits for which no supporting documentation is submitted.

If an RA is found to not fulfill the requirements for recertification, the certificate holder will receive a notification to that effect. The certificate holder has 30 days from the date the notice was mailed to resolve the recertification requirement discrepancy.

If the discrepancy is not resolved, the certificate holder will be notified and have the opportunity to fulfill the 30 PDU requirements and resubmit documentation for recertification no later than 90 days following the certificate holder's current certification expiration date. An additional late fee of US $100 will be applied.

Decertification

Certificate holders who fail to satisfy recertification requirements by 90 days following their current certification date are automatically decertified. A Candidate is required to take the CSDP exam to be recertified OR the certificate holder can appeal such decertification if extenuating circumstances are involved.

Professional Development Unit (PDU) Categories

Category 1 – Active Practice

Practice of any area of software engineering as part of regular employment or volunteer work that is not included in any of the following categories, below. Active practice includes requirements, design, programming, testing, supervision, project management, research, teaching and so on. This can be as an employee, open source developer, self-employed professional, educator, or consultant. Credits claimed for activities in this category cannot also be claimed in any of the other categories.

- 1 credit per 500 hours of active practice (note: 1 year of full time employment is ~2000 hours, or 4 credits)

This category has a maximum limit of 12 credits per recertification cycle.

Category 2 – Learning Activity

Include attending university/academic classes, professional training courses, formal in-company presentations, conference sessions, conference panel discussions, webinars, computer based training, and reading of books, blogs, research papers, articles and so on.

- 0.5 credits per presentation-hour of university class, professional training course, formal in-company presentation, conference session, conference panel discussion, webinar or computer based training

- 1 credit per 33 full pages read in a book

- Credits per 1000 words read in an article, research paper, blog, etc.

This category has no maximum credits per recertification cycle; however no more than 5 of the credits in this category may be claimed for material that is not readily available to the general public (e.g., proprietary presentations).

Category 3 – Writing

Include writing and publishing (but not necessarily publishing externally) books, articles, research papers, and blogs that were written or co-authored by the certificate holder. This category includes Contribution of content to standards, SWEBOK Guide, writing exam items for CSDA and CSDP exams, etc.

- 0.3 credits per 1000 words written if the content is not formally peer reviewed before publication

- 0.6 credits per 1000 words written if the content is formally peer reviewed before publication

In cases where credit per 1000 words are written would be inappropriate (e.g., collaborative standards development, CSDA/CSDP exam item writing, or any similar effort) 0.2 credits per hour of participation.

This category has no maximum credits per recertification cycle; however no more than 5 of the credits in this category may be claimed for material that is not readily available to the general public (e.g., proprietary reports).

Category 4 - Presenting

Include creating and presenting academic classes, professional training courses, formal in-company presentations, conference sessions, conference panel discussions, webinars, tutoring, mentoring and so on. Credit is given for the first presentation only. No credit is given for repeat presentation of the same material even if the material is re-presented in a different recertification period and/or to a different audience.

- 1.5 credits per presentation-hour of university class, professional training course, formal in-company presentation, conference session, conference panel discussion, webinar, tutoring, mentoring, or computer based training.

This category has no maximum credits per recertification cycle; however no more than 5 of the credits in this category may be claimed for material that is not readily available to the general public (e.g., proprietary presentations).

Category 5: Peer Reviewing

Include peer reviewing books, articles, research papers, blogs, software, or documentation (such as specifications and designs) to the extent that it is not already claimed in the Active Practice category. This category also includes acting as an accreditor or appraiser, to the extent that it is not already claimed in the Active Practice category. A requirement to count this activity is that the certificate holder actively gave written feedback to the author, editor or manager as part of this process. Repeated reviews of the same artifact or organization, even after they have been subsequently changed, do not count. This category includes reviewing standards, SWEBOK Guide content, exam items for CSDA & CSDP, and so on.

- 0.2 credits per hour of peer review activity

This category has no maximum credits per recertification cycle; however no more than 5 of the credits in this category may be claimed for material that is not readily available to the general public (e.g., reviews of Proprietary reports or proprietary assessment/appraisal).

Category 6: Technical/Professional Service

Include active participation in professional societies and organizations in the software engineering field. This means more than simply joining these organizations or attending their meetings. Credit cannot be claimed simply for membership or attendance (this should be claimed under Learning Activity category). Participation involving writing or presenting should be claimed under the Presenting category. Involvement must be as an officer, board member, or committee member and actively performing tasks that assist the organization.

- 3 credits per 1 year term served

This category has a maximum of 9 credits per recertification cycle.

Category 7: Other

Other items not covered above may be considered. The software professional will need to provide the details of the activity for which credit is claimed, substantiate the hours spent on the activity, describe the specific task(s) performed, and the SWEBOK Guide-related Knowledge Areas involved.

- Credits per hour of activity.

This category has a maximum of 5 credits per recertification cycle.