# Certification scheme operation CSOP

Designing, developing and operating certification schemes, accreditations and credentials, including digital credentials or badges.

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| **Guidance Notes:**  The overall purpose of certification of persons is to recognise an individual's competence to perform a task or job or determine whether they have met some knowledge criteria.  Knowledge and competence are different and the two terms should not be confused. A certification body has the responsibility to ensure that only people who demonstrate competence are awarded competence certification.  Certification of people provides value through public confidence and trust. Public confidence relies on a valid assessment of competence by a third party, reconfirmed at defined intervals. The certification body should act responsibly to provide confidence to interested parties in its competence, impartiality and integrity.  Activities may include, but are not limited to:   * verifying on request whether an individual holds a currently valid certificate and the scope of that certification, except where the law prevents the information from being disclosed * documenting security policies and procedures, including non-disclosure or other agreements not to release confidential examination materials or participate in fraudulent practices * implementing arrangements for certified persons to inform the certification body of anything affecting capability to continue meeting certification requirements. |

## Level 2

Processes applications for certification.   
Logs complaints.  
Assists with the preparation and organisation of credential materials.  
Supports the creation and maintenance of credentials or certificates and helps resolve routine problems during the certification lifecycle.

## Level 3

Issues certifications or credentials and maintains and retains certification records.   
Maintains information on the certification scheme and a general description of the certification process.   
Designs, creates, develops, customises and maintains credentials or certificates.   
Responds to public information requests. Analyses and takes action on complaints or issues.

## Level 4

Documents instructions for all personnel involved in certification, including legally enforceable agreements with any third parties involved in the process.   
Identifies threats to impartiality by analysing, mitigating or eliminating potential conflict of interests arising from certification activities.   
Implements the procedures for certification of individuals for the delivery of training.   
Determines the merits of complaints and any remedial actions required.

## Level 5

Defines a certification or accreditation scheme, including organisation structure, duties, responsibilities and authorities.   
Determines necessary competence to perform certification functions. Designs and implements the examiner or assessor selection and approval process.   
Monitors performance and judgements, and agrees corrective actions. Plans and provides adequate premises, equipment and resources.   
Documents policies and procedures for maintenance and release of information, including consideration of any legal agreements for confidentiality.

## Level 6

Sets policies and standards for the operation of a certification scheme, including segregation of duties and addressing impartiality.   
Develops and maintains a description of the code of ethics and professional practices required.   
Aligns certification schemes with relevant external standards, frameworks such as SFIA and best practices.   
Obtains approval from accreditation scheme owners or governance bodies.