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RESCUE ASSOCIATION

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Assessment Charter

Version 5.0

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1. Preface

The International Technical Rescue Association (ITRA) is committed to maintaining the highest standards of fairness, consistency, and technical accuracy in the assessment of rescue professionals worldwide. The **Assessment Charter (Version 5.0)** provides the definitive policy framework for conducting candidate assessments across all ITRA disciplines.

This updated edition reflects the collective input of the ITRA Working Groups, Board of Directors, and global membership. It incorporates refinements to assessment methodology, clearer definitions of independence and impartiality, improved procedures for knowledge evaluation, and structured pathways for direct assessment. The changes are designed to ensure that all assessments—whether practical and/or theoretical—are delivered to the same internationally recognized standards of safety, integrity, and technical competence.

The Charter applies to all **student candidate assessments** for ITRA qualifications and is intended for use by instructors, evaluators, candidates, and those in the role of assessors. It outlines the scope, guiding principles, processes, and criteria for assessments, as well as the roles and responsibilities of those involved. It also clarifies how assessments should be planned, conducted, documented, and moderated, with particular emphasis on independence, safety, and the validity of results.

Every assessor and candidate is expected to be familiar with the contents of this Charter and to apply its standards without exception. By following the guidance set out herein, we collectively uphold the credibility of ITRA qualifications and the trust placed in them by industry, agencies, and communities around the world.

We thank all members and stakeholders who contributed to the development of this edition, and we look forward to its role in strengthening ITRA's mission to advance technical rescue capability globally.

2. Assessment Charter

In the case of a conflict between the wording of the International Technical Rescue Association (ITRA) assessment charter, discipline assessment sub-charters, or other ITRA documents, the wording of the ITRA assessment charter has precedence on the topic of assessment. The original English language version of this document will be considered authoritative over translations.

This document is only for assessing students, not for instructor and evaluator evaluation.

2.1 Introduction

The ITRA Assessment Charter provides the policy to underpin the assessment methodology undertaken when student candidates are assessed against ITRA learning objectives.

2.3 General Principles

- Assessments must be conducted in accordance with:
 - ITRA assessment charter
 - Discipline-specific assessment sub-charters
- Assessment consists of oral, written, and hands-on components:
 - The hands-on skill component will be conducted in accordance with the discipline's syllabus and Performance, Standards, and Conditions (PSC)
 - Oral and written knowledge-based components will be in accordance with the discipline's syllabus.
- Candidates shall not be assessed on topics beyond the assessment level's PSCs and Learning Objectives.
- Assessment is performed only for established ITRA qualifications.

2.4 Direct Assessment

Direct assessment refers to a candidate presenting for assessment without having completed formal training with an ITRA Instructor for the level being attempted. This policy seeks to balance accessibility with fairness and consistency across disciplines.

Self-training and direct assessment are permitted under the following strict conditions:

- The candidate **must submit an application to the relevant discipline Working Group** for approval **prior to scheduling the assessment**.
- For **levels without pre-requisites** only **one assessor is required** to perform the assessment.
- The assessment must be conducted by **two independent assessors**, both of whom meet all independence requirements outlined in the Assessment Charter.

2.5 Procedure

- The discipline-specific assessment sub-charter further defines assessment criteria, discrepancies, and additional guidance to be followed.
- Prior, and during, the assessment the assessor may request to consult with the candidate's previous instructor (ITRA or other) to clarify technical matters or questions about the candidate's ability
 - Consultation should not lead to pre-determining the candidate's level of competence.
- Assessment specifics may sometimes require specific techniques and redundancy due to insurance, legal, or training site restrictions. Any special requirements or limitations must be clarified when scheduling an assessment.
- If the candidate requires special assistance, this must be brought to the assessors' attention when initially scheduling the assessment.

- Accommodation for translation will be supported but must be coordinated before an assessment begins.
 - Assessments are focused on technical skills, not language skills.
 - Written documentation is not required to be in English
- The assessment procedure must be clearly explained before the assessment begins.
- For a direct entry qualification assessment all previous level learning objectives and PSCs must also be assessed.

2.6 Knowledge

- Questions will be specific to the discipline's learning objectives and not above the assessed level of the candidate.
- Scoring of knowledge assessments is specific to disciplines and is available in the relevant discipline sub-charter.
- The theoretical testing program consists of two primary components:
 - Workbooks (Learning Tool)
 - Objective: To assist instructors and students in reinforcing theoretical learning through guided question sets.
 - Nature: Non-assessed, educational use only.
 - Availability: Accessible only to registered course participants.
 - Format:
 - Covers all Learning Objectives (LOs) for the respective level.
 - Immediate feedback on incorrect answers to support learning.
 - Outcome Impact: Results from workbooks do not impact assessment eligibility or outcome.
 - Exams (Assessment Tool)
 - Objective: To evaluate theoretical knowledge as part of the certification process.
 - Nature: Assessed, formal test.
 - Deployment: Administered by assessors on the assessment day.
 - Format:
 - Questions randomly selected from the database to ensure coverage of all LOs.
 - Scoring & Outcome Impact:
 - ≥70%: Satisfactory
 - 50–69%: Minor mistake (recorded)
 - <50%: Fail (major)
 - Multi-level assessment:
 - Failing Level 3 Exam: eligible for Level 2 assessment only.
 - Failing Level 2 Exam: eligible for Level 1 assessment only.
 - Accumulating 3 minors across exams: assessment cannot proceed.

2.7 Discrepancies

- Assessment discrepancies are classified as minor and major.
- A minor discrepancy is an instance that may lead to unsafe situations or displays inappropriate technique.
 - A minor discrepancy will be corrected and the assessment allowed to continue.
- A major discrepancy is a violation that is potentially life-threatening or destructive to property.

- A single major discrepancy will terminate the assessment and the entire assessment must be retaken.
- Three or more minor discrepancies will be considered a major discrepancy and will terminate the assessment for that level and the entire level's assessment must be retaken.

2.8 Successful

- The assessor shall notify the Association of the assessment outcome within seven days.
- Results will be recorded and available in the ITRA Global Training database.
- Qualification is only awarded upon successful completion of the assessment and completion, submission, and acceptance of the documents by ITRA.
- Failure to submit finalized paperwork by the assessor in a timely manner may result in assessor status being suspended upon a vote by the relevant working group and approval by the board.

2.9 Unsuccessful

- In the event of a failed assessment, a lower level qualification may be awarded if all objectives for that level were completed successfully.
 - Example: A candidate failing a level 3 objective but passing all level 1 and 2 objectives will be awarded a level 2 qualification.
- If a lower level is awarded, a retest does not need to be performed on those learning objectives.
 - Example: A candidate fails a level 3 assessment and is awarded a level 2 qualification. A retest for level 3 only requires an assessment of level 3 learning objectives.
- Assessment retests require completing all required objectives, not only the objective that was failed.
- Only one assessment shall be attempted per calendar day. A direct entry for any level is considered one assessment, if the candidate will be assessed for multiple levels.
- Assessment retests are subject to assessor availability.

2.10 Appeals

- Candidates who wish to appeal the outcome of a failed assessment should initially discuss their concerns with their assessor.
- If the matter is not resolved, the candidate can initiate an appeal to the Association within 14 days of the assessment by using the ITRA Appeals and Complaint Form located at the website or emailing info@technicalrescue.org outlining the grounds for the complaint.
- When an appeal is received, it will be reviewed within 14 working days. A review panel of three suitably qualified and independent members, with no conflict of interests, will review the complaint which may include contacting the candidate and assessor for further information.
- The panel shall provide an interim finding within 30 working days.
- The candidate and assessor will have 7 days to respond to the interim finding.
- The panel shall then make a final binding decision and notification to the candidate.

2.11 Renewals

- Qualification certificates at all levels shall be renewed within three years of the assessment date.
- Renewal assessments shall be performed before the expiration of the previous certificate.
- If the renewal assessment is completed less than 6 months prior to the date of expiry, a new certificate shall be issued with an expiry date three years from the date of expiry of the previous certificate.

- Renewal assessment candidates must retest all learning objectives for the level being reassessed.
- At least two skills that shall be included in the assessment from each level below the level being assessed. The skills chosen are at the discretion of the assessor.
- A grace period of three months shall be granted for expired qualifications before a full assessment (all levels) is required.

3. Assessment Guidance

- The maximum number of candidates being assessed is determined by the discipline in their sub-charter.
- The assessor is responsible for providing or coordinating any necessary assessment resources.
- The assessor may consult with the instructor as to any details of instruction that took place during the teaching of the learning objectives.

3.1 Independence

- Assessments must be conducted with consistency and without bias.
- Assessors must not influence the outcome of the assessment in any way including coaching.
- In order to remove the appearance of potential bias, whenever possible assessors and instructors shall not be related, from the same company, or have an ongoing close financial relationship.
- Assessors must seek clarification if they feel there might be a conflict of interest.
- Potential conflicts of interest must be disclosed and recorded on the assessment documentation.
- Candidates must be assessed independently from instruction.
- The relevant ITRA working group and board will investigate and take appropriate action where it has evidence of a lack of impartiality during an assessment.
- This point should be analyzed in conjunction with point “4.1 Independent Assessment” of the criteria chapter.

3.2 Safety

- A safety briefing will be given prior to beginning an assessment.
- The assessment may be stopped at any time on the grounds of safety.
- Suitable emergency medical capability and procedures must be available.
- The candidate may not be allowed to attempt an assessment if there are questions about their physical, mental, or medical fitness to perform the required tasks.

3.3 Equipment

- All equipment must comply with the discipline safety and standards guidance.
- Equipment must be used according to the manufacturer’s instructions and recommendations.
- Equipment shall be suitable and functional in the environment in which it is used.
- Equipment must be compatible with the system where it is used and conform to standards relevant to the intended use.
- If equipment inspection records are not available, items must be inspected before use.
- Off-label equipment use will not be allowed during ITRA assessments.

3.4 Facilities

- The assessment location, props, and area must be capable of sustaining the number of candidates.

- Assessment sites should be without undue distractions and free from outside hazards.

3.5 Moderation

- Moderation is the quality assurance process to ensure assessments have been carried out according to the parameters of the assessment charter and in accordance with procedures laid out by the Association.
- Assessment decisions may be randomly sampled for moderation by the ITRA board and/or the respective discipline working group.

3.6 Records

- Assessment documents shall be completed by the assessor and submitted to the Association within 7 days of the assessment.
- Assessment evidence must be maintained for audit and review for 12 months. Evidence used in an assessment decision includes but is not limited to participant agreements, consent documents, risk disclosures, incident reports, checklists, theory assessments, and other approved assessment instruments.
- It is recommended that video and/or photographic evidence is taken with consent during assessment.
- Assessment evidence material must be provided to the association within 14 days of a request for review.

4. Assessment Criteria

4.1 Independent Assessment

The only **authorized assessment is the Independent Assessment**, in which the assessor must not have **instructed the discipline/level being assessed to the candidate within the previous six (6) months**.

To ensure full independence and impartiality, the following additional conditions apply between the assessor and either the candidate or the course instructor:

- There must be no family relationship.
- There must be no employment relationship of dependency (e.g., one is not the employer, employee, or in a position of direct work-related authority over the other).
- The assessor must not receive any undeclared financial gain or benefit linked to the outcome of the assessment beyond their standard assessment fees.

Independent Assessments are intended to:

- Evaluate the candidate's knowledge, skills, and attitudes in relation to operational performance.
- Provide an independent and impartial judgment of the candidate's understanding of the techniques covered during their training.

Offer the industry an assured standard of proficiency through certification.

Certification is valid for a defined period and requires regular re-assessment and/or further training to ensure continued competence and alignment with current standards.

The use of unauthorized assessment criteria may result in the invalidation of assessment results and/or disciplinary action.

4.2 Individual Assessment

ITRA certifications are granted to individuals, and therefore all assessments are conducted on an individual basis under all circumstances.

While tasks may be combined to improve efficiency and reduce candidate downtime, the assessment decision must always be based on each candidate's individual performance.

Some Learning Objectives (LOs) may require participation in group activities.

- These activities must be explicitly identified in the Performance Standards and Conditions (PSCs) for the LO.
- If the activity requires only one competent assistant, that assistant should be provided but will not be assessed.
- If the activity requires multiple candidates, the PSC must specify:
 - The number of candidates required
 - The roles assigned
 - The tasks for each role
- In such cases, each candidate must be individually assessed across multiple roles to ensure a complete evaluation of competence.

For all activities, the assessor must clearly convey each candidate's positions and functions, as defined in the PSC of the LO being evaluated.

- Written communication (e.g., whiteboard, printed instructions) is recommended in addition to verbal explanations, to ensure proper understanding by all candidates.

4.3 Exceptional Circumstances

Additional assessment criteria may be used in the case of extenuating circumstances.

- A proposal must be submitted to the discipline working group for review at least 30 days prior to the assessment.
- The reason for the new alternative assessment criteria must be described in detail.
- The proposal will be reviewed by the discipline working group.
- The proposal with working group comments will then be forwarded to the ITRA board of directors for final review and disposition.

5. Effective Date

This Assessment Charter shall take effect on **January 1, 2026**.

All assessments and related processes conducted on or after this date must comply with the guidance set forth herein.