

# Certification Renewal of Certified Professionals

## Introduction

The GCCC recognizes the importance of ongoing professional development and education for all certificants. The certification renewal requirement is designed to ensure that certificants maintain their knowledge, keep up to date with evolving technology and best practices, stay informed of practice developments, broaden their perspective of the profession, and reinforce learning.

Due to the pace at which information changes in the industry, certificants are required to renew their certification annually.

## Certification Renewal

Each certified individual is required to complete the following certification renewal requirements:

- Complete 40 professional development (PD) points per year.
- Submit a complete Renewal Form for certification renewal that includes:
  - Distribution of PD activities within categories determined by GCCC
  - Applicable amount of points for each PD activity
  - Signature, acknowledging having read and being bound by GCCC's Policies and Procedures
- Pay fees annually, with submission of PD and Renewal Form. GCCC will send a reminder notice to each certified individual's email address(s) that are on file with GCCC.

Certificates showing successful completion of each continuing education/professional development activity must be submitted with the certification Renewal Form. Certificants are responsible for retaining appropriate records and documentation as evidence of completing continuing education activities.

## Professional Development Requirements

Professional development points may be earned at (including but not limited to):

- attending communications webinars/seminars/workshops/conferences presented by professional organizations

- presenting at communications webinars/seminars/workshops/conferences presented by a professional organization
- completion of continuing education
- mentorship
- other certifications or licensures
- authoring or reading publications
- leadership activities
- board participation
- GCCC contributions

For all reported events proof of attendance should be submitted along with the title, course length (hours), description of the scope or content of the course, and certificate of completion or other proof of attendance. The GCCC will retain the right to review all certification renewal PD materials and provide the final decision on acceptance of the materials and/or webinars for PD points for certification renewal.

### Submission of Professional Development

Professional development points can be submitted online (and fees paid) here - <https://gccouncil.org/certification-renewal/> The online form is based on the following chart:

| Professional Development Activity<br>Must acquire at least 40 points; No ONE category can account for more than 60% (24 points) of professional development activity | Points Awarded   | Acceptable Documentation                              |
|--|--|---|
| Attending: Attendance at a professional organization conference, workshop, lecture or seminar on communication management knowledge                                  | 1 point per 1 hour of attendance (max. 20 pts per one event) | Conference Program/Agenda, receipt                    |
| Presenting: Speak or present at a professional organization conference, workshop, lecture or seminar on communication management knowledge                           | 10 pts per event   | Conference Program/Agenda with name                   |
| Continuing Education: Successful completion of a course of study focused on communication management   | 10 pts per course completed                                  | Transcript or certificate of completion               |
| Mentorship: Developing the skills of another communicator through a formalized teaching, coaching or mentoring program (excluding line management responsibilities). | 10 points per mentee   | Letter from mentee or Mentoring program documentation |

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|---|--|---|
| Other Certification or Licensure: Earning or maintaining an industry related certification that is accredited by ISO/IEC 17024, or ANSI, or has eligibility requirements, a criterion-referenced exam, and renewal requirements OR earn or maintain a related professional license.   | 5 points per certification or licensure  | Copy of certificate or license  |
| Authoring Publications: Content must include communication management knowledge   | 1 textbook = 20 points if written during the certification cycle<br><br>1 published article = 5 points (certified person is sole author)<br><br>1 point per contribution; up to 5 points awarded for industry video-blogs, blogs or contributions to newsletter articles or published interviews | Book/author citation or link to article   |
| Reading Publications: Books or journal articles related to communication management   | 1 point per article<br>5 points per book   | Book/author citation or link to article   |
| Leadership: Participating in a leadership role for a professional communication association (e.g. serving as a board or committee member for an association or an award adjudicator)<br><br>Participating in a leadership position on a communication governing body at the international, national, regional, local or chapter level, with full participation. | Maximum 10 points per year of participation<br><br>Multiple points will not be awarded for sitting on multiple committees and boards within the same association.  | Printout of Leadership page of website<br><br>Letterhead with leadership positions<br><br>Confirmation letter from fellow member of board |
| GCCC Activities: Contribution to the work of GCCC; Service restricted to sitting on GCCC, proctoring exams, JTA meetings, item-writing and review, passing score study meeting.   | Maximum Ten (10) points available per renewal cycle  | Copy of agenda with names<br><br>Proctor agreement  |

Certification Renewal Form Review

The Sr. Certification Manager ensures that all complete applications are reviewed to determine if the Certificant meets all Certification renewal requirements and that all required information has been properly submitted. Certificants are required to submit proof of attendance or completion

for non-IABC events. GCCC reserves the right to verify any information submitted with an application and to request further information or documentation from the Certificant as needed.

## Certification Expiration and Failure to Renew

Failure to successfully renew by the published deadline will result in forfeiture of the individual's certification status.

If certification has been expired for 90 days or less, an individual may reinstate his/her certification by meeting all the certification renewal requirements; submitting a complete certification renewal form and paying the certification renewal fee. If certification has been expired for more than 90 days and an extension has not been granted, certification status shall be moved into lapsed status.

Individuals whose certification has expired may be granted an extension to meet all recertification requirements for a period not to exceed one year. Extensions may be granted upon request and at the discretion of certification program personnel. The certified individual's original date of expiration will remain valid when/if the new certificate is issued. If the individual does not renew their expired certification within the designated extension period, the individual's record shall be moved into lapsed status.

Individuals in lapsed status can only achieve re-certification by meeting all eligibility requirements in effect at the time of re-application and pass the examination(s). All eligibility, examination and fee requirements shall apply.

## Certification Renewal Appeals

Certificants who have submitted a completed certification renewal form and who are notified that they do not meet the Certification renewal requirements may appeal this decision by sending an email notice of the appeal to the Sr. Certification Manager within 45 days of the date of the adverse decision.

Any appeals that are not resolved to the satisfaction of the certificant will be forwarded by the Sr. Certification Manager to the GCCC Appeals Committee for review along with any relevant information from the review of the certification renewal form. Written notice of the final decision will be emailed to the certificant within 30 days of the review. The decision of the GCCC Appeals Committee will be final.

## Maintenance of Certification Acceptance

The Sr. Certification Manager will issue a Certification renewal email and updated certificate once all certification renewal requirements have been met. Certification renewal forms will not be accepted from individuals whose certification has been revoked or is in a state of suspension.

All professional development activities are subject to review and approval by the GCCC. Credit is only granted after an activity has been completed and documented.

## Complaints Against Certificants

### Introduction

To maintain and enhance the credibility of the certification program, the GCCC has adopted the following procedures to allow individuals to bring complaints concerning the conduct of individuals who are certificants or candidates for certification by the GCCC.

In the event an individual violates the certification program policies, the GCCC may reprimand or suspend the individual or may revoke certification. The grounds for sanctions under these procedures may include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- Violation of established certification policies, rules and requirements.
- Conviction of a felony or other crime under federal or state law.
- Gross negligence, willful misconduct, or other unethical conduct in the performance of services for which the individual has achieved certification from GCCC.
- Fraud or misrepresentation in an initial certification application or certification renewal form.

Information regarding the complaint process will be available to the public without request via the GCCC web site and/or other published documents.

Actions taken under this policy do not constitute enforcement of the law, although referral to appropriate federal, state, or local government agencies may be made about the conduct of the candidate or certificant in appropriate situations. Individuals initially bringing complaints are not entitled to any relief or damages by this process, although they will receive notice of the actions taken.

### Complaints

Complaints may be submitted by any individual or entity. Complaints should be reported to the Sr. Certification Manager in writing via email and must include the name of the person submitting the complaint, the name of the person the complaint is regarding along with other relevant identifying information, a detailed description of factual allegations supporting the charges, and any relevant supporting documentation. Information submitted during the complaint and investigation process is considered confidential and will be handled in accordance with the GCCC's confidentiality policy.

Upon receipt and preliminary review of a complaint involving a certificant or candidate for certification the Sr. Certification Manager in consultation with the GCCC Chair may conclude, in their sole discretion, that the submission contains unreliable or insufficient information.

In such cases, the Sr. Certification Manager and GCCC Chair may determine that the submission

does not constitute a valid and actionable complaint that would justify bringing it before the GCCC for investigation and a determination of whether there has been a violation of substantive requirements of the Certification process. If so, the submission is disposed of by notice from the Sr. Certification Manager and Chair to the individual who the complaint was filed against and its complainant. All such preliminary dispositions by the Chair are reported to the GCCC at its next meeting.

This preliminary review to determine if the complaint is valid and actionable will be conducted within 30 calendar days of receipt of the complaint.

If a submission is deemed by the Chair to be a valid and actionable complaint, the Chair shall see that written notice is provided to the individual whose conduct has been called into question. The individual whose conduct is at issue shall also be given the opportunity to respond to the complaint. The Chair also shall ensure that the individual submitting the complaint receives notice that the complaint is being reviewed by the GCCC.

### Complaint Review

For each complaint that the Chair concludes is a valid and actionable complaint, the GCCC authorizes an investigation into its specific facts or circumstances to whatever extent is necessary to clarify, expand, or corroborate the information provided by the complainant.

The Chair refers the complaint to a review committee to investigate and make an appropriate determination with respect to each such valid and actionable complaint. The review committee will consist of at least three, but not more than five, individuals. No one with any personal involvement or conflict of interest may serve on the review committee. Members of the review committee may be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred in connection with the activities of the committee.

The review committee initially determines whether it is appropriate to review the complaint under these procedures or whether the matter should be referred to another entity engaged in the administration of law. The timeline for responses and for providing any additional information shall be established by the review committee. The review committee may be assisted in the conduct of its investigation by IABC staff or legal counsel. The GCCC Chair exercises general supervision over all investigations.

Both the individual complainant and the candidate/certificant who is the subject of the investigation may be contacted for additional information with respect to the complaint. The review committee, or the GCCC on its behalf, may at its discretion contact such other individuals who may have knowledge of the facts and circumstances surrounding the complaint.

All investigations and deliberations of the review committee and the GCCC are conducted in confidence, with all communications marked "Personal and Confidential," and they are

conducted objectively, without any indication of prejudgment. An investigation may be directed toward any aspect of a complaint which is relevant. Formal hearings are not held, and the parties are not expected to be represented by counsel, although the review committee and GCCC may consult their own counsel.

## Determination of Violation

Upon completion of an investigation, the Review Committee recommends whether the GCCC should decide that there has been a violation of GCCC policies and rules.

If the review committee recommends that the GCCC find a violation, the review committee may recommend imposition of an appropriate sanction prepared under the supervision of the Chair and is presented by a representative of the review committee to the GCCC along with the record of the review committee's investigation.

If the review committee determines that a violation has not occurred, the complaint is dismissed with notice to the candidate/certificant, the complainant, and the GCCC.

The GCCC reviews the recommendation of the review committee based upon the record of the investigation. The GCCC may accept, reject, or modify the Review Committee's recommendation, either with respect to the determination of a violation or the recommended sanction to be imposed.

In certain circumstances, the GCCC may consider a recommendation from the review committee that the Candidate/Certificant who has violated the Certification program policies or rules should be offered an opportunity to submit a written assurance that the conduct in question has been terminated and will not recur. The decision of the Review Committee to make such a recommendation and of the GCCC to accept it are within their respective discretionary powers. If such an offer is extended, the Candidate/Certificant at issue must submit the required written assurance within thirty days of receipt of the offer, and the assurance must be submitted in terms that are acceptable to the GCCC. If the GCCC accepts the assurance, notice is given to the candidate/certificants and complainant, if the submitter agrees in advance and in writing to maintain the information in confidence.

## Sanctions

Any of the following sanctions may be imposed by the GCCC upon a candidate/certificant whom the GCCC has determined to have violated the policies and rules of its Certification program(s), although the sanction applied must reasonably relate to the nature and severity of the violation, focusing on reformation of the conduct of the member and deterrence of similar conduct by others:

- Written reprimand to the candidate/certificant;
- Suspension or termination of the certificant's certification for a designated period; or
- Suspension or termination of the candidate's application eligibility for a designated

period

Reprimand in the form of a written notice from the GCCC Chair is sent to a candidate/certificant who has received his or her first substantiated complaint. Suspension normally is imposed on a candidate/certificant who has received two substantiated complaints. Termination is imposed on a candidate/certificant who has received three or more substantiated complaints. The GCCC may impose any of the sanctions, if warranted, in specific cases.

Certificants who have been terminated shall have their certification revoked and shall not be considered for certification in the future. If certification is revoked, any and all certificates or other materials requested by the GCCC must be returned promptly to the GCCC or destroyed.

## Appeal

Within thirty (30) days from receipt of notice of violation, the affected candidate/certificant may submit to the GCCC Chair via email a request for an appeal. Any candidate /certificant receiving such adverse decision will receive a copy of this policy along with notification of the appeal period.

Upon receipt of a request for appeal, the Chair of the GCCC establishes an appeal committee consisting of at least three, but not more than five, individuals. This Appeal Committee may review one or more appeals, upon request of the Chair. No current members of the Review Committee or the GCCC may serve on the Appeal Committee; further, no one with any personal involvement or conflict of interest may serve on the Appeal Committee. Members of the Appeal Committee may be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred in connection with the activities of the Committee.

The Appeal Committee may only review whether the determination by the GCCC of a violation of the Certification program policies and/or rules was inappropriate because of:

- Material errors of fact, or
- Failure of the Review Committee or the GCCC to conform to published criteria, policies, or procedures.

Only facts and conditions up to and including the time of the GCCC's determination as represented by facts known to the GCCC are considered during an appeal. The appeal shall not include a hearing or any similar trial-type proceeding. Legal counsel is not expected to participate in the appeal process, unless requested by the appellant and approved by the GCCC and the Appeal Committee. The GCCC and Appeal Committee may consult legal counsel.

The Appeal Committee conducts and completes the appeal within ninety days after receipt of the request for an appeal. Written appellate submissions and any reply submissions may be made by authorized representatives of the member and of the GCCC. Submissions are made according to whatever schedule is reasonably established by the Appeal Committee. The decision of the

Appeal Committee either affirms or overrules the determination of the GCCC but does not address a sanction imposed by the GCCC. The Appeal Committee will confirm receipt of all communications including the initial appeal and will provide notice to the appellant of the end of the appeals-handling process.

The Appeal Committee decision is binding upon the GCCC, the Candidate/Certificant who is subject to the termination, and all other persons.

## Resignation

If a certificant who is the subject of a complaint voluntarily surrenders his or her Certification at any time during the investigation of a complaint under these Procedures, the complaint is dismissed without any further action by the Review Committee, the GCCC, or an Appeal Committee established after an appeal. Such resignation must include resignation of all GCCC credentials held by the individual. The entire record is sealed, and the individual may not reapply for Certification by the GCCC. However, the GCCC may authorize the Chair to communicate the fact and date of resignation, and the fact and general nature of the complaint, which was pending at the time of the resignation, to or at the request of a government entity engaged in the administration of law. Similarly, in the event of such resignation, the certificant's employer and the person or entity who submitted the complaint are notified of the fact and date of resignation and that GCCC has dismissed the complaint as a result.

## Certification Register

The GCCC® will publish a register of certificate holders on its public website [gccouncil.org](http://gccouncil.org) (<http://bit.ly/1NyB8c6>). Visitors to the website will be able to see who holds a current certification. Each listing will include the certificate holder's current name, any other professional designations, the country and city where he or she is based, and the date when certification is due for renewal.

By applying for certification, candidates agree to be included in the public register.

If a certification lapses, anyone searching for it will be notified only that a name does not appear on the register.

## Use of the Register

The GCCC® will never allow anyone to access the register for any purpose apart from marketing its certifications and promoting professionalism through continuing professional education. IABC staff maintain the register. IABC keeps the records separate from its own data. Applicants or certificate holders will never be approached by IABC as a result of having been in contact with the GCCC®.

## Privacy

The GCCC® and IABC will not respond to requests for information about candidates beyond confirming information in the public register. All information collected from candidates is held only for the purposes of confirming eligibility for certification and for developing clear standards for the profession.

## Indemnification

The laws of the State of California shall take precedence in administering the GCCC's certification program. IABC indemnifies all individual GCCC® members against actions in other jurisdictions arising from their work on the GCCC®.