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**COMMERCE ACQUISITION MANUAL
1301.6**

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
CONTRACTING CERTIFICATION AND WARRANT PROGRAM

COMMERCE ACQUISITION MANUAL

1301.6

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Contracting Certification and Warrant Program

Section 1 - Overview

1.1 Background

The quality and effectiveness of the federal acquisition process depend on the development of a capable and competent workforce. Congress recognized the need for a professional workforce through the passage of the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) (10 U.S.C. §§ 1741-46) and the Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) Act (41 U.S.C. § 433) which established education, training, and experience requirements for entry and advancement in the acquisition career fields for the Department of Defense (DoD) and civilian agencies respectively.

On April 15, 2005, OFPP issued Policy Letter 05-01¹, Developing and Managing the Acquisition Workforce, which established career management, education, and training requirements for contracting personnel in civilian executive agencies. Policy Letter 05-01 established the government-wide framework for creating a federal acquisition workforce with the skills necessary to deliver best value supplies and services, find the best business solutions, and provide strategic business advice to accomplish agency missions.

Building on the previous efforts to improve the development of the acquisition workforce, OFPP issued, in a memorandum dated January 20, 2006², government-wide requirements that govern the Federal Acquisition Certification in Contracting (FAC-C). These requirements were later revised in December 2008³ to better align with the Department of Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) contracting certification curriculum in an effort to strengthen the civilian contracting function. To further improve the FAC-C program and align more closely with the DAWIA certification, OFPP revised the FAC-C program requirements in its memorandum dated May 7, 2014⁴. On January 19, 2023, OFPP further revised the FAC-C program to transition the legacy FAC-C certifications to the FAC-C Professional that now has reciprocity⁵ with the Department of Defense in its memorandum entitled, "Federal Acquisition Certification in Contracting (FAC-C) Modernization."

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of the Department of Commerce (DOC) Contracting Certification and Warrant Program is to provide the framework and establish procedures for implementing the requirements of OFPP Policy Letter 05-01 as updated by the FAC-C Modernization memorandum.

1.3 Applicability

The Contracting Certification and Warrant Programs are applicable to the following acquisition workforce employees within the Department of Commerce:

- All employees in the contracting series (GS-1102); and
- All warranted Contracting Officers, regardless of series, with authority to obligate funds above the micro-purchase threshold.

1.4 Program Objectives

The primary objectives of the DOC Contracting Certification and Warrant Programs are to improve the capabilities and management of the Department's contracting workforce by attracting, selecting, developing and retaining a highly qualified, diverse workforce capable of performing current and future acquisition

¹ Available at: https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/omb/procurement_policy_letter_05-01

² Available at: <https://www.fai.gov/sites/default/files/2006-1-20-OMB-Memo-FAC-C-Certification.pdf>

³ Available at: https://www.fai.gov/sites/default/files/pdfss/fac_contracting_program.pdf

⁴ Available at: <https://www.fai.gov/sites/default/files/2014-05-07-FAC-C-Refresh.pdf>

⁵ [Reciprocity Memorandum of Understanding between the Federal Acquisition Certification in Contracting \(Professional\) and the Department of Defense Contracting Professional Certification.](#)

functions; preparing future key leaders; providing career guidance and opportunities for broadening experiences and progression in the career field; and ensuring effective use of training and education resources. Successful implementation of the program will result in a professional, agile, and motivated workforce that consistently makes smart business decisions and delivers timely and affordable capabilities to meet the mission of the Department.

1.5 Core Competencies

The FAC-C (Professional) certification is built on competencies that reflect the knowledge, skills and abilities that Contracting Professionals must possess to successfully perform their duties as members of the acquisition team.

The [FAC-C \(Professional\) Competency Model](#) is the same model used by the Department of Defense. It is based on the National Contract Management Association's Contract Management Standard and is relevant and applicable across the Department of Defense, federal civilian agencies and industry. The competency model details both buyer and seller tasks and includes an industry perspective.

1.6 Career Paths for the Contracting Series (GS-1102)

The Department of Commerce has identified three career paths (Junior, Intermediate, and Advanced) for the contracting career field, which are designed to facilitate the development of the necessary competencies needed by the contracting workforce to progress to senior acquisition levels. Within each career path there are experience, education, formal training and development programs, and informal growth and development opportunities. Requirements identified in each level are cumulative. All requirements for each lower level must be met in order to move to the next level.

The career paths will assist employees in planning career development activities and setting goals for accomplishing the necessary training. Pathways for career progression include both vertical and lateral movement. Lateral movement within and between career paths is highly encouraged, primarily at the intermediate level. Lateral movements broaden the contracting professional's experience base and can be accomplished through details, developmental opportunities, and rotational assignments. Multi-specialty experience for upper-level positions is important for individuals who strive to secure work assignments and training in more than one of the functional areas of acquisition.

A guide to determining career path development is provided in subsections 1.6.1 through 1.6.3. *Figure 1-1 Model Contracting Career Paths*, outlines the career paths for the contracting series and incorporates the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Qualification Standard for Contract Specialists⁶ and the Federal Acquisition Certification in Contracting (FAC-C) (Professional). Grades are typical and should not imply a direct correlation with timing for promotion or completing the experience, education, and training standards.

1.6.1 Junior

The Junior level standards target grades 5 and 7, or the equivalent, and are designed to establish fundamental competencies and expertise in an individual's job series or career field. Development at the entry level lays the foundation for career progression and is designed to prepare qualified and motivated personnel for positions of increasing responsibility. At the entry level, individuals are exposed to fundamental acquisition procedures and the roles of various support functions such as pricing, property administration, and quality assurance.

1.6.2 Intermediate

The Intermediate level standards target grades 9 through 12, or the equivalent, and emphasize specialization. Development continues and includes on-the-job rotational assignments. As the employee progresses to the higher grades within this level, they are introduced to basic

⁶ Available at: <http://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/classification-qualifications/general-schedule-qualification-standards/1100/contracting-series-1102/>

management principles through training and development assignments. Although specialization is emphasized at the beginning of this level, the individual should later broaden their background toward a more general expertise in the overall processes of their career field. Development of the generalist normally involves establishing a good foundation of experience in the employee's primary specialty followed by lateral movement to a related specialty. Standards for development at the Junior level must be met before progressing to the Intermediate level.

1.6.3 Advanced

The Advanced level standards target grades 13 and above, or equivalent, and emphasize in-depth knowledge in a functional area and breadth of knowledge across the entire acquisition process. Management training is commensurate with the individual's job performance and his/her potential for advancement into managerial positions. Advanced acquisition education and training are imperative for a more global perspective. Standards for development at the Intermediate level must be met before progressing to the Advanced level.

Figure 1-1 Model Contracting Career Paths

Typical Grade	Education	Experience	Training	Certification
Junior GS-5/7 (or equivalent)	Baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution. OR At least 24 semester hours from among the following disciplines: accounting, business, finance, law, contracts, purchasing, economics, industrial management, marketing, quantitative methods, or organization and management.	At least one year contracting experience	Core Courses: See Warrant Level 1 Training Requirements in Figure 4-2.	
Intermediate GS-9/11/12 (or equivalent)	Baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution. OR At least 24 semester hours from among the following disciplines: accounting, business, finance, law, contracts, purchasing, economics, industrial management, marketing, quantitative methods, or organization and management.	At least two years of contracting experience	Core Courses: See Warrant Level 2 Training Requirements in Figure 4-2 Continuous Learning: 80 CLPs every 2 years through April 30, 2024. 100 CLPs every 2 years after May 1, 2024.	FAC-C (Professional)

<p>Advanced GS-13 and above (or equivalent)</p>	<p>Baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution that includes or is supplemented with at least 24 semester hours from among the following disciplines: accounting, business, finance, law, contracts, purchasing, economics, industrial management, marketing, quantitative methods, or organization and management.</p>	<p>At least four years contracting experience</p>	<p>Core Courses: See Warrant Level 3 Training Requirements in Figure 4-2.</p> <p>Continuous Learning: 80 CLPs every 2 years through April 30, 2024. 100 CLPs every 2 years after May 1, 2024.</p>	<p>FAC-C (Professional)</p>
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1.7 Management Information System

Section 37(d) of the OFPP Act, as amended (41 U.S.C. 433(d)) requires each executive agency collect, maintain and utilize information to ensure effective management of the acquisition workforce. Senior Bureau Procurement Officials are responsible for establishing policies for maintaining complete training, education, certification, and continuous learning records for members of their acquisition workforce. The Federal Acquisition Institute maintains the government-wide system used to track acquisition personnel training and certification information. Section 3.8 provides requirements for documenting and recording training, education, and certification information in the management information system.

1.8 Roles and Responsibilities

1.8.1 Chief Acquisition Officer (CAO)

The Chief Financial Officer and Assistant Secretary for Administration has been designated the Chief Acquisition Officer for the Department of Commerce. The CAO is responsible for:

- Developing and maintaining an acquisition career management program to ensure the development of a competent, professional workforce to support the accomplishment of the Department's mission; and
- Implementing a budget strategy that reflects the workforce development needs and organizational structure of the Department.

1.8.2 Senior Procurement Executive (SPE)

The Director for Acquisition Management has been designated Senior Procurement Executive for the Department of Commerce. The SPE is responsible for:

- Implementing the Contracting Certification and Warrant Program department-wide and
- Approving waivers to the OPM 1102 Qualification Standard.

1.8.3 Career Manager (ACM)

The Executive Director, Acquisition Policy, Oversight and Workforce has been designated Acquisition Career Manager for the Department of Commerce. The ACM is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the Department's acquisition workforce meets the requirements of the Contracting Certification and Warrant Program by identifying staffing needs, training requirements and other workforce development strategies;
- Recommending to the SPE waivers to the OPM 1102 Qualification Standard;

- c. Ensuring the Department's acquisition workforce is registered in FAI's system for training and certification; and
- d. Granting acquisition certifications.

1.8.4 Senior Bureau Procurement Official (BPO)

The Senior Bureau Procurement Official is responsible for:

- a. Workforce planning to ensure the operating unit's acquisition workforce receives training and development opportunities consistent with the Contracting Certification and Warrant Program, operating unit-specific needs, and Individual Development Plans (IDP);
- b. Coordinating annual training needs; coordinating and submitting requests for education and training waivers to the SPE for approval;
- c. Establishing policies for maintaining complete, accurate and current training, education, certification and continuous learning records for members of their acquisition workforce in FAI's system for training and certification;
- d. Designating a Bureau Career Manager to manage the Contracting Certification and Warrant Program within their operating units; and
- e. Submitting an annual warrant report to the Office of Acquisition Management.

1.8.5 Head of Contracting Office (HCO)

The Heads of Contracting Offices are responsible for:

- a. Tracking and reporting completed education and training requirements in FAI's system for training and certification;
- b. Ensuring that an IDP is prepared for each acquisition workforce employee; and
- c. Submitting requests for education and training waivers to the BPO.

1.8.6 Bureau Career Manager (BCM)

The Bureau Career Manager is responsible for:

- a. Serving as the designated bureau-level point of contact for the Contracting Certification and Warrant Program;
- b. Reviewing and analyzing certification applications for their Bureau procurement office;
- c. Assisting candidates with identifying certification requirements;
- d. Providing concurrence for all FAC-C applications ; and
- e. Ensuring communication regarding the Contracting Certification and Warrant Program is disseminated to their Bureau's acquisition community.

1.8.7 Supervisor of Acquisition Workforce Employee

Supervisors of Acquisition Workforce Employees are responsible for:

- a. Filling vacancies with employees that meet specific organizational needs as well as

minimum qualification standards as set forth in the OPM 1102 Qualification Standard;

- b. Determining if an employee has met the mandatory requirements to enable them to move to the next career path;
- c. Determining if an employee has the requisite qualifications to participate in a training course or developmental assignment;
- d. Providing assistance to the employee in identifying training and development opportunities;
- e. Providing guidance to the employee during the development of the IDP;
- f. Reviewing and approving employee IDPs;
- g. Providing career guidance to the employee as appropriate; and
- h. Reviewing and approving FAC-C applications.

1.8.8 Acquisition Workforce Employee

Acquisition Workforce Employees are responsible for:

- a. Their personal career progression and development which includes meeting qualification standards as set forth in the OPM 1102 Qualification Standard;
- b. Developing an IDP to identify training and development opportunities for a multi-year time frame;
- c. Identifying development opportunities that may contribute to the advancement of career goals;
- d. Meeting requisite qualifications to participate in training courses or developmental assignments;
- e. Submitting proof of completed education and training requirements;
- f. Entering and maintaining training and education requirements in FAI's system for training and certification; and
- g. Applying for certification once training and experience requirements have been met.

END OF SECTION 1

Section 2 – Qualification Standards for Contracting Career Field

2.1 Background

The Clinger-Cohen Act, P.L. 104-106, required the Administrator of OFPP to establish General Schedule (GS) 1102 employment qualification standards for acquisition workforce positions in civilian agencies. As a result, the Contract Specialist Qualification Standard was established by the Office of Personnel Management which sets forth the education and experience requirements for civilian employees in the GS-1102 series (<http://www.opm.gov/qualifications/sec-iv/b/gs1100/1102.htm>). Appendix B provides answers to frequently asked questions concerning the GS-1102 Qualification Standard.

2.2 Basic Requirements for GS-1102 Grades 5 through 12

The Basic education requirements for employees in the GS-1102 series at grades 5 through 12 are:

- A. A 4-year course of study leading to a bachelor's degree with a major in any field;
- OR**
- B. At least 24 semester hours in any combination of the following fields: accounting, business, finance, law, contracts, purchasing, economics, industrial management, marketing, quantitative methods, or organization and management.

Figure 2-1 OPM GS-1102 Qualification Standard, outlines the education and experience required to qualify for positions at the GS-7 through GS-12 level covered by this standard.

Figure 2-1 OPM GS-1102 Qualification Standard

Grade	Education	Or Specialized Experience
GS-7	1 full academic year of graduate education or law school or superior academic achievement	1 year equivalent to at least GS-5
GS-9	2 full academic years of progressively higher level graduate education or masters or equivalent graduate degree or LL.B. or J.D.	1 year equivalent to at least GS-7
GS-11	3 full academic years of progressively higher level graduate education or Ph.D. or equivalent doctoral degree	1 year equivalent to at least GS-9
GS-12	No educational equivalent	1 year equivalent to at least next lower grade level
Equivalent combinations of education and experience are qualifying for all grade levels for which both education and experience are acceptable.		

In addition to meeting the basic education requirements outlined above, applicants who are qualifying for positions at grades GS-7 through GS-12 based on experience must possess at least one year of specialized experience at or equivalent to work at the next lower level that provided the knowledge, skills, and abilities to successfully perform the work of the position. Graduate education in one or a combination of the following fields is required to qualify for GS-1102 positions on the basis of graduate education: accounting, business, finance, law, contracts, purchasing, economics, industrial management, marketing, quantitative methods, or organization and management.

2.3 Basic Requirements for GS-1102 Grades 13 and Above

The Basic education requirements for employees in the GS-1102 series at grades 13 and above are:

- A. Completion of all mandatory training prescribed by the head of the agency for progression to GS-13 or higher-level contracting positions, including at least 4-year experience in contracting or related positions. At least one year of that experience must have been specialized experience at or equivalent to work at the next lower level of the position, and must have provided the knowledge, skills, and abilities to successfully perform the work of the position.

AND

- B. A 4-year course of study leading to a bachelor's degree with a major in any field that included or was supplemented by at least 24 semester hours in any combination of the following disciplines: accounting, business, finance, law, contracts, purchasing, economics, industrial management, marketing, quantitative methods, or organization and management-

2.4 Exceptions

2.4.1 Exceptions for GS-1102 Grades 5-12

Employees in GS-1102 positions are considered to have met the standard for positions they occupied on January 1, 2000. Employees who occupied GS-1102 positions at grades 5 through 12 are considered to meet the basic requirements for other GS-1102 positions up to and including those classified at GS-12. This includes positions at other agencies and promotions up through grade 12. However, employees must meet specialized experience requirements when seeking another position. This exception does not apply if there was a break in service after January 1, 2000.

2.4.2 Exceptions for GS-1102 Grades 13 and Above

Employees in the GS-1102 positions at grades 13 and above are considered to have met the standard for positions they occupied on January 1, 2000. This also applies to positions at the same grade in the same agency or other agencies if the specialized experience requirements are met. However, the employee must meet the basic requirements and specialized experience requirement in order to qualify for a promotion to a higher grade, unless granted a waiver as set forth in Section 2.4.3 below. This exception does not apply if there was a break in service after January 1, 2000.

2.4.3 Waiver Authority

The OPM 1102 Qualification Standard **cannot** be waived for new entrants into the GS-1102 career field or individuals applying for contracting series positions at grades 12 and below. The OPM 1102 Qualification standards for individuals applying to contracting series positions at grades 13 and above can be waived at the discretion of the Senior Procurement Executive. The SPE is required to certify that the applicant for such positions possesses significant potential for advancement to levels of greater responsibility and authority based on demonstrated analytical and decision-making capabilities, job performance, and qualifying experience. Waiver authority cannot be delegated and will only be granted for **exceptional and compelling** circumstances of a specific hiring action such as when there are no qualified candidates readily available. There are no "blanket" waivers for an individual or an organization.

2.4.4 Waiver Process

If it is determined that a waiver will be necessary to fill a vacancy for a GS-1102 position at grade 13 and above, the vacancy announcement must state that the agency will consider applicants who require a waiver. The vacancy announcement must state that candidates who do not meet the qualification requirements may be considered for a waiver in accordance with the GS-1102 qualification standard. HCOs are responsible for coordinating with their servicing Human Resource Management office to ensure proper notification is placed within the vacancy

announcement.

When making a selection, if an applicant does not meet the qualification standards, the HCO must provide the request for waiver to the BPO for review. The BPO is responsible for ensuring that the request clearly documents the need for the waiver and indicates that there are no qualified candidates readily available to fill the position, if applicable. Upon concurrence by the BPO the waiver request shall be forwarded to the SPE for approval. **The waiver request must be approved prior to making an offer.** In most instances the waiver provision will be utilized when hiring for hard-to-fill positions or duty locations where it may be difficult to attract qualified candidates.

2.4.5 Waiver Packages

Waiver packages forwarded to the SPE for approval should include the following information:

- a. Copy of the position description and vacancy announcement;
- b. Description of the recruiting efforts undertaken by the organization and the results of those efforts including the sources used for recruiting;
- c. Application or resume of tentatively selected individual;
- d. Narrative from the HCO describing the potential of the applicant for advancement to levels of greater responsibility and authority based on demonstrated analytical and decision-making capabilities, job performance, and qualifying experience;
- e. Draft plan, agreed to by the tentatively selected individual and the supervisor, which delineates a timeline for achieving the educational and/or training requirements. The plan should be finalized and signed by both parties after the waiver is granted and selection has taken place. A copy of the final plan shall be provided to the ACM within 5 days of entry on duty;
- f. Documentation that demonstrates the tentatively selected individual is actively pursuing completion of the requirements;
- g. Justification that relates the applicant's background and experience to the performance requirements of the job to be filled. The justification must address why the individual was selected in lieu of candidates who fully met the education and training requirements (if any), and any impact a disapproval of the waiver would have on the organization;
- h. Identification of actions that will be taken if the conditions of the waiver are not met; and
- i. Memorandum of concurrence and a recommendation for approval of the waiver from the BPO.

Requests for waivers that do not include the documentation listed above will be returned to the recommending BPO without further action. A sample waiver memorandum is provided in Appendix C.

The waiver request package should be submitted electronically to: OAM_Mailbox@doc.gov.

END OF SECTION 2

Section 3 – Training and Certification Program

3.1 Background

The development of a highly qualified, well-trained workforce is critical to ensuring the Department accomplishes its mission. Investment in training and development of the acquisition workforce will improve the ability to meet mission needs. The Office of Federal Procurement Policy developed the Federal Acquisition Certification in Contracting (FAC-C) program, a common training and certification program for the Federal contracting workforce that reflects a government-wide standard for education, training and experience leading to achievement of core competencies.

3.2 Purpose

The purpose of the Training and Certification Program is to implement OFPP Policy Letter 05-01, *Developing and Managing the Acquisition Workforce*, dated April 15, 2005⁷ as updated by OFPP Memorandum, *Federal Acquisition Certification in Contracting (FAC-C) Modernization*, dated January 19, 2023. The program will be used to demonstrate that an individual has achieved a practical, well-rounded understanding of acquisition and business process skills that will enhance his/her ability to perform as a business leader within the Department.

3.3 Federal Acquisition Certification in Contracting Program

The Federal Acquisition Certification in Contracting program was developed by FAI to promote the development of core acquisition competencies government-wide and to facilitate employee mobility. The FAC-C (Professional) certification serves as one means to demonstrate that an individual meets the core education, training and experience requirements for the contracting career field.

3.3.1 Applicability

All employees in the GS-1102 series must be FAC-C (Professional) certified based on their career path as identified in Figure 1.1. New entrants in the 1102 career field shall have 24 months to meet FAC-C (Professional) certification requirements. Individuals in the 1102 series who are promoted into a new career path shall have 24 months to meet the certification requirements for the new career path. (NOTE: Employees must meet the OPM 1102 Qualification Standards for education and experience in order to be hired or promoted unless it has been waived by the SPE, therefore, the 24-month requirement only applies to training requirements.)

All Contracting Officers, regardless of job series, must be FAC-C (Professional) certified pursuant to this policy.

3.3.2 Certification Requirements

The modernized FAC-C framework includes a refreshed contracting competency model, a single-level certification, updated certification requirements and the introduction of credentials which are mission-focused training packages. The new single-level FAC-C (Professional) requirements include completion of foundational training, one year of experience, a professional certification exam, and an updated continuous learning requirement. Achievement of the FAC-C (Professional) is based on requirements for experience and training as outlined below and summarized in *Figure 3-1 FAC-C (Professional) Certification Requirements*. Maintenance of a FAC-C (Professional) is a function of continuous learning.

⁷ Available at: https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/omb/procurement_policy_letter_05-01

Figure 3-1 FAC-C (Professional) Certification Requirements

FAC-C (Professional)	
Experience	1 year of contracting experience
Training	All FAC-C (Professional) training requirements as prescribed on the FAI website at FAI.gov
Exam	Contracting professional certification exam
Continuous Learning	80 CLPs every 2 years through April 30, 2024. 100 CLPs every 2 years after May 1, 2024.

3.3.2.1 Experience

A minimum of 12 months of full-time experience applying a representative sample of the technical contracting competencies. Experience requirements are generally based on the OPM 1102 Qualification Standard. Experience may be time spent on the job in a contracting related job assignment, either in the private or public sector, which reflects the accumulation of knowledge, skills, and abilities during years of progressively more responsible work assignments. There is no exception to the experience requirements and candidates must provide evidence to the certifying official. Appendix G provides a list of developmental activities that should be considered when developing the contracting workforce. The list is not exhaustive.

3.3.2.2 Core Training

Core training courses that focus on the foundational components of the Federal acquisition lifecycle are required for the FAC-C (Professional). Detailed information on core curricula courses is available at Contracting Certification Course Web Series – Defense Acquisition University (dau.edu). Individuals must meet the training requirements by taking DAU training, DAU-equivalent courses, or through the fulfillment process described in Section 3.7.

3.3.2.3 Exam

Passing the contracting professional certification exam is required to obtain the FAC-C (Professional). An optional exam prep class is available to assist in preparation for the exam. More information on the certification exam is available at CON 3990V – Contract Certification Exam – Defense Acquisition University (dau.edu).

3.3.2.4 Continuous Learning Requirement

To maintain a FAC-C (Professional) certification, contracting professionals are required to earn 100 continuous learning points (CLPs) of skills currency training every two years by April 30th⁸. Supervisors are encouraged to use the continuous learning requirement to assist individuals in obtaining core competencies, maintaining critical acquisition skills, and acquiring operating unit-specific training. *Failure to comply with CLP requirements nullifies the certification and its transferability to other agencies.*

Continuous learning points must be submitted in FAI's system for training and certification. Guidance on earning continuous learning points and assigning points to various developmental activities is provided in Appendix G. Continuous learning activities may include, but are not limited to the following:

⁸ This requirement starts in May 2024. The continuous learning period ending in April 2024 is 80 CLPs.

- Training activities, such as teaching, self-directed study, and mentoring;
- Courses completed to achieve training requirements at the next higher level;
- Professional activities, such as attending/speaking/presenting at professional seminars/symposia/conferences, publishing, and attending workshops; or
- Educational activities, such as formal training, and formal academic programs.

FAC-C holders may view or print their certifications and continuous learning achievement status from their CLIP dashboard in FAI's system for training and certification. Once required continuous learning is achieved no further action is required to maintain certification for that period.

3.4 Digital Services Credential

The Digital Services Credential establishes additional training, experience, and continuous learning requirements for FAC-C (Professional) certified individuals who manage specific investments requiring specialized knowledge, skills, and abilities. The Digital Services Credential is required for contracting professionals assigned to an acquisition for digital services over the FAR Subpart 13.5 threshold, inclusive of acquisitions as described in 13.500(c)).

3.4.1 Digital Services Credential Curriculum

The Digital IT Acquisition Professional (DITAP) program allows government and commercial acquisition training organizations to offer the DITAP curriculum for the Digital Services Credential. The curriculum is based upon an open-source learning management system, which allows participants to interact, and features self-directed, guided and applied learning, classroom instruction, case studies, guest speakers, and hands-on skills building through a live digital assignment. A list of validated vendors who are authorized to provide the DITAP program is available at: <https://techfarhub.cio.gov/initiatives/ditap/>.

3.4.2 Digital Services Maintenance

To maintain the Digital Services Credential, after three years from earning the credential, renewal requirements (e.g., training course(s), assessment) will be made available in FAI's system for training and certification, and an individual will have 6-months to complete the training to maintain the credential.

3.5 DAWIA Certifications

An individual who has obtained a Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act certification in contracting at any time during their career is eligible for a FAC-C (Professional) if continuous learning requirements have been maintained and can be documented⁹. The employee is responsible for providing the necessary documentation of the DAWIA certification and the appropriate continuous learning history to ensure validity and currency of the certification.

3.6 Training Providers

3.6.1 Federal Acquisition Institute Sponsored Training

The Federal Acquisition Institute manages the Acquisition Workforce Training Fund to ensure that equitable training opportunities are available for all civilian agencies. FAI uses the training fund to offer DAU-equivalent core training courses to civilian agency employees at no charge. Employees can view the current FAI course schedule and register for courses at <https://www.fai.gov/training/find-and-register-for-courses>.

3.6.2 Defense Acquisition University Training

DAU training courses are available to civilian agency employees at no charge. Employees can view

⁹ The requirements for maintenance are those amount of CLPs requirement to maintain the DAWIA certification.

the current course schedule and register for DAU training courses in the DAU catalog at: <https://icatalog.dau.edu/>.

3.6.3 DAU-Equivalent Training

Several training providers offer courses that have been certified equivalent to DAU curriculum courses. DAU-equivalent courses can be used to meet the core training requirements. A list of DAU-equivalent courses and training providers is located at: <https://icatalog.dau.edu/>.

3.7 Fulfillment

The fulfillment process for contracting certification is a program based on accepting prior related work experience, or courses taken from other federal agencies, other training providers, or through institutions of higher learning to satisfy the mandatory training requirements under the FAC-C program. The FAC-C fulfillment process will follow the fulfillment process for Department of Defense. In seeking FAC-C (Professional) certification via the fulfillment process, individuals must document assessment of demonstrated competencies against the learning outcomes/objectives of the DAU courses using the DAU course materials at <https://icatalog.dau.edu/DAUFulfillmentPgm.aspx>. Individuals must satisfactorily meet all requirements for certification and the competencies shall have successfully been completed and documented to qualify for fulfillment credit. The requirement for the CON 3990V Contracting Certification Exam cannot be met through fulfillment. Requests for FAC-C via the fulfillment process must be submitted in FAI's system for training and certification.

3.7.1 Fulfillment Methods

Methods of fulfilling competencies can include alternative training, experience, education, or certification by another recognized organization.

3.7.2 Alternative Training

If competencies were obtained through courses that were not DAU or DAU-equivalent courses, the individual must document for each competency the dates of training, course descriptions, provider names, grades (if applicable), and competencies achieved, to the maximum extent practicable.

3.7.3 Experience

If competencies were obtained through related job experience, the individual must provide the agency name, dates, location, position title, and the duties performed that provided the relevant competencies.

3.7.4 Education

If competencies were obtained through academic courses provided at an accredited institution, the individual must provide the date of each class, course descriptions, provider names, grades (if applicable), and competencies achieved.

3.8 Certification Application Process

Applicants must initiate their applications for FAC-C (Professional) certification using FAI's system for training and certification and submit the required documentation using the Department's certification routing tool. Nominees are responsible for producing certificates, transcripts, and records that provide evidence that they satisfy the requirements of the program. Instructions for completing applications are included in Appendix E. For individuals who have a legacy FAC-C Level 1, 2, or 3, a FAC-C (Professional) may be obtained by requesting it in FAI's system for training and certification.

3.9 Certification Waivers

3.9.1 FAC-C Waivers

The Senior Procurement Executive may waive the requirement for obtaining a certification, on a case-by-case basis, if granting a waiver is in the best interest of the Department. This authority may not be delegated. A certification waiver allows an individual who does not meet the

certification requirements of the position to remain in that position. This is an assignment waiver and is only valid for the particular position to which the individual is assigned. This waiver is not transferable to another position or agency.

3.9.2 Digital Services Credential Waivers

The Senior Procurement Executive may waive the requirement for contracting professionals assigned to acquisitions for digital services over the above threshold to have the Digital Services Credential prior to being assigned and allow an employee to be credentialed within one year after being assigned¹⁰. This decision must be documented in writing and provided to the agency Acquisition Career Manager.

3.10 Documenting and Recording Training and Certification Requirements

The Senior Bureau Procurement Official is responsible for establishing policies for maintaining official training, education and certification records on their acquisition workforce employees and ensuring information is entered in FAI's system for training and certification. Training records must be available for inspection by OAM upon request.

Employees are responsible for maintaining all transcripts and training certificates for their records. Upon completion of training or relevant college coursework, the employee is responsible for submitting evidence of successful training completion to their supervisor and updating their information in FAI's system for training and certification to reflect training, certification, experience, and continuous learning points. Use of FAI's system for training and certification is a government-wide mandatory requirement of the FAC programs and all employees issued a FAC-C certification must be registered in FAI's system for training and certification.

3.11 Additional Training Requirements

In addition to training required for FAC-C (Professional) certification, contracting professionals shall complete additional training requirements, as applicable, as outlined below. This additional training may count towards continuous learning requirements.

3.11.1 Small Business Programs

All contracting professionals are required to successfully complete the online course entitled "Small Business Programs" (FAC 031). This course provides an overview of the small business program in accordance with Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Part 19 and the Small Business Act. The course is provided by DAU through FAI's system for training and certification.

3.11.2 Green Procurement

All contracting professionals are required to successfully complete green procurement training. An online course entitled "DoD Sustainable Procurement Program," (CLC 046)¹¹ provides an overview of the policies, requirements, and best practices for purchasing sustainable products and services. This course is provided by DAU through FAI's system for training and certification.

3.11.3 Earned Value Management

All contracting professionals who award or administer contracts for major acquisitions for development are required to successfully complete an Earned Value Management course. DOC defines a "major acquisition for development" as an acquisition that includes \$25 million or more in development, modernization, and enhancement (DME) costs over the life cycle of the acquisition. Other projects may be designated "major acquisition for development" if they merit special attention due to their sensitivity, mission criticality, or risk potential. An online course entitled "Fundamentals of Earned Value Management" is available, at no charge, through DAU FAI's system for training and certification.

¹⁰ *Establishment of Federal Acquisition Certification in Contracting Core-Plus Specialization in Digital Services (FAC-C-DS)*, Available at: https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/fac_c_digital_services_05_12_18.pdf

¹¹ FAC 028 or FAC 038 may also satisfy the Green Procurement training requirement.

3.11.4 Information Technology Systems and Software Applications

All contracting professionals shall have sufficient training in information technology systems (e.g., contract writing systems, FPDS, etc.) and software applications (e.g., Word, Excel, etc.) that are required to successfully accomplish assignments in an acquisition environment.

3.11.5 Ethics

All contracting professionals shall successfully complete ethics training. Beginning in 1993, all federal employees have been required to receive a one-hour block of initial ethics training within 90 days of beginning federal employment. This initial ethics training satisfies the ethics training requirement. In addition, the DOC Office of General Counsel (OGC) provides annual ethics training which also satisfies the requirement for ethics training.

3.11.6 AbilityOne

All contracting professionals should have sufficient training in the AbilityOne Program. They should understand the many benefits of contracting with the AbilityOne Program and the various products and services they deliver to the federal government.

3.11.7 Buy America

All contracting professionals should have sufficient training in the Buy American Statute and regulatory requirements.

3.11.8 Category Management

All contracting professionals should have sufficient training in category management. They should understand the fundamental category management concepts as well as the government's specific approach, how category management will affect them, and about tools they can use to better utilize category management concepts.

END OF SECTION 3

Section 4 - Contracting Officer Warrant Program

4.1 Background

Federal Acquisition Regulation Subpart 1.603 sets forth requirements for the selection, appointment, and termination of Contracting Officers. The Commerce Acquisition Regulation (CAR) supplements the FAR with policies specific to the Department of Commerce.

4.2 Purpose

The purpose of the Contracting Officer Warrant Program is to mandate the specific standards which must be met prior to the delegation of Contracting Officer authority. The Warrant Program will ensure that only fully qualified employees are delegated the authority to obligate the Department in the expenditure of public funds through the acquisition system.

4.3 Applicability

The requirements of the Contracting Officer Warrant Program apply to all individuals nominated to be Contracting Officers and all individuals currently serving as Contracting Officers. All individuals with Contracting Officer warrants must meet the requirements of this policy.

4.4 Exemptions

Contracting Officer delegations are not required to make the following types of transactions. However, these transactions may require a delegation from another source.

- Purchase Card transactions below the micro-purchase threshold (see CAM 1313.301, Commerce Purchase Card Procedures);
- Standard Form 44 (Purchase Order-Invoice-Voucher);
- Government Bills of Lading;
- Real Property Acquisitions;
- Standard Form 182, Request, Authorization, Agreement and Certification of Training;
- Paid Advertisements for personnel recruitment actions; and
- Financial Assistance Agreements.

4.5 Warrant Qualification Standards

To qualify to serve as a Contracting Officer with authority to award or administer contracts valued above the micro-purchase threshold, an individual must have a FAC-C (Professional) certification.

4.6 Warrant Levels and Limitations

Within the Department of Commerce there are three (3) warrant levels. Bureaus may further restrict the warrant levels at their discretion. Specific education, training, and experience requirements for each level are identified in *Figure 4-1 Warrant Level Requirements*.

Figure 4-1 Warrant Level Requirements

Warrant Level	Warrant Threshold Authority	Education	Experience	Training	FAC-C (Professional)
Level I	In accordance with contract terms and conditions or a maximum of \$250,000 for Contracting Officers employed within an acquisition office and \$150,000 for Contracting Officers employed outside an acquisition office.	4 – year course of study leading to a bachelor's degree OR At least 24 semester hours from among the following disciplines: accounting, business, finance, law, contracts, purchasing, economics, industrial management, marketing, quantitative methods, or organization and management.	At least 1 year of contracting experience.	All Level I training requirements identified in Figure 4-2 or a Legacy FAC-C or DAWIA Level I. Continuous Learning: 100 CLPs every 2 years ¹²	Yes
Level II	In accordance with contract terms and conditions or a maximum of \$1,000,000. Up to the limits established in FAR 12.203 when using commercial item procedures	4 – year course of study leading to a bachelor's degree OR At least 24 semester hours from among the following disciplines: accounting, business, finance, law, contracts, purchasing, economics, industrial management, marketing, quantitative methods, or organization and management.	At least 2 years of contracting experience.	All Level I and II training requirements identified in Figure 4-2 or a Legacy FAC-C or DAWIA Level II. ¹³ Continuous Learning: 100 CLPs every 2 years	Yes
Level III	Unlimited	4 – year course of study leading to a bachelor's degree that includes or is supplemented with at least 24 semester hours from among the following disciplines: accounting, business, finance, law, contracts, purchasing, economics, industrial management, marketing, quantitative methods, or organization and management.	At least 4 years of contracting experience.	All Level I, II, and III training requirements identified in Figure 4-2 or a Legacy FAC-C or DAWIA Level III. Continuous Learning: 100 CLPs every 2 years	Yes

¹² This requirement starts in May 2024. The continuous learning period ending in April 2024 is 80 CLPs.

¹³ A legacy FAC-C certification at the appropriate level may be used in lieu of the required training. Example: an individual applies for a Level III warrant; the individual could use a legacy Level II FAC-C certification in lieu of the training listed in Figure 4-2 for Level II and Level I and would only have to take the additional Level III training.

Figure 4-2 Training Requirements¹⁴

Warrant Level	Training
Level I	CON 1100 (Guiding Principles)
	CON 1200 (Pre-Award)
	CON 1300 (Award)
	CON 1400 (Post-Award)
Level II	FAC 031 Small Business Programs
	CLC 046 DoD Sustainable Procurement Program (or FAC 028 & FAC 038)
	CLC 058 Introduction to Contract Pricing
	CMC 105 Undefined Contract Actions (UCA) Administration
	FCL-CM-2500 Category Management 101
	CON 216 Legal Considerations in Contracting
	HBS 428 Negotiating
	Electives-120 CLPs: Electives may be one course or a series of courses. At least 96 CLPs should consist of courses eight hours in length or more. Courses may be classroom, online, or a combination of the two. Topics must be related to acquisition and may include general business courses such as statistics or budgeting. Topics of subject areas may also be in a technical area related to the individual's specific work, such as IT. CLPs obtained for Credentials taken through DAU or FAI will count in their entirety.
Level III	Leadership-40 CLPs: The leadership requirement may be met with one course or a series of courses. Each course should be at least eight hours in length and can be classroom, online, or a combination of the two. Topics must be related to leadership and/or management.
	Electives-120 CLPs: Electives may be one course or a series of courses. At least 96 CLPs should consist of courses eight hours in length or more. Courses may be classroom, online, or a combination of the two. Topics must be related to acquisition and may include general business courses such as statistics or budgeting. Topics of subject areas may also be in a technical area related to the individual's specific work, such as IT. CLPs obtained for Credentials taken through DAU or FAI will count in their entirety.

4.7 Selection, Appointment and Termination of Appointment

Prior to delegating warrant authority, the Appointing Official shall ensure that a valid organizational need for the requested authority has been demonstrated.

4.7.1 Selection of Warrant Levels

Appointment of Contracting Officers should be commensurate with the volume and complexity of acquisition actions to be handled. Individuals selected for Contracting Officer delegations must meet the FAC-C, education, experience, and training requirements that are commensurate with the warrant levels established in *Figure 4-1 Warrant Level Requirements*. In addition, Appointing Officials shall consider the following criteria:

- Warrant levels are based on the aggregate contract value, not the individual contract action. However, warrant levels for orders against Federal Supply Schedules, Governmentwide Acquisition Contracts, Agency-specific vehicles, and Multi-agency Contracts are based on the aggregate value of the order, inclusive of options, not the aggregate value of the indefinite delivery, indefinite quantity contract.
- If the basis of award involves evaluating options, the option periods are included in the contract value to determine the warrant level required for award.
- If an action includes both additions and deductions the aggregate, absolute value of the changes determines the warrant level required for the transaction (e.g., the value of an action is

¹⁴ Course numbers may change and subsequent courses are acceptable if they cover the same competencies.

\$110,000 regardless of whether the action includes \$30k of additions and \$80k of subtractions).

4.7.2 Issuance of Appointments

All warrants shall be issued on Standard Form (SF) 1402, Certificate of Appointment and shall indicate the Contracting Officers warrant level and dollar threshold and any other limitations. Additional limits may be placed on the authority granted by the warrant; such limitations must be stated on the actual SF 1402. Prior to issuance of a warrant, the Appointing Official must ensure that the warrant applicant has a valid FAC-C (Professional) certification and meets any specialized training required by the operating unit.

Senior Bureau Procurement Officials are authorized to issue all Level I, II, and III warrants. The HCO should prepare requests for warrants in the format provided in Appendix H and submit requests to the BPO for approval. Senior Bureau Procurement Officials may authorize HCOs to issue Level I warrants to program officials.

The Senior Procurement Executive will issue warrants for the BPO. Warrant requests for the BPO should be sent from the Head of Contracting Activity (HCA) using the format provided in Appendix H.

4.7.3 Performance Plan Requirement

All warranted Contracting Officers in the 1102 contracting series shall have the following items as separate critical elements or incorporated into an existing performance element a requirement for:

- a. FPDS Data Accuracy – complete, accurate, and timely reporting to FPDS.
- b. Small Business Achievement, including small disadvantaged, women-owned, historically underutilized business zone, and service-disabled veteran-owned business goals.

4.7.4 Maintaining an Appointment

In order to maintain an appointment, Contracting Officers must complete 100 continuous learning points every two years¹⁵. If this condition is not met, the FAC-C certification will expire and the Bureau Procurement Official may choose to revoke or modify a warrant.

The Appointing Official must perform a review of all delegations of authority issued to validate the continued need for the warrant and determine if Contracting Officers have maintained professional proficiency to qualify for appointment. Level I and II warrants should be reviewed at least annually; and Level III warrants should be reviewed at least every two years. Based on the review, warrant authority should be terminated or reduced in scope, when appropriate.

4.7.5 Termination of Appointment

Appointments of Contracting Officers remain in effect as long as the appointee is assigned to the position stated on the warrant unless terminated sooner by the Appointing Official, their successor, or the Senior Procurement Executive. Contracting Officer warrants may be terminated at any time for justifiable reasons such as, but not limited to, the following:

- Appointee fails to comply with applicable statutes, Executive Orders, OMB Circulars, Federal Acquisition Regulation, Commerce Acquisition Regulation, Commerce Acquisition Manual, and other internal policies;
- Appointee violates the Code of Ethics;
- A valid organizational need for the delegation of authority no longer exists;
- Appointee is reassigned to a new position where the need for a warrant no longer exists;
- Appointee transfers to another agency, retires, resigns, or is terminated from Government employment; or

¹⁵ This requirement starts in May 2024. The continuous learning period ending in April 2024 is 80 CLPs

- Appointee does not complete required continuous learning points.

Warrant holders shall be notified in writing of the effective date of the termination. The notification shall provide enough time and sufficient instruction to ensure that unauthorized obligations are not made. Upon termination the original SF 1402 should be returned to the issuing office for placement in the official Contracting Officer appointment file. The SF 1402 should be annotated as "CANCELLED" and accompanied by a brief cover memorandum indicating the reason for termination.

4.8 Additional Requirements for Program Officials

Contracting authority is generally reserved for employees working in a DOC contracting office. However, in limited circumstances where there is a demonstrated organizational need, contracting authority may be granted by the Senior Bureau Procurement Official to a DOC employee in a Program Office. Such authority shall be limited to a Level I Warrant.

In addition to the FAC-C, education, experience, and training requirements outlined in *Figure 4-1 Warrant Level Requirements*, employees who are not employed by a contracting office shall meet the additional requirements outlined in subsections 4.8.1 through 4.8.5.

The Head of Contracting Office shall conduct annual acquisition management reviews of acquisitions processed by program officials with delegated contracting authority.

4.8.1 Performance Plan Requirements

The nominated employee shall have Acquisition Management as a critical element in their performance plan weighted no less than 15%. In addition, the performance plan shall provide for input into the employee's interim and final performance appraisal by the Head of Contracting Office. Appendix I provides sample language for a performance plan element.

4.8.2 Funding for Training, Travel and Oversight

The requesting organization shall fund all expenses related to travel, training, and oversight audits for the nominee.

4.8.3 On-the-Job Training

Upon acceptance of the nomination, nominees shall be assigned to work in the servicing contracting office to perform contracting duties for a minimum of one (1) week. For a period of six (6) months after the initial assignment in the servicing contracting office, the nominee shall perform contracting duties under the review, approval, and signature of the Head of Contracting Office or a Level II or above Contracting Officer in the servicing acquisition office. At the end of the on-the-job training period, the Head of Contracting Office shall assess the performance of the nominee and provide a recommendation to the Senior Bureau Procurement Official for approval or disapproval of the request for contracting authority.

4.8.4 Approval of Contract Actions

Program Officials who are granted contracting authority shall submit the complete acquisition file (current action plus basic award and any other previously awarded modifications) to the Head of Contracting Office for approval and signature when the total value of the contractual action will exceed the warrant level as a result of modifications to the basic award. For example, an award was made for \$125,000 by a Contracting Officer with a Level I warrant (up to \$150,000) and it later becomes necessary to modify that award and increase its value by \$26,000.

4.8.5 Annual Training and Evaluation

Program Officials who are granted contracting authority shall serve one (1) week annually in the

servicing contracting office for refresher acquisition and systems training and evaluation. In lieu of the annual training, the BPO may approve alternative training and development activities that shall include a minimum of 40 hours of organized instruction annually.

4.9 Warrant Waivers

In unique situations, on a case-by-case basis, the Senior Procurement Executive may approve, in writing, any deviation from the policies, procedures, and requirements of the Contracting Officer Warrant Program. The Senior Bureau Procurement Official shall submit all requests for waivers to the SPE with the following documentation:

- a. Optional Form 612, Application for Federal Employment, signed by the candidate, or a resume detailing the candidate's experience, education, and training relevant to the position;
- b. Justification that relates the candidate's background and experience to the contract action(s) for which the warrant is required;
- c. Plan agreed upon by the candidate and HCO, delineating a time frame for achieving the requirements; and
- d. Statement that identifies the impact a disapproval of the waiver would have on the organization.

4.10 Administration of Warrant Program

The Senior Bureau Procurement Official shall establish procedures for administering the Warrant Program within the bureau. Appointing Officials shall maintain official files documenting the qualifications of each Contracting Officer. Such files shall be available for oversight reviews. The BPO is responsible for ensuring that current, accurate, and complete information regarding each individual with delegated procurement authority is maintained in FAI's system for training and certification.

4.11 Reporting Requirements

The Senior Bureau Procurement Official shall submit an annual report to the Office of Acquisition Management by the 30th of January each year. The report shall be submitted electronically to: [OAM Mailbox@doc.gov](mailto:OAM_Mailbox@doc.gov) and include the following information for all Warrants:

- a. Name of appointee;
- b. Grade and series;
- c. Organization;
- d. Warrant level;
- e. Date of appointment; and
- f. Any limitation on the warrant.

4.12 Warrant Program Roles and Responsibilities

4.12.1 Senior Procurement Executive

The Senior Procurement Executive is responsible for:

- a. Establishing the policies, procedures, and requirements that govern the Warrant Program; and
- b. Approving/disapproving deviations from the warrant program requirements.

4.12.2 Head of Contracting Activity

The Head of Contracting Activity is responsible for:

- a. Submitting requests for Contracting Officer appointments for Senior Bureau Procurement Official within the operating unit to the SPE for approval; and
- b. Submitting requests for waivers or deviations from the Warrant Program for Senior Bureau Procurement Official to the SPE.

4.12.3 Senior Bureau Procurement Official

The Senior Bureau Procurement Official is responsible for:

- a. Establishing procedures for administering the Warrant Program within the operating unit;
- b. Appointing Level I, II, and III Contracting Officers within the operating unit, in accordance with FAR 1.603;
- c. Submitting requests for waivers or deviations from the Warrant Program to the SPE; and
- d. Ensuring official records on individuals with delegated authority are maintained and information is entered into FAI's system for training and certification.

4.12.4 Head of Contracting Office

The Head of Contracting Office is responsible for:

- a. Determining the number of Contracting Officer warrants and levels of authority necessary for the organization;
- b. Submitting requests for Level I, II, and III Contracting Officer appointments to the BPO for approval;
- c. Submitting requests for waivers to the BPO;
- d. Monitoring the performance of Contracting Officers;
- e. Ensuring that FPDS data accuracy and small business goal achievement elements are included in the performance plan for all Contracting Officers; and
- f. Establishing controls to ensure compliance with laws, regulations, procedures, and good business judgment.

4.12.5 Contracting Officer

The Contracting Officer is responsible for:

- a. Completing and submitting an OGE-450, Confidential Financial Disclosure Report or OGE-278, Public Financial Disclosure Report. If there are questions regarding the Financial Disclosure Reporting requirements contact the ethics office.
- b. Using sound business judgment and performing all necessary actions for effective contracting;
- c. Ensuring timely and accurate submission of individual contact action reports to FPDS;
- d. Achieving small business goals;
- e. Ensuring compliance with the terms of the contract, and safeguarding the interests of the United States in all contractual relationships;
- f. Ensuring that the requirements of FAR 1.602-1(b) have been met and that sufficient funds are available for obligation;

- g. Complying with the terms and conditions of the warrant and any specified limitations;
- h. Ensuring contractors receive impartial, fair, and equitable treatment; and
- i. Requesting and considering the advice of specialists in audit, law, engineering, transportation, and other fields, as appropriate.

END OF SECTION 4

Section 5 - Career Planning

5.1 Background

Career planning is a process whereby an employee chooses and sets their career goals and identifies the means to achieve them. The process involves the employee and supervisor working together to set attainable career goals for the employee that are identified through projects, training, rotations, special assignments, and other career enhancing opportunities. The objective of the career planning process is to help employees choose realistic career paths and provide direction in developing and reaching their career goals.

5.2 Individual Development Plan

The Individual Development Plan (IDP) is an essential tool in the career planning process. It is based on both formal and informal assessments and identifies areas in which the employee should increase their knowledge and skills to reach career goals. An IDP specifically addresses the education, training, development, and job assignments required by an employee to progress in their career, improve business skills, and grow professionally and personally over the next several years. The use of the IDP allows the necessary planning, scheduling, and budgeting of training and development for each employee.

An IDP is required for each employee in the contracting series (GS-1102). A sample IDP is provided in Appendix J. Using the plan as a guide and with the support and approval of the supervisor, each employee must develop an IDP that shows specific training and development needs for both short term and long-term career goals and objectives. The IDP should specifically identify developmental activities over a two-to-three-year period, consistent with the employee's career path, capabilities, aspirations, and the agency mission. The IDP should identify mandatory core training courses and recommended courses. In addition, employees may request on-the-job training, more challenging work assignments, participation in a rotational assignment, mentor relationship, participation in a professional association, outside education, and other job-related activities.

Individual Development Plans should be integrated into the performance plan process and reviewed in conjunction with mid-year and end-of-year performance reviews. Individual Development Plans should be updated each year to reflect the progression of the employee and adjusted as appropriate.

5.3 Developmental Opportunities

In addition to the mandatory education and training requirements identified in Section 3, there are non-mandatory developmental opportunities that will broaden experiences and expand acquisition and business skills. Examples of such opportunities include rotational and or developmental assignments, participation in mentoring programs, teams and workgroups, or membership in professional associations. Developmental opportunities are a vital component to developing the acquisition workforce as business leaders. The variety and depth of experiences gained through developmental opportunities are not necessarily available through traditional classroom training or from normal work experiences. Developmental opportunities provide individuals with the ability to obtain additional skills that enable them to become more well-rounded acquisition professionals, which benefits both the employee as well as the organization.

5.3.1 Rotational and Developmental Assignments

Rotational and developmental assignments are vital tools for career development. Valuable experience is gained by working on a variety of assignments in other organizations within a bureau, across bureaus, and in the Office of Acquisition Management. Rotational and developmental assignments provide cross training and establish skills in other disciplines which, in turn, foster a better understanding of other disciplines and build team relationships within the acquisition community. Generally rotational assignments involve an assignment to another organization for a specified period of time and may involve a variety of work assignment specific project. Developmental assignments are generally project specific and the individual may maintain their current workload as well as a

special assignment from another organization. Through these types of assignments, the acquisition office can create professional development opportunities without expending additional funds.

5.3.2 Mentoring

Mentoring provides an opportunity for an individual to receive coaching and feedback on their career planning and career choices. Bureau acquisition offices are encouraged to sponsor voluntary mentoring programs. The HCO is responsible for ensuring that Mentors are employees that have progressed sufficiently in their own career and can provide career guidance to junior level employees in the same profession. Mentoring outside the normal employee/supervisory relationship allows the mentor a chance to share valuable information from their own professional experiences as well as gain experience in communication, team building, coaching and feedback. Acquisition offices are encouraged to work with their servicing Human Resource Office for guidance in establishing mentor programs.

5.3.3 Teams and Workgroups

Participation on inter-office, agency, or department teams and/or workgroups often provides opportunities to network with acquisition professionals of various backgrounds, gain knowledge in new acquisition related fields or subject matter, share best practices and improve team building and communication skills.

5.3.4 Professional Associations

Membership in professional associations is voluntary but strongly encouraged. It provides opportunities for sharing information and ideas on a variety of issues. Information is available to allow the professional to keep abreast of current topics through professional journals, seminars, and networking opportunities.

5.4 Performance Standards

Performance standards should reflect the core business and technical competencies identified by FAI at <https://fai.gov/certification/fac-c/fac-c-competencies>. The Individual Development Plan is a tool that should be used as part of the process of establishing performance standards. The Individual Development Plan should reflect the employee's most recent performance appraisal and identify any education, training, or special assignments needed to improve performance or maintain the current acceptable level of performance. Acquisition offices are encouraged to work with their servicing Human Resource Office in establishing performance plans.

5.5 Performance Incentives

The Department of Commerce rewards employees who serve as business leaders by focusing on outcomes and performance, partnering with customers and industry, and effectively leveraging technology and commercial best practices to facilitate innovative, streamlined, and flexible business arrangements that result in mission success and support the goals and objectives of the Department's acquisition community. Acquisition offices are encouraged to work with their serving Human Resource Office to provide monetary and other recognition to employees who have made substantive contributions to the Department's acquisition system.

5.6 Tuition Assistance

Senior Bureau Procurement Officials are strongly encouraged to budget for tuition assistance to help employees in acquisition positions meet the positive education requirement, including a full-time course of study leading to a degree in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 4107.

5.7 Obtaining College Credit for Training Courses and Examinations

5.7.1 American Council on Education

Employees may be eligible to receive college credit through a national program sponsored by the

American Council of Education (ACE). ACE's purpose is to help individuals obtain academic credit for learning they have acquired outside of colleges and universities. ACE evaluates and makes credit recommendations for formal education programs and courses sponsored by non-collegiate organizations. These credits must be accepted and reflected on the transcript of an accredited college or university to be considered as credit toward the degree requirement or the 24-semester hour requirement. Some classes offered by the Defense Acquisition University (DAU) are ACE certified. Information on the ACE advisory service is available at: <http://www.acenet.edu>.

5.7.2 CLEP and DANTES Examinations

College credit may be obtained through the College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) or through Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES) Program. These credits must be awarded by an accredited college or university to be considered as credit toward the degree requirement or the 24-semester hour requirement. The following website has information on CLEP exams: <http://www.collegeboard.com/>. The following website offers information bulletins on DANTES: <https://www.dantes.mil/>.

END OF SECTION 5

END OF CAM 1301.6

APPENDIX A - DEFINITIONS

Acquisition - The acquiring of supplies or services (including construction) with appropriated funds by contract for the use of the Federal Government through purchase or lease, whether the supplies or services are already in existence or must be created, developed, demonstrated, and evaluated.

Acquisition Career Manager – The Individual appointed pursuant to OFPP Policy Letter 05-01 to lead the Department's Contracting Certification and Warrant program. The Executive Director of the Acquisition Policy and Oversight Division has been designated as the Acquisition Career Manager.

Acquisition Experience - Experience gained while assigned to an acquisition position which includes related cooperative education and other acquisition developmental assignments; experience in DOC acquisition positions and in comparable positions outside of DOC.

Acquisition Positions - Employees who are in the acquisition system with duties that fall into an acquisition category. These positions comprise the contracting series (GS-1102) and positions in other job series in which significant acquisition-related functions are performed.

Acquisition Workforce - Employees performing acquisition-related work. The acquisition workforce includes permanent civilian employees who occupy acquisition positions.

Appointing Official – Person authorized to grant individual Contracting Officer warrant authority consistent with the applicable regulations of the Federal Acquisition Regulations and Commerce Acquisition Regulations.

Business Leader - Individual that possesses the ability to: develop, negotiate, and manage business deals; communicate effectively; manage and lead change; solve problems in an ambiguous environment; analyze and understand the marketplace; build and manage relationships across functions and organizations; understand and effectively operate in the customer environment; develop and implement outcome oriented solutions; and execute.

Career Development - The professional development of employees by integrating the capabilities, needs, interests, and aptitudes of employees in acquisition positions with designated training and development designed to meet organizational objectives. Career development is accomplished through a combination of work assignments, education, job rotation, training, and self-development programs.

Career Path - The range of opportunities at each career level and the optimum route for progression in a career field.

Career Planning - A process by which the supervisor and the employee constructively and realistically assess the employee's career goals and development needs and the supervisor gives guidance on planning alternatives to achieve the goals.

Chief Acquisition Officer – The Department's Executive-level non-career employee designated pursuant to the Services Acquisition Reform Act (SARA) to advise and assist the head of the agency and other agency officials to ensure the mission of the agency is achieved through the management of the agency's acquisition activities. The Chief Financial Officer and Assistant Secretary for Administration has been designated as the Chief Acquisition Officer.

Competencies – Observable, measurable patterns of skills, knowledge, abilities, behaviors, and other characteristics than an individual needs to perform in occupational functions.

Continuous Learning Points - Continuing education or training opportunities such as agency-sponsored training and management/executive seminars, special job and/or professional association related projects and/or participation in seminars/workshops, or other appropriate developmental activities to remain current in the acquisition field.

Contracting Officer – Individuals designated authority to enter into, administer, and/or terminate contracts and to make related determinations and findings.

Core Training Course - An approved course of study that meets FAC-C training requirements for a career path.

Critical Skills – Business and technical skills that are needed by a member of the acquisition workforce to sufficiently perform their duties.

Defense Acquisition University - A consortium of Department of Defense education and training institutions and organizations providing mandatory acquisition courses for certification.

Defense Acquisition University-Equivalent Course – Courses offered by various training providers that have been certified as equivalent to mandatory acquisition courses provided by the Defense Acquisition University.

Delegation of Procurement Authority – Written authority to obligate Government funds that is delegated to an individual.

Digital Services – Delivery of digital information (i.e., data or content) and transactional services (e.g., online forms and benefits applications) across a variety of platforms, devices, and delivery mechanisms (e.g., websites, mobile applications, and social media).

Electives – Any training opportunity related to the employee's job, those necessary for career development, or those used to for cross training. Electives may include no-cost distance learning, assignment-specific courses, or other training opportunities.

Federal Acquisition Certification in Contracting – A certification program establishing core requirements for education, training, and experience for contracting professionals in civilian agencies.

Fulfillment Process - The DOD process through a determination is made based alternative training, experience, education, certification by another recognized organization, or other developmental activities that the required competencies for a particular course have been attained.

Head of Contracting Activity – Officials who are designated as Heads of Operating Units in orders establishing the respective operating units.

Head of Contracting Office - Individuals designated to head the contracting offices within each operating unit that has designated contracting authority to award and administer contracts to the full limit of the Department's contracting authority.

Individual Development Plan - Document used to plan an employee's education, training, experience, and other developmental activities for progression in the procurement career field. Developing the plan is a joint effort of the employee, supervisor, and possibly other knowledgeable persons in the training and/or acquisition fields.

Contract Specialist Qualification Standard - The standard issued by the Office of Personnel Management that specifies the minimum requirements an individual must meet for the GS-1102 job series.

Senior Bureau Procurement Official – The senior career procurement official, within each operating unit, that has been delegated contracting authority.

Senior Procurement Executive - The official appointed pursuant to Executive Order 12931 and the Services Acquisition Reform Act (SARA) to carry out the responsibilities identified in both the Executive Order and SARA.

Skills Currency – Federal Acquisition Certification in Contracting requires at least 100 hours of continuous education or training every two years to maintain certification.

Specialized Experience – Work experience in or related to the work to be performed.

Waiver (1102 Qualification Standard) -- A provision that permits the Department of Commerce SPE to waive the education or training requirements for an applicant for a GS-1102 grade 13 or above position based on a certification that the applicant possesses significant potential for advancement to levels of greater responsibility and authority.

Warrant – The delegation of Contracting Officer authority that allows an individual to obligate funds subject to any stated limitations.

APPENDIX B - OPM 1102 QUALIFICATION STANDARD Q&A

The questions and answers found at the link below supplement the revised qualification standard that went into effect for GS-1102 contract specialist positions in non-Defense agencies as of January 1, 2000. The standard was developed by the Office of Federal Procurement Policy under the authority of 41 U.S.C. 433.

<https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/classification-qualifications/general-schedule-qualification-standards/1100/questions-and-answers-concerning-revised-1102-qualification-standard/>

APPENDIX C

SAMPLE REQUEST WAIVER OF OPM 1102 QUALIFICATION STANDARDS

MEMORANDUM FOR: Senior Procurement Executive

THROUGH: Bureau Senior Procurement Official

FROM: Head of Contracting Office

SUBJECT: Request for Waiver of OPM 1102 Qualification Standards

It is requested that a waiver be granted for: *[Insert Name, Position, Series, Grade, Organization, and Address].*

This request is to waive the _____ 24 semester hours of business-related courses, _____ four years of college leading to a degree, _____ experience requirements, and/or _____ training requirements.

[Specifically identify the portion of the standard that the individual does not meet (e.g., lacks 10 or the 24 credit hours in the required business related fields, has 24 semester credit hours, but lacks the degree, has completed all but one of the mandatory training requirements, etc.).]

The applicant has been determined to be the best-qualified individual for the position. In accordance with CAM 1301.6 the following narrative is provided.

[Provide a narrative that describes the potential of the applicant for advancement to levels of greater responsibility and authority based on demonstrated analytical and decision-making capabilities, job performance and qualifying experience].

In accordance with CAM 1301.6 the following justification is also provided.

[Provide justification for requesting the waiver that relates the applicant's background and experience to the performance requirements of the position to be filled. Address why the individual was selected in lieu of candidates who fully met the requirements of the GS-1102 OPM Qualification Standard (if any). Include a discussion of any impact a disapproval of the waiver would have on the organization].

If there are questions or if assistance is needed, please contact _____ *[insert name of contact]* on _____ *[insert phone number for contact]*.

Attachments **(See CAM 1301.6 subsection 2.4.5 Waiver Packages)**

Position Description
Vacancy Announcement
Description of recruiting efforts
Tentative selectee's application/resume
Plan for meeting the Qualification Standard

APPENDIX D

GUIDANCE ON MEETING CONTINUOUS LEARNING POINTS

Introduction

Professional learning by acquisition workforce members serves to improve the outcome of Federal procurements and benefits the public interest. Regular participation in continuous learning activities and programs enhances the skills of acquisition professionals, affords them opportunities for professional growth, and improves the quality of services rendered. Bureau Career Managers (BCMs) and supervisors shall work with acquisition workforce members to identify opportunities and determine the appropriate number of Continuous Learning Points (CLPs) obtained from each learning activity.

Accounting for and documenting continuous learning activities are mutual responsibilities between the acquisition workforce member, supervisor, and BCM.

Acquisition workforce members should refer to Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) certification policies¹⁶ to determine how many CLPs they must earn in order to maintain their certification. For discrete activities related to acquisition, such as attending learning events or training, each hour spent in a continuous learning activity is equal to one CLP. Experiential activities that do not have a definite number of learning hours, such as rotational assignments and mentoring are discussed below. Hours accrued over minimum requirements may not be carried forward for credit beyond the current period. In general, no single activity should be used to accumulate all CLPs required for certification maintenance. Workforce members should make an effort to participate in a variety of acquisition-related activities designed to give the member a well-rounded perspective of his/her acquisition function.

Not all training providers issue certificates based on hours. Some training providers issue certificates based on Continuing Education Units (CEUs) or CLPs. When converting to hours, one CEU equals 10 hours of instruction, and one CLP equals 1 hour of instruction.

Note: one training day is equal to six CLPs unless the training certificate identifies earned CLPs or Continuing Education Units (CEUs).

CLP Activities

The following activities can generally be used to obtain CLPs:

A. Training/Education

CLPs may be earned through formal or informal training activities that are related to the acquisition workforce member's job, including participating in self-directed study¹⁷, presenting training, and taking higher education coursework.

B. Participating in Professional Organizations and/or their Events

CLPs may be earned for participating in professional organizations, attending events sponsored by them, and obtaining professional licenses or certifications. Membership in a professional organization alone will not be considered as fulfilling continuous learning requirements, but participation in the organization leadership will. Before participating in professional organizations, workforce members must ensure that their participation is authorized by their agency and is permitted by ethics laws and regulations. Examples of activities that may qualify for CLPs include holding elected/appointed positions, such as committee leadership roles, or attending and/or presenting at educational learning events or meetings.

¹⁶ Available at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/management/office-federal-procurement-policy/>

¹⁷ Self-directed study programs must be approved by the employee's supervisor.

C. Publishing

Publishing articles related to acquisition are generally acceptable for CLPs. Points will only be awarded in the year published. Authors must comply with agency publication policy.

D. Participating in Experiential Activities

Experiential activities are those at-work experiences that serve to enhance workforce professional skills and improve agency acquisition delivery, such as rotational and developmental assignments or mentoring. CLPs accumulated for learning or simply performing an already understood work function should not be used to accumulate CLPs. Longer experiences can be more beneficial than shorter experiences, but the granting of CLPs should be focused on what the workforce member has learned, rather than what they have done.

Supervisors and workforce members should pre-define, as much as possible, the learning activities to be accomplished in each experience, and should work together to determine the appropriate number of CLPs that each experience will accumulate for the member. Mentoring of workforce members during experiential learning is encouraged, as is sharing of knowledge gained in an experiential assignment through reports, briefings, project designs or formal or informal training.

Sample Activities

Below are sample activities and the number of CLPs recommended for completing them. This sample list is not intended to be all-inclusive and workforce members and supervisors should work together to identify qualifying events and experiences. Agencies can establish different CLP values for the listed activities; therefore, workforce members should seek agency guidance and consider the advice of their ACM in the assignment of CLP values for activities listed and those being contemplated.

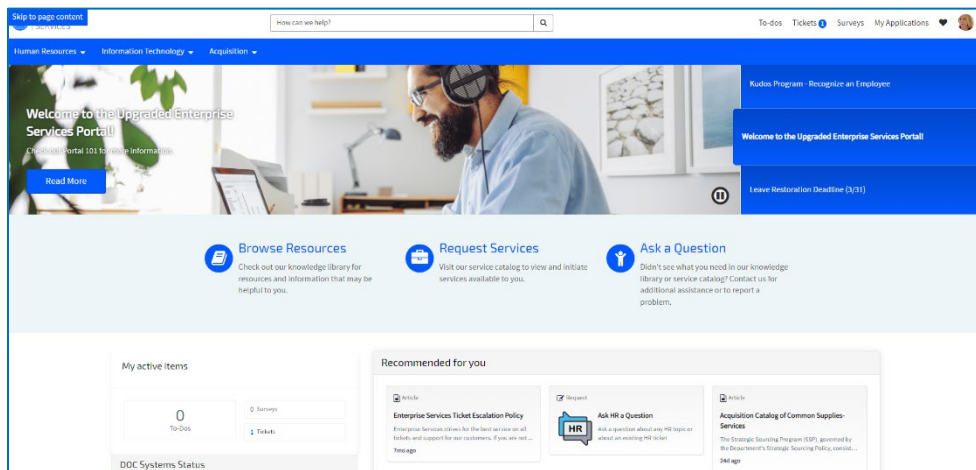
SAMPLE ACTIVITY	POINTS
Formal or Informal Training (such as FAI/DAU classroom or online courses)	1 CLP per hour of instruction (NOTE: excludes mealtime and assigned breaks)
Accredited Higher Education Courses (i.e. college courses)	Generally, 10 CLPs per semester or quarter hour
Continuing Education Unit (CEU)	10 CLPs per CEU
Equivalency Exam	Same points as awarded for the course
Learning event, training or seminar presentation	1 CLP per hour, including preparation; maximum of 20 CLPs per year
Attendance at professional association meeting	1 CLP per meeting hour, maximum of 20 CLPs per year
Participation in intra- or interagency group on an acquisition topic	1 CLP per meeting hour, maximum of 20 CLPs per year
Association Leadership Role	1 CLP per hour; maximum of 20 CLPs per year
Professional License or Certification	20 to 40 CLPs
Publication	1 CLP per hour of material prep; max of 20 CLPs per year
On-the-job Experiential Learning	1 CLP per hour of activity; maximum 20 CLPs per year
Mentoring	1 CLP per hour of activity; maximum 20 CLPs per year
Rotational or Developmental Assignment	Based on learning achieved and length of assignment/detail. Generally:
12 month assignment/detail	80 CLPs
9 months	65 CLPs
6 months	45 CLPs
3 months	35 CLPs
2 months	30 CLPs
1 month	20 CLPs

Note: All activities may earn points only in the year accomplished, awarded, or published.

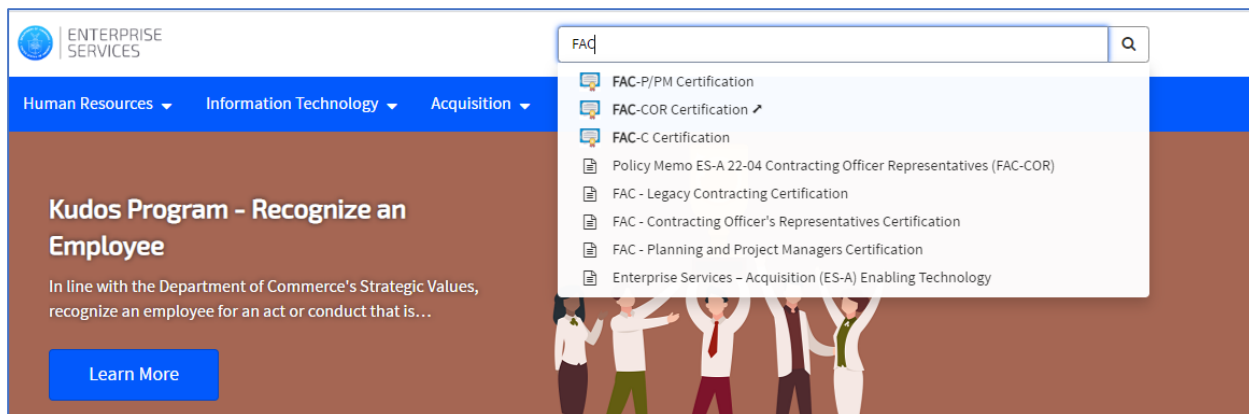
APPENDIX E – CERTIFICATION APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

1. Ensure that you are connected to a Department of Commerce network and log in to the **Enterprise Services Portal** below:

<https://enterpriseservices.servicenowservices.com>



2. Use the **Help** bar to search for the **FAC-C Professional Certification**:




3. Read the **Related Articles** for instructions and complete the form.

[Home](#) > [COR Certifications](#)


FAC-COR Certification


Request a new FAC-COR certification with supporting documentation



The Department of Commerce Contracting Officer Representative (COR) certification program is a competency and experience-based program that integrates project management competencies into the technical and acquisition training curriculum. Applying a project-oriented approach to the COR certification program aligns the appropriate project management tools and techniques with the skills needed to successfully acquire goods and services and to initiate, manage, and closeout contractual vehicles. Additional information regarding the Department's requirements for COR certification are located in Chapter 1301.670 of the Commerce Acquisition Manual [here](#).

User

 Marcelle Loveday

*Phone 

Next Page

Related Articles
[FAC - Contracting Officer's Representatives Certification](#)
20 Views • 7d ago

Contact the [Office of Acquisition Management](#) for questions.

APPENDIX F – EXTERNAL TRAINING & CONTINUOUS LEARNING POINT SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

When applying for certification with completed external training not recorded in FAI CSOD, the user has the option to:

- I. Request continuous learning points for the completed training. [*External Continuous Learning Activity Request Form*]

and/or

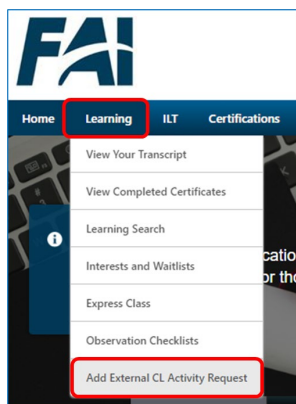
- II. Have the course registered in their certification application. [*Equivalency/Fulfillment Request Form*]

I. EXTERNAL CONTINUOUS LEARNING ACTIVITY REQUEST FORM

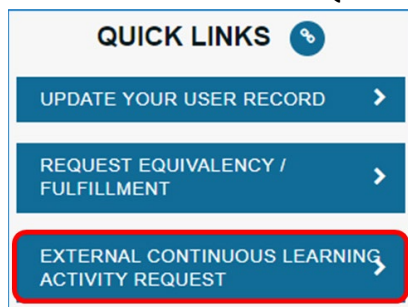
This form is used to request CLPs for external learning activities.

NOTE: This form is **NOT** used to record external training for certification.

1. From the **Learning** dropdown, select **Add External CL Activity Request**.



NOTE: The form can also be accessed via the QUICK LINKS on the FAI CSOD Welcome page by clicking on **EXTERNAL CONTINUOUS LEARNING ACTIVITY REQUEST**.



2. Fill out form.
 - a. All fields marked with * are required fields.
 - b. Enter earned CLPs in the **Continuous Learning Points** field.

3. Attach completion evidence (i.e. training certificate).


Attachment(s) for Completion Evidence *

Drag and drop files here or [Select a file](#)

[Cancel](#) [Submit](#)

4. Click **Submit**.

Attachment(s) for Completion Evidence *

 TEST CERTIFICATE.docx
11.99 KB

Drag and drop files here or [Select a file](#)


[Cancel](#) [Submit](#)

5. The external CL activity is now on your transcript with the Status: Registered. Select **Mark Complete** to forward to your Bureau Career Manager for approval.

Filter by Training Status Sort by Filter by Training Type Search by Keyword

Active Date Added All Types Search

Search Results (16) ☐ Hide Certified Certifications


 **Test CL Activity**
Due : No Due Date Status : Registered [Mark Complete](#)

NOTE: After selecting **Mark Complete**, the Status will change to **Pending Completion Approval**.

Filter by Training Status Sort by Filter by Training Type Search by Keyword

Active Date Added All Types Search

Search Results (16) ☐ Hide Certified Certifications


 **Test CL Activity**
Due : No Due Date Status : Pending Completion Approval [View Training D...](#)

NOTE: After your Bureau Career Manager approves the request, the external CL activity will move to Training Status **Completed**, and the Status will change to **Completed**.

Filter by Training Status Sort by Filter by Training Type Search by Keyword

Completed Completion Date All Types Search

Search Results (62) ☐ Hide Certified Certifications

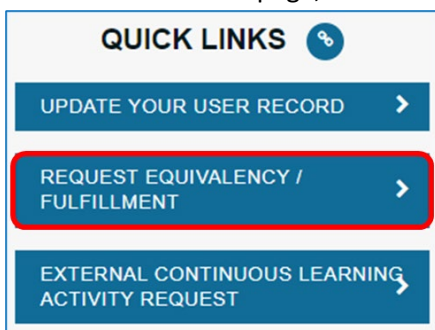
 **Test CL Activity**
Completed : 9/28/2022 Status : Completed [View Training D...](#)

II. EQUIVALENCY/FULFILLMENT REQUEST FORM

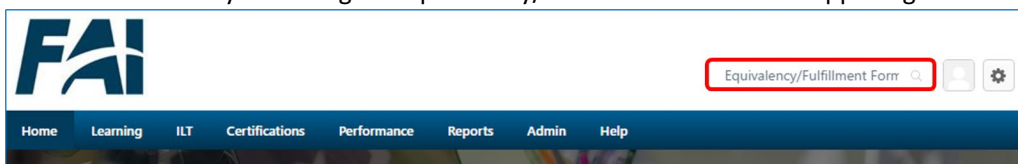
This form is used to register completed external training courses for certification only.

NOTE: This form is **NOT** used to request CLPs for external learning activities.

1. From the FAI CSOD welcome page, access the Equivalency/Fulfillment Request Form from the **QUICK LINKS**.



NOTE: You may also find the form by searching for Equivalency/Fulfillment Form in the upper-right search bar.



2. Fill out form.

- a. All fields marked with * are required fields.
- b. Please choose why you are submitting this request from the options below (select all that apply). *
 - i. Select **Certification Requirement**
- c. If you selected "Certification Requirement" please list the certification. If you selected "Prerequisite Requirement" please list the course.
 - i. Enter the certification to which the course applies (i.e. FAC-COR Level 2)

Please choose why you are submitting this request from the options below (select all that apply). *

☒ Certification Requirement

☐ Prerequisite Requirement

☐ Mandatory Training Requirement

If you selected "Certification Requirement" please list the certification. If you selected "Prerequisite Requirement" please list the course.

- d. Please select the course you would like equivalency credit for. *
 - i. Select the applicable course from the dropdown. If your desired course is not listed, select **Other**.

Please select the course you would like equivalency credit for. *

Select

- ii. If you selected **Other**, enter your desired course exactly as it appears in the FAI CSOD catalog.
(i.e. CON 091 (FED))

If you selected "Other", please list.

Ex. ABC 123 (FED)

- e. Enter the *Training Start Date & Training End Date*
- f. *Equivalency Option: Course Completion Certificate*
 - i. Attach your evidence of completion.

Equivalency Option: Course Completion Certificate

Drag and drop files here or Select a file

If requesting course equivalency, attach course completion certificate here.

- 3. Click **Submit for Approval**.
 - a. Notify your Bureau Career Manager for approval.

APPENDIX G - DEVELOPMENTAL OPPORTUNITIES

To ensure the acquisition workforce develops the necessary breadth and depth of experience required to demonstrate effective contracting competencies, requires professionals to not only learn technical skills through formal training but also through on-the-job experience and informal learning opportunities. Examples of such opportunities include rotational and or developmental assignments, participation in mentoring programs, teams and workgroups, or membership in professional associations.

Contracting professionals are encouraged to create IDPs to document career goals, assess competencies and identify a path for career development. The Office of Personnel Management has a training and development policy wiki that provides information on IDPs, including templates and resources, which are available at: <http://www.opm.gov/wiki/training/Individual-Development-Plans.ashx>.

The following chart details developmental activities that may be appropriate at the various career paths.

Level	Possible Developmental Activities
Junior	<p>Participate in an onboarding program.¹⁸</p> <p>Obtain a peer mentor and/or technical mentor.¹⁹</p>
Intermediate	<p>Obtain a technical mentor and a leadership mentor.</p> <p>Participate in a rotational assignment to other Bureau procurement offices or related organizations (i.e., budget, finance, or a program office).</p> <p>Participate in a leadership development program.</p> <p>Participate in an intra-agency team on a Department-wide acquisition initiative.</p> <p>Consider a core-plus certification.</p> <p>Write an article for an acquisition-related magazine or journal.</p> <p>Present an acquisition topic at a training forum.</p> <p>Conduct special procurement-related research projects.</p>
Advanced	<p>Be a technical mentor.</p> <p>Obtain a leadership mentor.</p> <p>Participate in a rotational assignment outside of the agency.</p> <p>Consider an additional core-plus certification.</p> <p>Lead an intra-agency team on an agency acquisition initiative.</p> <p>Participate on an intra-agency team on a non-acquisition initiative.</p> <p>Present a leadership topic at a training forum.</p> <p>Participate on an interagency team on an acquisition initiative.</p> <p>Conduct special procurement-related research projects.</p>

¹⁸ An onboarding program helps new employees become better acclimated with their new role, understand employer expectations, meet colleagues, and understand the mission of the agency. For assistance in developing an onboarding program, the Department of Agriculture has a guide available at: <http://www.dm.usda.gov/obp/docs/SupervisorGuide.pdf>

¹⁹ More information and resources on mentoring can be found at: <http://www.opm.gov/wiki/training/mentoring-and-coaching.ashx>

APPENDIX H

SAMPLE REQUEST FOR APPOINTMENT OF CONTRACTING OFFICER

MEMORANDUM FOR: Senior Bureau Procurement Official*

FROM: Head of Contracting Office*

SUBJECT: Request for Appointment of Contracting Officer

There is a clear and convincing need to appoint {name of nominee} as a Level {warrant level} Contracting Officer. This need is evidenced by {discuss factors which necessitate contracting authority}.

The nominee is employed in the following organizational position: {insert job title, series, grade, Office, Branch/Division and complete address}.

The nominee meets the education, training and experience requirements established by CAM 1301.6 Section 4.7, and the warrant level requested is commensurate with the nominee's qualifications. The attached OF 612 (or resume) is current and specifically identifies the nominee's education, procurement related training, and procurement experience. The nominee's education is clearly identified as to the type of degree held and/or the number of credit hours completed within the fields designated in CAM Chapter 1301.6 Section 4.7. Procurement training is identified as to course titles, dates, number of hours, and training provider. Procurement experience is identified which relates the nominee's background and experience to the types of contract actions that the nominee will be responsible for as a Contracting Officer.

The nominee's OGE-450, Confidential Financial Disclosure Report or OGE-278, Public Financial Disclosure Report, has been submitted. {If there are questions regarding the Financial Disclosure Reporting requirements contact the ethics office.}

The nominee's recent performance appraisal(s) rating is fully successful or higher (or equivalent).

The level of authority requested per contract action is_____.

{If applicable: The {insert organization} agrees to set aside funding for training, audits and required travel to servicing contracting offices as required for nominee.}

{If applicable: A copy of the nominee's Performance Plan reflecting a separate critical element for acquisition management or acquisition management as part of an existing critical element, with a minimum weight of 15% is attached}

{The nominee will complete a minimum of one week mandatory training at the servicing contracting office prior to appointment and will meet annually training and evaluation requirements}

{insert any additional comments}

Attachments

**In those instances where the request is for the appointment of a Senior Bureau Procurement Official, the request should be addressed to the Senior Procurement Executive from the HCA.*

APPENDIX I - SAMPLE PERFORMANCE PLAN ELEMENT

SECTION 1 - PERFORMANCE PLAN

Employee's Name	Rating Period 10/01/05 - 09/30/06	Element No. <u>1</u> of 3
-----------------	--------------------------------------	------------------------------

ITEM 1. Performance Element, Objective and Point Weight

Critical Element: Acquisition Management

Objective: To provide timely and effective acquisition service.

Point Weight: 15

The weight must reflect the importance of the element or the time required to perform it, or both. Element weight must be in 5-point increments, with no element weight higher than 60 points, and all element weights must equal 100 points.

ITEM 2. Major Activities or Required Results Related to the Above Element *(Maximum of 5)*

Acquisitions are conducted timely and effectively in accordance with applicable law, regulation and policy.

Data integrity is maintained through the use of all appropriate acquisition reporting systems.

Contract administration is executed timely and effectively.

Integrity, sound judgment and the highest ethical standards are demonstrated in all actions.

ITEM 3. Evaluation Criteria *(Benchmark performance standards must be used; add supplemental standards, if needed.)*

NIST/OAM Benchmark Performance Standards

Acquisitions are awarded within established procurement action lead times 85% of the time.

Contract file documentation is generally complete, well-organized, and reflects the acquisition was conducted in accordance with applicable policies, procedures and regulations and supports proposed actions.

Contract administration is generally timely and ensures compliance with contract terms and conditions and is consistent with applicable law, regulation and policy.

Procurement data is timely and accurately entered into the appropriate automation system and identified errors are corrected timely.

Sound judgment is generally exercised in Contracting Officer decision on contractual actions.

APPENDIX J - SAMPLE INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Individual Development Plan

NAME J. Sample		CURRENT POSITION, SERIES, GRADE AND ORGANIZATION Contract Specialist GS-1102-09, Department of Commerce		FOR FY xx	
SHORT-RANGE GOALS (1 year) To develop knowledge, skills, and abilities for career advancement					
LONG-RANGE GOALS (3-5 years) To become supervisory contracting officer					
DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITIES/FORMAL TRAINING					
ACTIVITY/COURSE TITLE		PURPOSE	DURATION	PROJECTED COMPLETION DATE AND ESTIMATED COST	
(1) Obtain appropriate training, education, and experience for developing strong procurement skills and leadership qualities. Take Intermediate Contracting (CON 202) course. Take class in Interpersonal Communication.		To increase knowledge and broaden contracting skills and to take core training course	160 hours	11/98	\$1,000.00
(2) Participate in government-wide procurement conferences, workshops, seminars, and outside professional organizations.		To broaden perspective and keep current by interacting with Government-wide personnel on acquisition topics.	24 hours	1/99	\$ 250.00
(3) Obtain a procurement role model or mentor.		To obtain advice and guidance on career matters.	Ongoing	5/99	
(4) Request developmental assignment with senior level CO.		To assist in high-level acquisition for experience.	90 days	3/99	
(5) Learn to use spreadsheet applications.		To support contract projects and presentations.	24 hours	10/98	
(6) Join a professional organization.		To stay abreast of current acquisition issues.	Ongoing	10/98	
EMPLOYEE'S SIGNATURE		DATE	SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE	DATE	SECOND LEVEL SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE