

# Education Programs, Certification and Recertification Guidelines

## Q&A

### GENERAL

Q: What is the effective date of the approved Education Guidelines?

A: January 1, 2007.

Q: How many professional designations does IIMC offer?

A: IIMC awards two professional designations, the CMC and the MMC. The CMC Designation Program is designed to enhance the job performance of the Clerk in small and large municipalities. To earn the CMC designation, a Municipal Clerk must attend extensive education programs. The designation also requires pertinent experience in a municipality. The program prepares the participants to meet the challenges of the complex role of the municipal clerks by providing them with quality education in partnership with 47 institutions of higher learning. The program has been in existence since 1970 and has helped thousands of clerks in various municipalities.

The MMC is the other professional designation granted by IIMC. To qualify for entrance into the Master Municipal Academy (MMCA), which prepares participants for achieving the MMC designation, one must have earned the CMC designation.

The MMCA is an advanced continuing education program that prepares participants to perform more complex municipal duties. The program has an extensive and rigorous educational component, a professional and social contributions component, and a commitment to lifelong learning. The Academy members must demonstrate that they have actively pursued educational and professional activities and have remained informed of current socio-political, cultural, and economic issues that affect local governments and municipalities.

Q: What is an IIMC Institute?

A: An IIMC Institute is the umbrella organization that hosts the programs for the CMC and the MMC designations and the CMC Recertification.

Q: What is an IIMC program?

A: An IIMC program is a set of classes about a particular subject; in this case, the Certified Municipal Clerk Certification, the Master Municipal Clerk Academy, and the CMC Recertification Programs.

Q: What is the purpose of the Application for Admission?

A: The purpose of the Application for Admission is to register the Applicant in the IIMC system, monitor his/her progress, and keep him/her informed of educational opportunities

that IIMC Institutes may offer. The application fee is non-refundable; however, it will be deducted from the fee for Application for Designation.

## CMC

Q: What is the minimum number of education points for the CMC designation?

A: 60 points (120 hours).

Q: Are all participants in the CMC program required to take the additional 20 hours?

A: No. Those who prior to January 1, 2007 have entered into an IIMC Institute to obtain a CMC designation shall fulfill the 100 hours of education requirements, and they are not required to take the additional 20 hours.

Q: Could a portion of the 120 hours of education for the CMC certification be obtained through distance education?

A: Yes, one-third (1/3) of the minimum 120 hours of institute training for the CMC certification program may be obtained through distance education.

Q: What are the requirements for earning the CMC designation?

A: The following are the requirements for obtaining the CMC designation:

1. Be a clerk or a deputy clerk or perform the duties as defined by IIMC.
2. Be an active member of IIMC for two years.
3. Affirm and practice the IIMC Code of Ethics.
4. Complete and submit an IIMC Application for CMC Designation with required supporting documentation and fee.
5. Furnish a letter of sponsorship from a municipal clerk member of IIMC.
6. Perform the core duties of a municipal clerk by serving a Legislative Government Body (LGB) in an administrative capacity with management responsibilities, which would include four (4) of the following:
  - a. General Management
  - b. Records Management
  - c. Elections
  - d. Meeting Administration
  - e. Management of by-laws, Articles of Incorporation, ordinances or other legal instruments
  - f. Human Resources Management
  - g. Financial Management
  - h. Custody of the official seal and execution of official documents
7. Deputy clerks must perform at least four (4) of the eight (8) core duties.
8. Attain sixty (60) points in the Education category.
9. Attain fifty (50) points in the Experience category.
10. Once certified, a CMC holder shall apply for recertification every four years, unless application is made for admission into the MMCA program prior to his/her four (4) year CMC anniversary date. Those CMC holders who actively and consistently are pursuing

an MMC designation and earn 12 or more points per year may retain their CMC without having to recertify, otherwise, they shall recertify in a timely manner.

Q: What is the Application for Designation?

A: The Application for the CMC designation encompasses all Education and Experience requirements for the attainment of the CMC designation. Upon the completion of Education and Experience requirements for the CMC designation, the applicant shall complete an Application for Designation. The applicant shall submit the Application for Designation and its supporting documents to IIMC in a timely manner.

Q: At what stage should the Application for Designation for CMC be submitted to IIMC?

A: The Applicant should submit the Application for Designation for CMC to IIMC after fulfilling all Education and Experience requirements for designation.

Q: What are the Education requirements for the CMC designation?

A: The following are the Education requirements for the CMC designation:

**CMC Education Component (total of 60 points required)**

	<b>Points</b>
Satisfactory completion of 120 hours (60 points) of coursework at an on-land IIMC approved municipal clerks' institute. One-third (1/3) of the minimum 120 hours of Institute training for the CMC Certification program may be obtained through distance education. All distance education shall be pre-approved by the Director of Education and Research.	60
A Bachelor's degree or higher in Public Administration or a related field*	20
A Bachelor's degree or higher in an unrelated field*	10
An Associate of Arts degree in Public Administration or a related field*	5

Q: What are the Experience requirements for the CMC designation?

A: The following are the Experience requirements for the CMC designation:

**CMC Experience Component (total of 50 points required)**

	<b>Points</b>
Full-Time municipal or deputy clerk with administrative responsibility	4 per year maximum 40 points
Part-time municipal or deputy clerk with administrative responsibility	2 per year maximum 40 points
Part-time municipal or deputy clerk with no administrative responsibility	1 per year maximum 30 points
Other full-time administrative positions in local government prior to becoming a municipal or deputy clerk	2 per year maximum 30 points
Administrative position in federal, state or provincial government	1 per year maximum 30 points
Administrative position in business	1 per year maximum 30 points

**CMC Experience Component -- Municipal Clerks Conferences**

<b>Points</b>	
Attendance at IIMC Conferences	4 each maximum 20 points
Attendance at municipal clerk related conferences. Example: IIMC regional, municipal associations, state associations and municipal league conferences	1 per 6 or more hours in one day of attendance maximum 10 points

**CMC Experience Component --Continuing Education**

<b>Points</b>	
Continuing education courses, college non-degree related courses	1 point per 6 or more hours in one day maximum 15 points
Satisfactory completion of an IIMC-approved Distance Education or self-study courses	May vary with course, maximum of 25 points

**CMC Experience Component --Business or Vocational School Courses**

<b>Points</b>	
Courses must relate to the municipal clerk's position	1 per 10 hours of training maximum 10 points

**CMC Experience Component --College or University Courses**

<b>Points</b>	
Relevant college or university course credits not used for education points	1 per credit hour maximum 24 points

The enrollee is responsible for earning a minimum of 12 points of coursework per year towards the fulfillment of the requirements of the CMC designation.

\*Examples of acceptable fields of study include public administration, political science, business administration, municipal management, municipal finance, governmental accounting, records management, urban affairs, and urban planning. Education units or hours may not be credited to both of the CMC and MMCA programs.

**Q:** Do I have to be a municipal clerk and an IIMC member to take an IIMC program?

**A:** No. IIMC encourages anyone interested in his or her personal and professional development to attend an IIMC program. However, you may not attain the CMC designation unless you are a member of IIMC and you are a Municipal or a Deputy Clerk.

**Q:** Do I have to be an IIMC member for two consecutive years while I attend an IIMC institute for obtaining the CMC designation?

**A:** No. You must have two years of IIMC membership for purposes of the CMC designation but they do not have to be consecutive. However, the two years of

membership have to have been within the last 5-year period prior to applying for the CMC designation.

Q: The work I do is very similar to that of a municipal or deputy clerk, but my actual job title is not “Municipal Clerk.” Would IIMC accept my administrative experience?

A: Yes, points may be awarded for the work you do, not the job title you have. Describe your duties on a separate sheet of paper and attach it to your application.

Q: If I do not maintain my membership with IIMC may I still use my CMC designation?

A: No.

Q: I hold a CMC designation but am temporarily out of work. May I retain my CMC designation while I look for another clerk position?

A: Yes, under three conditions. You must be actively looking for work, you must maintain Associate Member status with IIMC until you secure your new Clerk position, and you must recertify every four years.

Q: May I use my CMC designation after my retirement?

A: Yes, as long as you maintain Retired Member status with IIMC.

## **MMCA**

Q: What are the requirements for earning the MMC designation?

A: The following are the requirements for obtaining the MMC designation:

1. Hold a CMC designation in good standing.
2. Be an active member of IIMC.
3. Reaffirm IIMC's Code of Ethics.
4. Complete and submit an IIMC Application for the MMC designation with required supporting documentation and fee.
5. Attain 84 points in Education category.
6. Attain 20 points in Professional and Social Contributions category.

Q: Have the four levels of the MMCA been consolidated into one?

A: Yes, the approved Education Guidelines have consolidated the four-level format of the MMCA into one similar to the CMC process.

Q: Would the consolidation of levels of MMCA adversely affect the current MMC candidates?

A: No, there will be no adverse effect. The educational requirements for those who have attended one Academy prior to January 1, 2007 will remain the same and there will be no increase in the number of hours required for those students. Those students are required to earn a total of 100 points of which a minimum of 60 points shall be Advanced Education points, and a minimum of 20 points shall be Professional and Social Contributions points. As long as those two minimums (60 Advanced Education points

and 20 Professional and Social Contributions points) are met, any combination of total number of points (i.e. 100 points) would be acceptable.

Q: Given that I entered into an IIMC Academy prior to January 1, 2007, and have earned 79 Advanced Education points, how many Professional and Social Contributions points would I need for my MMC designation?

A: You will need 21 Professional and Social Contributions points (100 total number of required points - 79 Advanced Education points). In this case, the two minimums (60 Advanced Education points and 20 Professional and Social Contributions points) will be met.

Q: Given that I have completed my Entry Level MMCA, what should be my next step in continuing my education?

A: Continue taking Academy courses until you fulfill all the Advanced Education and Professional and Social Contributions requirements for the MMC designation. In this case, you will need a minimum of 75 (100- 25) points to earn your MMC designation. You are required to earn a total of 100 points of which a minimum of 60 points shall be Advanced Education points, and a minimum of 20 points shall be Professional and Social Contributions points. As long as those two minimums (60 Advanced Education points and 20 Professional and Social Contributions points) are met, any combination of total number of points would be acceptable. (An MMC candidate shall earn 12 or more points per year to retain his/her CMC designation without having to recertify, otherwise, he/she shall recertify in a timely manner.)

Q: What is the minimum number of required education points for the MMC designation?

A: Effective January 1, 2007, the minimum number of required education points for the MMC designation is 84 points (168 hours). An MMC candidate shall earn 12 or more points per year to retain his/her CMC designation without having to recertify, otherwise, he/she shall recertify in a timely manner.

Q: What is the minimum number of years for earning the MMC designation?

A: Four years.

Q: Could a part of MMCA education points be obtained through distance education?

A: Yes, two-thirds of the minimum 84 education points for the MMC Designation Program may be obtained through distance education.

Q: What is the Application for Designation?

A: The Application for the MMC designation encompasses all the Advanced Education and the Professional and Social Contributions requirements for the attainment of the MMC designation. Upon the completion of the Advanced Education and the Professional and Social Contributions requirements for the MMC designation, the applicant shall complete an Application for Designation. The applicant shall submit the Application for Designation and its supporting documents to IIMC in a timely manner.

Q: At what stage should the Application for Designation for the MMC designation be submitted to IIMC?

A: The Applicant should submit the Application for Designation for the MMC to IIMC after fulfilling all the Advanced Education and the Professional and Social Contributions requirements for designation.

Q: What are the Advanced Education requirements for the MMC designation?

A: The following are the Advanced Education requirements for the MMC designation:

<b>Advanced Education Component (84 points required)</b>	<b>Points</b>
1. Completion of 168 hours (84 point) of coursework at an on-land IIMC Institute. Two-thirds (2/3) of the minimum 168 hours of Institute training for the MMC Certification program may be obtained through distance education. All distance education shall be pre-approved by the Director of Education and Research.	84
2. Completion of an IIMC-approved Academy program	3 per 6 or more hours in one day of training
3. Academic credits in a related field earned at an accredited college or university*	2 per credit unit maximum 6 points
4. Certification and education obtained from another organization relevant to the responsibilities of a municipal clerk, which have been pre-approved by IIMC**	1 per 6 or more hours in one day of training maximum 6 points

\*Examples of acceptable fields of study include public administration, political science, business administration, municipal management, municipal finance, governmental accounting, records management, urban affairs, and urban planning. Education units or hours may not be credited to both of the CMC and MMCA programs.

\*\*Prior to attending an educational or a certificate program offered by other organizations, the student shall seek and obtain approval of the program from the IIMC Education Department.

Q: What are the Professional and Social Contributions requirements for the MMC designation?

A: The following are the Professional and Social Contributions requirements for the MMC designation:

<b>Professional and Social Contributions Component (20 points required)</b>	<b>Points</b>
1. Member of the IIMC Board of Directors	2 per year
2. Chairperson of an IIMC or Municipal clerks Association Committee	2 per year

3. Officer or trustee of a Municipal Clerks Association or subdivision	2 per year
4. Registration and attendance at an IIMC Regional Meeting, Municipal Clerks Association Annual Conference, or Municipal League Annual Conference	1 per event
5. Registration and attendance at an IIMC Annual Conference (attendance at IIMC Conferences prior to 2004 equals ONE point)	4 per event
6. Presenter at an IIMC/State/Province or Regional meeting	1 per session
7. IIMC or Municipal Clerks Association Committee member	1 per year
8. Unique on-the-job performance or achievements that benefit the profession or community	2 per year
9. Personal accomplishments of educational benefit to the profession	2 per year
10. Officer in a related professional association	1 per year
11. Teacher or trainer at an IIMC-recognized Institute or municipal clerk education program	1 per 6 or more hours in one day of teaching/training/preparation
12. Completion of a professionally-related seminar or course at a local resource not approved as an MMCA program	1 per 6 or more hours in one day of training maximum 4 points

Q: Can I use my MMC designation after the retirement?

A: Yes, as long as you maintain your Retired Member status with IIMC.

### **CMC Recertification**

Q: What is the CMC Recertification?

A: The CMC Recertification enables the CMC holders to keep current professionally by pursuing their education beyond the attainment of the CMC designation.

Q: Who has to recertify?

A: All CMC holders who wish to retain their CMC designation, and who do not plan to pursue an MMC designation. Once certified, a CMC holder shall apply for recertification every four years, unless an application is made for admission into the MMCA program prior to his/her four (4) year CMC anniversary date. Those CMC holders who actively and consistently are pursuing an MMC designation and earn 12 or more points per year may retain their CMC without having to recertify, otherwise, they shall recertify in a timely manner.

Q: Do I have to recertify if I decide to enter the MMCA program?

A: No. You will retain your CMC while you are actively and consistently pursuing an MMC designation.

Q: What do I have to do to recertify?

A: You must earn 10 education hours (5 education points) each year for four years, for a minimum total of 40 hours (20 education points) during the four-year period.

Q: Do I have to recertify after first four-year period?

A: Yes. The Recertification Program is continuous. If you wish to maintain your CMC designation, you need to recertify every four years until you retire. Your second four-year cycle will begin immediately after your first recertification cycle and every four years thereafter.

Q: Do I have to maintain my IIMC membership if I choose to recertify instead of entering the MMCA?

A: Yes.

Q: Do I have to complete application for recertification?

A: Yes.

Q: What would happen if I forget and do not apply for recertification within the required time period?

A: You are responsible for your own recertification, for tracking your annual 10 hours of training and monitoring your recertification schedule, and for submitting your request for recertification. If you do not complete the requirements within the required four-year periods, your CMC designation will be rescinded.

Q: What would happen if I am already in the IIMC Academy and then decide not to pursue MMC designation? Can I credit my MMCA study hours toward my recertification?

A: Yes, if you decide not to pursue the MMC designation, you would need to notify IIMC of your decision. You may credit 10 hours of verified training a year for each year you attended the MMC programs. If you missed 10 hours of training in any one of the years prior to your decision to discontinue your MMC studies, you will need to take 10 hours of training for the year you missed before applying for recertification.

## **IIMC INSTITUTES**

Q: What is the role of each partner in the Triangular Partnership, which includes the Municipal Clerks State Association, the Institute, and IIMC?

A: The Association is the client that needs an educational service, the Institute provides that service according to the IIMC Education Guidelines, and IIMC grants the CMC and the MMC designations according to the same guidelines, and serves as a compliance auditor to ensure that the terms and conditions of the articles of partnership (i.e. Education Guidelines) are followed. This is done in an environment of collaboration, cooperation, and mutual respect.

Q: What is the purpose of reviewing the budgets of the Institute by IIMC?

A: In any partnership, every partner is entitled to know about the financial health or the lack thereof of the partnership. As a partner, IIMC is entitled to receive and review the budget of the Institute. The scope of the review (as opposed to approval) is limited to the determination of the (general) financial health or the lack thereof.

Q: Is it mandatory for all IIMC institutes to offer the additional 20 (120 hours - 100 hours) education hours starting January 1, 2007?

A: Not necessarily. Since the program scheduling of the institutes are different, some institutes may not be able to offer that additional 20 education hours immediately. Those institutes and the Director of Education and Research will work collaboratively to start the offering of the education hours in a timely manner.

Q: Is the approved curriculum for CMC designation mandatory?

A: No. The proposed curriculum is a sample. It is an indication of the distribution of subject matters (50%-30%-20%) within the context of IIMC educational requirements for the CMC designation. The number of hours and assessment instruments for courses may differ from Institute to Institute. For instance, a six-hour course could be reduced to a two-hour course and its assessment instrument could be changed from an essay to a multiple-choice test. IIMC strongly endorses and supports ongoing member participation in traditional, non-traditional, new and innovative educational programs, and the maximum use of educational technologies and delivery systems best suited to individual learning needs and service requirements of their communities.

Q: Is the approved curriculum for MMC designation mandatory?

A: No. The proposed curriculum is a sample. It is an indication of the distribution of subject matters (80%-20%) within the context of IIMC educational requirements for the MMC designation. The number of hours and assessment instruments for courses may differ from Institute to Institute. For instance, a six-hour course could be reduced to a two-hour course and its assessment instrument could be changed from an essay to a multiple-choice test. IIMC strongly endorses and supports ongoing member participation in traditional, non-traditional, new and innovative educational programs, and the maximum use of educational technologies and delivery systems best suited to individual learning needs and service requirements of their communities.

Q: What is the purpose of the course and program pre-approval process?

A: The purpose of the course and program pre-approval process is to save time, effort, and money. To be a proactive partner, IIMC has established a course and program pre-approval process in which the Institute and Education Committee consult with the IIMC Director of Education and Research in designing a course or a program prior to its launch, as opposed to sending the documents to him/her full review and approval of after the launch.

Q: Is a list of reading materials required in each Institute course?

A: Not necessarily. It all depends on the scope and nature of the course and it is at the discretion of the instructor.

Q: Is an essay required in each Institute course?

A: Not necessarily. An essay is one of the many assessment instruments. Each Institute course shall have an assessment instrument. However, the choice of the assessment instrument is at the discretion of the instructor.

Q: Is the Knowledge Transfer Action Plan (KTAP) designed by the Arizona Institute acceptable as an assessment instrument?

A: Yes, KTAP and similar assessment instruments are acceptable. IIMC requires the use of an assessment instrument in each course. The choice of the assessment instrument is at the discretion of the instructor.

Q: Are the existing Institutes required to submit an agreement of sponsorship with a university?

A: No, the existing institutes are not required to submit a sponsorship agreement.

Q: Is it possible for clerks to train other clerks?

A: Yes, provided the trainer is qualified to do the training, the training relates to basic clerkship skills, and appropriate education quality control measures are instituted. As a first step towards quality control, the institutes shall send to IIMC a brief bio of the trainer, a course outline including course objectives, course outcomes, method(s) of course outcomes assessment, and a course timeline for review and pre-approval.