IAS Technical Note - AC474

Dated: January 30, 2026
From: IAS Management

Subject: Clarification of Training Requirements and Acceptance of Alternative Training Pathways under ISO 9712-Based Personnel Certification Schemes

IAS has noted, through complaint handling activities and routine accreditation oversight, that there may be varying interpretations among personnel certification bodies regarding the implementation and communication of training requirements under ISO 9712-based certification schemes.

In particular, questions have arisen concerning the distinction between mandatory training requirements and the acceptance of alternative or equivalent training pathways, including employer-provided training. This Technical Note is issued to clarify IAS expectations and to promote consistent application of ISO/IEC 17024-based certification schemes.

ISO 9712 establishes training as a mandatory prerequisite for the qualification and certification of non-destructive testing (NDT) personnel. Training, experience, and on-the-job training (OJT) are distinct elements and shall not be treated as interchangeable. Certification bodies are expected to ensure that all candidates have successfully completed the required training prior to certification decision-making.

As a general principle, training delivered by an Authorized Training Organization (ATO), aligned with ISO 9712 and ISO/TS 25108, should be identified as the primary and default pathway for meeting training requirements. This pathway provides a structured and independently verifiable means of ensuring conformity with applicable standards.

ISO 9712-based schemes may allow alternative or equivalent training pathways where formally defined within the certification scheme. Such alternatives may include employer-provided training; however, acceptance of alternative training is conditional and shall be subject to documented controls. Certification bodies are expected to demonstrate that alternative training:

- Meets or exceeds the minimum training hours and content requirements specified in ISO 9712.

- Demonstrably aligned with ISO/TS 25108, ISO/TR 25107, or equivalent recognized technical guidance.
- Reviewed and validated by the certification body prior to certification decision-making; and
- May be treated as an exception rather than a replacement for formal training.

IAS has further observed that inconsistencies may arise where publicly available information, such as websites, application forms, or candidate guidance materials, does not accurately reflect the certification body's approved scheme requirements. Public information that oversimplifies or omits mandatory training prerequisites may create misunderstanding among applicants and other interested parties.

Certification bodies are therefore reminded that public-facing information shall be consistent with their approved certification schemes and internal procedures. A clear distinction should be made between training, experience, and OJT, and the conditions under which alternative training may be accepted should be transparently communicated.

During assessments, IAS assessors evaluate the certification bodies effective implementation and control of their internal training requirements, including the review and validation of alternative training pathways. Particular attention is given to the alignment between scheme documentation, certification records, and publicly available information.

This Technical Note is intended to support consistent interpretation, reduce the risk of miscommunication, and strengthen confidence in ISO 9712-based personnel certification activities.

Note: This document does not introduce new requirements, but clarifies existing expectations under ISO 9712, ISO/IEC 17024, and the IAS accreditation framework.