



Candidate Handbook

2017 Edition

Understanding Influencing, and Winning Today's Shopper

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Contents

ABOUT SHOP!	1
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVE.....	1
STATEMENT OF FAIRNESS.....	1
IMPARTIALITY.....	1
OVERVIEW	2
MARC CERTIFICATION	2
SCOPE OF CERTIFICATION	2
MARC CERTIFICATION COMPETENCIES.....	2
EXAM CONTENT OUTLINE.....	3
APPLICATION PROCESS.....	6
CANDIDATE ELIGIBILITY	6
REGISTRATION.....	6
2017 FEES	6
SCHEDULING THE EXAM	6
ACCOMMODATIONS.....	6
PREPARING FOR THE EXAMINATION	7
EXAMINATION DAY.....	7
POLICIES DURING EXAMINATION ADMINISTRATION	7
SECURITY VIOLATIONS/CHEATING	7
FAILURE TO APPEAR.....	7
WITHDRAWING AN APPLICATION	7
CHANGE OF CONTACT INFORMATION.....	7
SCORING AND RESULTS SCORING PROCESS	8
NOTIFICATION OF RESULTS.....	8
APPEAL OF EXAMINATION RESULTS	8
RESCHEDULING & RETAKING PROCESS.....	9
RESCHEDULING AN EXAMINATION	9
RETAKING THE EXAMINATION.....	9
CANCELLATION POLICY.....	9
USE OF CERTIFICATION MARKS AND DESIGNATIONS INTRODUCTION	10
ACCEPTABLE USE.....	10
CERTIFICATE	10
MAINTAINING YOUR CERTIFICATION	11
INTRODUCTION.....	11

RECERTIFICATION CRITERIA11

PDU AUDITS.....12

PDU AUDIT REINSTATEMENT POLICY.....12

CHANGING SCOPE OF CERTIFICATION13

EMERITUS STATUS13

COMPLAINTS OF DISCIPLINARY VIOLATION.....13

1) WITHDRAWAL/REVOCAION.....13

2) SUSPENSION.....13

APPEALS13

FILING OF APPEAL.....14

APPEALS BODY14

FEE14

SHOP! BOARD CONSIDERATION OF THE APPEAL14

INTRODUCTION

ABOUT SHOP!

Shop! is the global non-profit trade association dedicated to enhancing retail environments and experiences. Shop! represents more than 2,000 member companies worldwide and provides value to the global retail marketplace through our leadership in: Research (consumer behavior, trends, futures), Design (customer experience design, store design, display design, fixture design), Build (manufacturing, construction, materials, methods, logistics, installation), Marketing (in-store communications, in-store marketing, technology, visual merchandising), and Evaluation (ROI, analytics, recognition/awards).

For questions regarding the program, textbook or credentialing process, please contact:

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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVE

Shop!'s overarching objective is to be the trusted source for quality professional development activities and credentials for professionals in the retail environment and experiences industry.

STATEMENT OF FAIRNESS

Shop! adheres to principles of fairness and due process and endorses the principles of equal opportunity. In administering the credentialing programs, Shop! shall not discriminate or deny opportunity to anyone on the grounds of gender, age, religion, national or ethnic origin, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation, or disability.

IMPARTIALITY

Shop! pays the utmost attention to the importance of impartiality in carrying out its certification activities, manages conflict of interest and ensures the objectivity of its certification activities.

OVERVIEW

MARC CERTIFICATION

The Shop! MaRC Program distinguishes retail industry members who have demonstrated their job knowledge in developing and executing in-store marketing materials or the retail environment. The program is the industry's only globally recognized credential that keeps retail individuals current on retail environments and experiences.

SCOPE OF CERTIFICATION

The certification program recognizes demonstrated knowledge in the research, design, build, marketing, and evaluation of in-store marketing materials or retail environments.

MARC CERTIFICATION COMPETENCIES

This certification program encompasses the five knowledge domains which make up the Shop! Value Cycle: Research, Design, Build, Market, and Evaluate.

Research

Candidates will gain a broad-based understanding of consumer and shopper behavior as it applies to the retail environment. Additionally, candidates will exhibit knowledge of global trends and the future of all facets of shopper/consumer experience.

Design

Key to the goal in this section is a knowledge and understanding of the customer experience design. Additionally, candidates will exhibit an understanding of store and fixture design, POP display design, and in-store marketing.

Build

In addition to demonstrating a fundamental knowledge of the issues associated with manufacturing methods and construction of both POP and store fixtures, candidates will also show specific competencies in materials and sustainability. Candidates will also gain knowledge of the logistics and installation of retail environments and POP displays.

Market

In Marketing, candidates will demonstrate a knowledge of key concepts in visual merchandising, digital, interactive, and mobile technologies, POP/displays and signage, promotions, packaging and sensory media.

Evaluate

Central to this domain is exhibiting an understanding of analytics and return-on-investment as well as the legal issues associated with intellectual property and regulatory compliance issues. Additionally, candidates will show an understanding of issues related to POP compliance.

EXAM CONTENT OUTLINE

The MaRC certification examination surveys the job knowledges and skills required for enhancing retail environments and experiences. In the 2017 edition MaRC Exam Prep book, retail-industry subject matter experts have identified and detailed the typical job responsibilities within the domains of Research, Design, Build, Market and Evaluate. The following exam content outline is a summary listing of the topics presented in the 2017 edition MaRC Exam Prep book, which serves as the basis for the 2017 MaRC exam.

Research (20 % of the exam)

- Recognize the shopper as a strategic target (Ch 1.1)
 - Understand the strategic role of consumer, shopper
- Integrate go-to-market plans through strategy and insight (Ch 1.1)
 - Understand the role of consumer marketing, shopper marketing, trade marketing
- Promote organic growth and build brand loyalty (Ch 1.1)
 - Recognize the formulas for organic growth, brand loyalty
- Understand how the building of intimate customer relationships impacts standard models of the path-to-purchase (Ch 1.1)
- Understand the connection between shopper's path-to-purchase and the consumer journey. (Ch 1.1)
 - Recognize Consumer-Brand Relationship Cycle and importance of its parts.
- Understand the "Three Es" model and how its components drive retail development (Ch 1.2)
 - Understand how efficiency can be achieved based on supply and demand, points-of-sale, points-of purchase, and points of engagement
 - Recognize the six expertise roles of retail staff
 - Recognize the six customer experiences that can be used to create retail environments

Design (20% of the exam)

- Understand how content, context, and consumers shape the customer experience (Ch 2.1)
- Understand how storytelling can be used to engage customers (Ch 2.1)
- Understand how the store's "fundamental floorplan" contributes to the customer experience (Ch 2.1)
 - Identify experience-building tools (e.g. discovery trail, amplification, interrupters, strike points, focal walls, neighborhoods)
- Identify current consumer demographic age groups and their shopping characteristics and expectations (CH 2.1)
- Recognize the Customer Experience (CX) M.A.S.T.E.R. Plan and how its attributes promote customer loyalty (Ch 2.1)
- Recognize the basic phases of the Design process and identify the critical steps of each phase. (Ch 2.2)
- Understand general design principles (e.g. theme, variation, visual hierarchy) (Ch 2.2.)
- Understand the characteristics and applications of fixtures (Ch 2.2)
 - Identify Factors that drive fixture selection

- Select fixture types based on location and merchandise type
- Identify retail formats (e.g. flagship, prototype, outlet, pop-up, shop-in-shop) and their characteristics. (e.g. unsight, shopper challenge)
- Understand Opti Channel / Omni Channel model (Ch 2.3)
- Recognize the steps for simplifying the integrated marketing communications (IMC) process (Ch 2.3)
- Identify the three ABC attributes of high-performing staff (Ch 2.3)
- Identify the critical elements of conducting a “store walk” (Ch 2.3)
- Understand and apply shopper marketing communications techniques (Ch 2.3)
 - Retail rule of 3, 4, 5™
 - Grab, Hold, Sold™
 - Trial before the Aisle

Build (20% of the exam)

- Define sustainability. (Ch 3.1)
 - Identify sustainable traits of fixtures, displays, or retail construction materials
- Recognize how a proposed strategy affects each of the three areas of the Triple Bottom Line. (Ch 3.1)
- Characterize the state of green building in retail according to recent studies. (Ch 3.1)
- Identify the factors that affect green building in retail. (Ch 3.1)
- Identify the benefits retailers can gain by building green. (Ch 3.1)
- Recognize the green-building rating systems. (Ch 3.1)
- Recognize common product ecolabels. (Ch 3.1)
- Identify the different materials (e.g. plastics, wood, metals, paper) and processes that are used in manufacturing displays (Ch 3.2)
- Identify lighting properties (e.g. color rendering index, color temperature, efficiency, intensity) (Ch 3.2)
- Identify lighting types (e.g. fluorescent, halogen, incandescent, LED) and their characteristics (Ch 3.2)
- Identify materials/methods that promote interactivity (Ch 3.2)
- Identify Types of retail installation projects (Ch. 3.3)
- Understand installation project scope terminology (Ch. 3.3)
- Identify installation process components that should be considered during the ideation stage (Ch. 3.3)
- Identify project information that must be communicated to the installation team (Ch. 3.3)
- Define color (Ch 3.4)
- Identify the parameters that influence individuals’ perception of color; predict their effects on display materials (Ch 3.4)
- Understand how the human brain remembers color (Ch 3.4)
- Identify advantages, including durability, and disadvantages of the various pigments used in architecture (Ch 3.4)

Market (20% of the exam)

- Recognize the contributions of retail display designers Gene Moore and Tom Beebe. (Ch 4.1)

- Identify and apply creative thinking process models (e.g. outside-the-box thinking; Judy Bell's Look, Compare, Innovate model; Robert Eberle's SCAMPER model) (Ch 4.1)
- Define and apply cross-merchandising (Ch 4.1)
- Define and apply design thinking (Ch 4.1)
- Identify the best practices for creative thinking strategies (Ch 4.1)
- Identify Karl Albrecht's five characteristics of innovative and creative thinking (Ch 4.1)
- Recognize the basic terminology, characteristics, functions, and limitations, of digital signage networks and their components (Ch 4.2)
- Apply strategies for developing and operating digital signage networks efficiently and cost-effectively (Ch 4.2)
- Recognize how sellers have used apps and other technology to collect shoppers' data and facilitate online shopping and buying. (Ch 4.3)
- Recognize how manufacturers are using emerging technology to connect their products, services, and brands to the consumer's experience. Ch 4.3)
- Recognize the steps in the promotional planning process. (Ch 4.4)
- Recognize types of promotional vehicles and their objectives (Ch 4.4)
- Apply strategies and tools for implementing a retail promotional plan (Ch 4.4)
- Identify how current digital shopping methods, evolving consumer expectations, and other trends are impacting current and future retail models (Ch 4.5)
- Methods of collecting and analyzing data about shopper behavior (Ch 4.5)

Evaluate (20% of the exam)

- Understand the general concept of ROI, and apply it to the store environment (Ch 5.1)
- Understand how consumers perceive value and how the value models have been impacted by evolving economic and marketing concepts (Ch 5.1)
- Understand the importance and impact of customer experience on business outcomes (Ch 5.1)
- Understand key principles and considerations in designing for customer experience (Ch 5.1)
- Understand and apply the success metrics of shopper marketing (Ch 5.2)
- Understand the methods and metrics used to observe and measure in-store shopper behavior (Ch 5.2)
- Understand the technologies used in shopper tracking (Ch 5.2)
- Understand general shopper behaviors as reported in recent research studies (Ch 5.2)
- Understand methods for measuring in-store sales (Ch 5.2)
- Understand how copyright and trademark laws impact the retail industry. (Ch 5.3)
- Identify the best practices for avoiding intellectual property conflicts. (Ch 5.3)
- Understand and apply the laws and regulations (e.g. antitrust laws, building codes, environmental, safety) that impact retail operations. (Ch 5.4)
- Understand the influence P.O.P displays have on purchase decision (Ch 5.5)
- Understand the impact of display compliance in various retail channels (Ch 5.5)
- Identify the most prevalent display vehicles (Ch 5.5)
- Understand and calculate Promotional Program Value (PPV); understand how it differs from Return on Investment (ROI) (Ch 5.5)
- Recognize the compliance rates, sales impact, and PPV of various P.O.P display types, according to recent research studies (Ch 5.5)
- Identify techniques for improving P.O.P display compliance rates (Ch 5.5)

APPLICATION PROCESS

The candidate must submit the completed program application, exam registration form and appropriate fees at least six weeks in advance of the examination date. Examinations are delivered through a computer-based, secured server website during the four designated testing windows throughout the year.

CANDIDATE ELIGIBILITY

There are no pre-requisites for the credential. Shop membership is not a requirement for certification.

REGISTRATION

The application forms can be found and submitted via the Shop! website, www.shopassociation.org/marc. Applications are reviewed to verify information and documentation to determine eligibility and will be kept confidential. Candidates will not be discriminated against based on race, religion, creed, age, gender, sexual orientation, or national origin or ancestry.

If the application is incomplete, the candidate will receive an e-mail explaining what is missing and will have a 30-day time period to respond. If the candidate does not respond, the candidate must then submit in writing a request for any fees paid minus the cancellation fee. The application may be deemed incomplete for reasons such as: application is not completely filled out, application is not signed, and appropriate fees are not submitted.

Applications must be completed at least six weeks in advance of desired examination date. Upon receipt of application, candidates will be invoiced for the Application Fee and will be directed to purchase the MaRC Exam Prep book.

FEES (AS OF 2017)

	Shop! Member	Non-Member
1. One Time Application Fee	\$150	\$250
2. MaRC Exam Prep book (Digital Format/PDF)	\$150	\$250
3. Initial Exam Fee	\$300	\$400
4. Re-exam Fee	\$150	\$250
5. Triennial Recertification Fee	\$300	\$400

SCHEDULING THE EXAM

After the application has been approved, and the examination registration fee has been paid, the candidate will receive an e-mail with instructions for accessing and taking his/her examination online.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Shop! complies with the provisions of the Americans With Disabilities Act and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 2000e. et. seq.) in accommodating candidates with disabilities who require special arrangements. The request must be submitted in writing with supporting documentation from a physician or other qualified professional reflecting a diagnosis of the candidate's condition and explanation of examination aids or modifications needed. Please contact Shop! at credentialing@shopassociation.org, if the candidate has any questions concerning ADA arrangements.

PREPARING FOR THE EXAMINATION

At present, self-study is the only path to certification. The MaRC Exam Prep Book can aid in the preparation for the MaRC Exam and can be purchased from the MaRC website at <http://www.shopassociation.org/marc/>.

EXAMINATION DAY

After the initial week waiting period, candidates will be able to take the MaRC Exam. **Candidates will have two hours to complete the 100-question, closed-book exam.**

EXAMINATION ADMINISTRATION

The following policies will be maintained during the testing session:

- Candidates are allowed to take the exam only during their assigned timeframe.
- The exam remote proctoring service uses the onboard camera and microphone of the candidate's computer to monitor the exam session. In addition, the proctoring service records images of the computer's desktop during the exam.
- Candidates must agree to the Non-Disclosure Agreement and Remote Monitoring Terms before beginning the exam.
- Once an exam has been started, the candidate cannot stop and restart the exam.
- During the exam, candidates are prohibited from opening additional browsers, copying materials on the screen, and capturing screen shots. The exam remote proctoring service detects and documents these activities.
- Candidates are prohibited from using the following items during the exam; an exam proxy, reference materials, books, papers, notes, visual aids, translation aids, cameras, or other electronics devices (including, but not limited to: e-readers, smart watches, computers, cellphones, etc.).

SECURITY VIOLATIONS/CHEATING

The performance of all candidates is monitored and may be analyzed to detect fraud. If, at any time after the examination administration, should there be a question about score validity or the identity of an examination candidate, Shop! staff will investigate. If it is determined that a violation has occurred, the Shop! Education Council will review the incident and decide on any appropriate penalty, including voiding the exam score and/or barring the candidate from testing for a period of time or indefinitely.

FAILURE TO APPEAR

If a candidate does not take a scheduled examination, the candidate will forfeit all fees. All fees will need to be paid again if the candidate decides to reschedule at a later date.

WITHDRAWING AN APPLICATION

All application changes must be made in writing and sent to the attention of Shop! by mail, 4651 Sheridan Street, #470, Hollywood, FL 33021, or email, credentialing@shopassociation.org

CHANGE OF CONTACT INFORMATION

It is the certified professional's responsibility to ensure that Shop! has his/her most current contact information including, mailing address, phone number and email address.

SCORING AND RESULTS SCORING PROCESS

Examinations are scored making every effort to ensure that the score is reported within a reasonable time period and that the score accurately reflects the points received by the candidate.

NOTIFICATION OF RESULTS

Preliminary pass/fail status will be reported immediately following the completion of the examination. Results are reported as “pass” or “fail.” **The passing grade for the exam is 80%.** Candidates who pass an examination and achieve certification will be notified officially via United States Postal Service of their passing status within 30 days. They will receive an official Shop! MaRC certificate.

Candidates who fail an examination will be provided with diagnostic information, consisting of their overall exam score and the percentage score earned in each of the exam’s five content domains. This information identifies the knowledge areas in which the candidate’s performance is deficient and is intended to help the candidate become better prepared before sitting for the examination again.

APPEAL OF EXAMINATION RESULTS

Candidates may request a verification of their score. Any scoring alteration found as a consequence of an appeal of examination results will be applied to all candidates whose pass-fail status was affected; not just the candidate requesting the appeal. All requests should be made in writing within 30 days of receiving examination results to Shop! by mail, 4651 Sheridan Street, #470, Hollywood, FL 33021, or emailed to credentialing@shopassociation.org.

RESCHEDULING & RETAKING PROCESS

RESCHEDULING AN EXAMINATION

Candidates who would like to postpone their exam to a later exam window must do so in writing and send their request to the attention of Shop! by mail at 4651 Sheridan Street, #470, Hollywood, FL 33021, or email, at credentialing@shopassociation.org. The request must be submitted by the last day of the originally-assigned exam window. A rescheduling fee of \$100 will be assessed to the candidate.

RETAKING THE EXAMINATION

No retake examination may be scheduled by the candidate until he or she has been officially notified of the results of his/her previously taken examination. No candidate will be allowed to retake an examination until 90 days have passed. There is no refund for failed examinations. A candidate will be allowed to take the examination no more than three times within a one-year period. If unsuccessful on the third attempt, the candidate must wait one year before he/she will be allowed to re-apply to the program and take the examination.

CANCELLATION POLICY

A cancellation fee of \$50 will be assessed to the candidate who cancels his or her exam by the last day of his or her assigned exam window. Cancellations must be made in writing and sent to the attention of Shop! by mail at 4651 Sheridan Street, #470, Hollywood, FL 33021, or email, at credentialing@shopassociation.org.

USE OF CERTIFICATION MARKS AND DESIGNATIONS INTRODUCTION

After receiving notification of earning a MaRC designation, the credential granted may be used only as long as the individual's MaRC certification remains valid and in good standing. Individuals may not use the credential until they have received specific written notification that they have successfully completed all requirements, including passing the required examination. Certificants must comply with all recertification requirements to maintain use of the credential.

The use and/or display of the official MaRC acronyms or designation names, except as permitted by this policy, is prohibited. Individuals who fail to maintain MaRC certification/recertify or whose MaRC certification is suspended or revoked must immediately discontinue use of the certification mark(s) and are prohibited from stating or implying that they hold the MaRC certification.

ACCEPTABLE USE

Individuals who have earned the credential(s) may identify themselves as a "MaRC Certified Professional" and use the honorific, MaRC after their name. For example: Jann Rosenquist, MaRC. The name and official acronym may be used only as long as the individual's certification is valid and in good standing. MaRC certification is a non-transferable, revocable, limited, non-exclusive license to use the certification designation and is subject to compliance with the policies and procedures of the Shop! Board. Certified individuals may not make misleading, deceptive, or confusing statements regarding their MaRC certification status.

CERTIFICATE

Each certificant will receive a certificate for each credential granted. Each certificate will include, at a minimum, the following information:

- Name of the credential
- Name of the certified individual
- Unique certification number
- Signature of the Shop! Board Chair and signature of the Shop's CEO.
- Reference to the scope and limitations of the certification, including that the individual has met all of the requirements of the designated certification program.
- Effective date
- Expiration date
- Disclaimer stating that the Shop! retains sole ownership of the certificate

Individuals who renew their certification (recertify) will receive a replacement certificate with a new expiration date.

MAINTAINING YOUR CERTIFICATION

Shop!'s goals for recertification are to ensure that MaRC certified professionals remain current with best practices, broaden their understanding of the industry, and continue to be recognized as competent practitioners. Shop! believes a three-year recertification cycle is appropriate.

INTRODUCTION

In a profession that regularly undergoes change, the importance of certification is growing rapidly. The purpose of this program is to ensure that those who are actively certified maintain a level of professional knowledge and skill, that is consistent with the standards according to which certification was initially conferred.

Certification is only as valuable as the standard it represents, if the standard is maintained. Recertification programs are extremely important because they require holders of the credential to present evidence that they are maintaining the established standard. This, in turn, enables certification to retain meaning and value for every individual who achieves it, particularly as the years pass after the credential is issued.

MaRC holders must complete the Recertification Application on the Shop! website prior to their certification expiration date.

RECERTIFICATION CRITERIA

The MaRC recertification process promotes the continuing education of MaRC certificants in the five domains of the MaRC credential: research, design, build, market, and evaluate.

During the three-year certification cycle, a MaRC certificant must earn 30 approved Professional Development Units (PDUs) in order to keep the credential active. Five PDUs are required in four of the five MaRC domains; 10 PDUs are demanded in the remaining MaRC domain. A PDU is a unit of credit equivalent to 1 hour of participation in continuing education activities.

The following activities may be applied towards the recertification continuing education requirement:

Continuing Education

Seminars/webinars, workshops, courses

In general, 1 PDU may be claimed for each documented contact hour of participation, either in-person or via online/distance learning. The MaRC domain is dependent on the course's content.

- Seminars/webinars, workshops, courses delivered by Shop! and other organizations:
1 PDU may be claimed for each documented contact hour of participation. The course certificate of completion must indicate the length of the course in hours. Example: a one-hour "Consumer Insights" webinar or e-Learning course is equivalent to 1 PDU in the MaRC Domain of Research.
- Credit-hour courses delivered by accredited colleges/universities:
5 PDUs may be claimed for each relevant credit hour of coursework. Example: A semester-long, two-credit course in Typography is equivalent to 10 PDUs in the MaRC Domain of Design.

Shop! Conferences and Events

- Shop!X Annual Meeting: 10 PDUs total, whereby 2 PDUs will be applied to each MaRC domain
- Shoptalk: 2 PDUs per event, MaRC Domain dependent on content
- Shop! West Coast Show, Lunch & Learn: 1 PDU per event, MaRC Domain dependent on content

Other Professional Development activities

- Participate in Shop! Awards programs as a Judge or OMA Marshal: 2 PDUs per year applied towards the MaRC "Evaluate" domain.
- Participate as a Board member, council member, or task force member for Shop! or other professional

- organizations or academia: 3 PDUs per year, MaRC Domain dependent on focus
- Present a webinar/workshop/course either in-person or online: 1 PDU per event, MaRC Domain dependent on content
- Publish a paper in an academic journal (JSR, AMA, HBR, etc.): 1 PDU per event, MaRC Domain dependent on content

PDU AUDITS

At the end of each PDU cycle, random PDU audits consisting of 10 percent of all certified individuals within the cycle will be conducted. The Board may add additional certified individuals, at its discretion, to the randomly chosen list of certified individuals to investigate claims or suspicion of impropriety.

Individuals chosen to participate in the PDU audit will be notified that their renewal submission is being audited to ensure compliance with the recertification policies. Individuals will be notified of their status upon completion of the audit and will be notified of any deficiencies that they may have. Individuals will have an opportunity to resolve any issues by submitting additional hours or further documentation to prove attendance in an event.

Note: Audit notifications will be sent via the United States Postal Service. It is the responsibility of MaRC holders to update their physical and email addresses with Shop! Unreceived audit notifications is not an acceptable excuse for failure to participate in an audit. If you have submitted a Recertification application, but you haven't received a response from Shop! after three weeks, you must contact Shop to inquire about the status of your certification.

For individuals who fail to fulfill the recertification requirement, their certifications will be revoked on December 31 of the year following their deadline. This letter will be mailed to the individual. These individuals will need to retake all examinations, at full price, in order to become certified again. Renewal fees are non-refundable.

PDU AUDIT REINSTATEMENT POLICY

Any person who was audited but did not respond to the corrective action letter, but submits information prior to February 1 following the calendar year after the certification has been revoked can be reinstated to the program. This late submittal needs to be complete and have no deficiencies in order to be accepted.

A late submittal fee will be required for processing. If there are deficiencies in the submitted recertification application, and the individual has not documented the required PDUs for certification renewal, the individual will lose his or her certification. This letter will be mailed to the individual. These individuals will need to retake all examinations, at full price, in order to become certified again.

CHANGING SCOPE OF CERTIFICATION

In the event that a certificant is no longer able to meet the requirements of the certification, the certified person must inform Shop! without delay, of matters that can affect the capability of the certified person to continue to fulfill the certification requirements.

EMERITUS STATUS

Purpose: To recognize a demonstrated effort through continuing practice, in order to reach new levels of knowledge in the field.

Qualifications for Emeritus Status: Eligible candidates must submit the status change request form and meet one of the following requirements:

- Retired from employment in the profession, whose number of years certified, when added to their years of work experience in the market-at-retail field, is greater or equal to 30 years; or;
- Retired from employment in the field, and held at least 15 years of continuous years of active certification status.
- Individuals earning the Emeritus status will no longer be required to submit a continuing practice journal or recertification fee, and they will be listed in the on-line registry as "Emeritus."

COMPLAINTS OF DISCIPLINARY VIOLATION

Shop! Professional Development staff will be responsible for implementing disciplinary policies and procedures. Grounds for disciplinary action shall include, but are not limited to the following:

- Evidence of falsification of information provided on documents submitted to the Shop! or its agents.
- Cheating on certification examinations or audits.
- Evidence of non-compliance with the Code of Conduct.
- Evidence of improper use of the Shop! certification status, logos and/or acronyms.
- Violation of established Shop! certification policies, rules and requirements.
- Conviction of a felony or other crime of moral turpitude under federal or state law.
- Gross negligence, willful misconduct, or other unethical conduct in the performance of services for which the individual has achieved certification from Shop!.

Shop! will establish procedures to fairly and consistently address alleged violations. Disciplinary procedures are designed to ensure that valid and actionable complaints are investigated and considered, and that all parties involved in the complaint have an opportunity to document circumstances warranting the complaint and to respond to the complaint.

All complaints will first be reviewed by the Shop! staff who will then report the complaint to the Shop! Education Council chair. If the complaint can be verified and resolved without further documentation or investigation, staff will notify the Council chair and the complaint will be closed.

If the complaint requires additional information, the complainant will be required to submit request in writing with supporting documents within 30 days of request for further actions to be considered. Upon receipt and review of the complaint and supporting documentation, the Shop! staff may inform, in writing, the accused and/or complainant of the official opening of an investigation. Shop! staff will acknowledge receipt of complaint and supporting documentation. The accused will have the opportunity to respond to the complaint made against him/her within 30 days of notification of the investigation.

Following the investigation, the Education Council Chair will inform the complainant of the decision in writing. The complainant will be notified in writing that a decision was reached. If disciplinary action is imposed, the complainant may submit an appeal of the decision to the full Education Council. This appeal must be submitted in writing to the Shop! Education Manager. A signed appeal must be submitted in writing within 60 days from receipt of the written notification that a disciplinary action is imposed and must clearly state the grounds for appeal.

Below are two possible decisions that the Shop! may make in regards to a complaint.

1) WITHDRAWAL/REVOCAION

When a complaint is received by Shop! which upon investigation by the policies and processes laid out appears to be due to negligence or intentional malpractice or violation of the code of conduct, Shop! may withdraw certification. In the event of withdrawal, the certified professional must refrain from further use of all references to certified status.

2) SUSPENSION

When a complaint is received by Shop! which upon investigation by the policies and processes laid out appears to be due to accidental causes, unintentional negligence or oversight, Shop! may suspend the certificant's certification for a specific period. Shop! may establish monitoring procedures during the suspension which the certificant must conform to. During the time of suspension the certificant must refrain from further promotion of his or her certification. If the certificant does not remedy the conditions of the suspension, the certificant's certification may be withdrawn.

APPEALS

In addition to appeals of disciplinary action, an individual or certificant who was denied certification or had his/her certification revoked may file an appeal within 60 days of receipt of notice of the action taken that is eligible for appeal.

FILING OF APPEAL

The appeal shall state the nature of the objection, including the details, and the specific remedial action that the appellant is requesting. Upon the filing of a properly executed appeal, the original action will be suspended until final action is taken on the appeal.

All appeals must be made in writing and sent to the attention of Shop! by mail, 4651 Sheridan Street, #470, Hollywood, FL 33021, or email, credentialing@shopassociation.org

Shop! staff will make an initial determination of whether the appeal has been properly filed and includes all needed documentation and rationale. Appellants will be notified within 60 days of Shop!'s receipt whether the appeal has been filed properly for an appealable action.

APPEALS BODY

Shop!'s Education Council is the body that hears appeals. The full Shop! Education Council is the final body to hear an appeal and there are no further appeals once the full Shop! Education Council has acted. Its ruling is final.

FEE

The fee for an appeal with the Shop! Board is \$50 (U.S.D.) payable by the individual filing the appeal. The fee for a subsequent appeal to the full Shop! Board is an additional \$150 (U.S.D.). Fees are payable with the filing of the appeal. An appellant may request that Shop! reduce these fees and must provide a rationale for this request (e.g., demonstrable financial hardship). The decision to reduce any appeal fee will be made by the Shop! Board Chair after review of the request and rationale.

SHOP! BOARD CONSIDERATION OF THE APPEAL

The Shop! Board reviews all properly filed and documented appeals to determine if significant evidence exists of a substantive error or omission in the certification process or outcome. Decisions require a (2/3) two-thirds vote by a panel of three Council members. If submitted, an appeal will be heard by a panel of three other Council members. When the Shop! Education Council reaches a decision, the appellant will be notified in writing within 60 days of such decision being made. The appellant may request a hearing on the appeal, but is responsible for paying all administrative expenses associated with such a hearing (including but not limited to travel expenses of the Shop! Board, if the appellant wishes to have a hearing in person).