Questions Universities Can Ask Certification Bodies to Assess Quality of Certifications

To Align or Embed with Academic Programs

1. What is the purpose (scope) of the certification?

2. What, if any, competing certifications address the same purpose (scope)?

3. What are the eligibility requirements for the certification?

4. What employers/types of employers seek out candidates with this certification?

5. Is the certification a requirement in any professions or industry sectors?

6. Is the certification preferred in any professions or industry sectors?

    a. If not, is there any movement towards preferring this certification?

7. Is there any evidence of improved employability outcomes for certified individuals (e.g. higher average salary, greater odds of being hired, job descriptions listing certifications as required or preferred, etc.)?

8. Who are the stakeholders that interact and build the certification?

9. Is the certification body a stand-alone, independent organization, or is it part of or affiliated with another organization?

    a. If the certification body is part of another organization, how does it maintain independence from the functions of the other organization (e.g., the membership function)?

10. Was a job task analysis done to support the validity of the certification?

    a. If so, was there a validation survey conducted? When was it last conducted?

    b. Was there a representative sample of industry included in the analysis?

11. Are there procedures for revoking the certification from an individual for reasons of incompetence or unethical behavior?

12. Do parts or all of the certification test blueprint match an existing academic course, certificate, or degree program?

    a. If so, which ones?

13. Was there a nationally recognized process for determining pass/fail of the examination? *(Note: Certification bodies do not generally report specific scores since a certification is a pass/fail examination.)*

14. What is the pass rate for individuals taking the certification exam?

15. Is there a recertification process for the certification?

    a. If so, is it based on a job task analysis?

16. Does the certification body have a policy that indicates how often the certification exam is updated?

    a. If so, what is the process to continually improve the certification program?

    b. If not, how is the certification exam updated, or is it?

17. Are the certification exam items reviewed for bias related to gender, race, ethnicity, geographic location, etc.?

18. Are certification exam items written to specific task statements to ensure the questions are measuring what they are supposed to be measuring?

19. What rationale and data is used to establish the prerequisites to sit for the exam?

20. What security measures are taken while delivering the examination?

21. How is the certification exam proctored, in person or remotely?

22. How often and where is the examination offered?