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ARIZONA

2022

MENTORS AND EVALUATORS GUIDE

The Department of Emergency and Military Affairs (DEMA) Arizona Qualification System (AQS) Plan was developed by the DEMA AQS Project Team in collaboration with the AQS Working Group. For more information on this plan, contact: DEMA AQS Project Team.

**The plan is located at:
https://dema.az.gov/AQS**

REVIEW, EVALUATION, AND CHANGES

Date	Summary of Activity	Plan/Document Section	Recommendation By Entry Made By
March 2022	Working Group updates incorporated into document	All	T. Joynt
June 2022	Document Completion	All	T. Joynt

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INTRODUCTION

The Arizona Qualification System (AQS) establishes and promotes baseline qualifications for a national incident workforce consisting of incident management, incident support, and emergency management personnel. These personnel come from all levels of government, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO), and the private sector. Mentors and evaluators play vital roles in the qualification of personnel through the Position Task Book (PTB) completion process.

The AQS Mentors and Evaluators Guide is adapted from the supplemental National Incident Management System (NIMS) guide. This AQS guide defines the roles mentors and evaluators play in developing a qualified incident workforce based on consistent performance standards. The guide explains the standards that mentors and evaluators uphold and identifies the skills necessary to succeed in their work with trainees.

The audience for this AQS guide is any Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) that is responsible for qualifying and certifying incident management, incident support, or emergency management personnel. This guide provides information for mentors and evaluators to effectively guide trainees through the PTB process. This document's appendices include job aids for mentors and evaluators.

Mentoring is the act of helping trainees build knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform in a specific position. The NIMS Guideline defines a mentor as an individual possessing specific job skills and experience who provides instructions and mentoring to help guide a trainee in applicable practices, methods, and skills that can result in PTB task completions.

Evaluation is the act of verifying that the trainee knows how to do a certain task. The NIMS Guideline for the National Qualification System (NQS) defines an evaluator as an individual authorized by an AHJ to observe, document, and complete evaluation records on a trainee based on a PTB. Mentors and evaluators work together to guide trainees through the qualification process.

Personnel Qualification Process

Qualification is the process of enabling personnel to perform position-specific duties and documenting their proficiency in the position's required capabilities. During the qualification process, trainees first meet the required prerequisites for the position they are pursuing by completing training courses, obtaining professional or technical

licenses/certifications, and if appropriate, meeting the position's physical and medical fitness requirements.

Note: Foundational prerequisites can be done simultaneously with the PTB, but mandatory prerequisites must be done prior to a PTB being assigned.

Identifying Mentors and Evaluators

Qualified mentors and evaluators should be able to successfully demonstrate the competencies and behaviors associated with the tasks of the trainee. Documented certifications of performance-based duties and tasks and specific levels of training or education specified in the AHJ's qualification system can verify sufficient experience to be a mentor or evaluator. Having a structure to identify mentors and evaluators promotes a clear path to standardization and the overall credentialing process.

Assigning Mentors and Evaluators

Each AHJ varies in the resources it can dedicate to mentoring and evaluating. It is recommended that different people fulfill the roles of mentor and evaluator. If resources are limited, an AHJ may combine one of the roles with a pre-existing role. For example, a supervisor can also act as an evaluator.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This section provides an overview of the roles, responsibilities, and capabilities of mentors and evaluators. The Mentor/Evaluator Checklist (Job Aid A) provides more information for understanding and fulfilling these roles and responsibilities.

Essential Mentor and Evaluator Capabilities

Mentors and evaluators play different roles but require similar capabilities, as outlined below. Mentoring is interactive and consists of constantly sharing information with the trainee; evaluation consists of assessing the trainee's skills and judging the trainee's capability to perform tasks. Mentors and evaluators can also communicate with each other throughout the entire process to aid in the development of the trainee. Although the following capabilities are necessary for both positions, they apply differently to each role.

Mentor and Evaluator Capabilities

- Provide constructive feedback
- Observing and Documenting
- Questioning

- Listening
- Note-taking
- Technical writing and analysis

Mentor Roles and Responsibilities

The mentor provides instructions, training, and mentoring to prepare a trainee to meet the performance qualification criteria for a given position. The process of matching a mentor with a trainee can be either formal, through a mentoring program, or informal, such as when more experienced personnel take it upon themselves to guide a trainee. The number of trainees per mentor varies, and AHJs generally determine the distribution of trainees to mentors during steady state.

A mentor is present for the trainee's development, providing on-the-job training and helping the trainee master tasks from the PTB. After a mentor describes and demonstrates tasks for the trainee, the mentor assesses the trainee's demonstration of these tasks and provides feedback.

Mentoring Process

- **Preliminary Meeting**: Even if the mentor has a previous relationship with the trainee, the mentor schedules a formal preliminary meeting. This meeting

includes introductions, an overview of the role the mentor will play in the trainee's development, and a plan for trainee development:

- Before the preliminary meeting, the mentor reviews the trainee's PTB to understand the trainee's previous relevant experience and ascertain strengths and weaknesses.

- During the preliminary meeting, the mentor outlines the roles of both mentor and evaluator, clearly highlighting the differences if the same person will perform both roles. For a new trainee, the mentor describes conditions and expectations for completing PTB tasks.

- If the trainee has already begun the PTB, the mentor reviews the tasks already completed and engages the trainee in conversation about relevant experiences.

- Using the Preliminary Meeting with Trainee form (Job Aid B), the mentor learns more about the trainee and develops a realistic plan for what the trainee intends to accomplish. Establishing a timeline gives the trainee structure and specific goals. Developing the plan in coordination with the trainee enables the trainee to contribute to ongoing growth and builds transparency into the process, promoting trust.

- The mentor alerts the trainee that additional training and evaluation opportunities may arise.

- **Mentoring and Teaching Tasks:** The mentor's role is relationship based. It is important for the trainee to trust and respect the mentor. The mentor answers the trainee's questions, shares relevant experiences, and provides opportunities for success. The mentor is responsible for the following:

  - Understanding diverse learning styles—visual, auditory, and kinesthetic—to guarantee appropriate training (see box below).

  - Ensuring that the trainee can adjust to diverse learning environments and placements.

  - Providing formative trainee assessments by providing feedback, performance documentation, and improvement strategies to prepare the trainee for evaluation on tasks.

Different Learning Styles

Visual – Learns best when able to see information and visualize relationships between ideas

Auditory – Learns best when able to hear information rather than reading it or seeing it displayed

Kinesthetic – Learns best through hands-on, experiential learning; learns best by doing

- **Debriefing:** During the qualification process, the mentor debriefs the trainee at various points: after practicing tasks in preparation for evaluation, after reaching a major milestone, at the end of a deployment, and when the mentor-trainee relationship terminates.

  After evaluations, the mentor focuses on the trainee's strengths and areas for improvement, and how to improve in preparation for the next assessment. The mentor should provide positive, constructive feedback and collaborate with the trainee on ongoing skill development and improvement strategies. Debriefing is also a good time to review the timeline and goals set up in the preliminary meeting, to ensure the trainee stays on track.

  The exit debrief should summarize what the trainee has completed, review the goals that remain, and reflect on the value of what the trainee has learned.

Evaluator Roles and Responsibilities

The evaluator reviews and validates successful completion of PTB tasks. Individual AHJs own the process for assigning evaluators to trainees. This process is formal, unlike the process for identifying mentors. An evaluator can be a trainee's supervisor. The evaluator does not have to hold qualifications in the same position as the one under consideration. As with mentors, the number of trainees per evaluator can vary, and AHJs generally determine the distribution of trainees to evaluators during steady state.

Evaluator responsibilities include conducting unbiased assessments of unassisted task completion and performance, providing summative assessments, and documenting proficiency of trainee capabilities.

Key characteristics of an effective evaluator include being observant, knowledgeable, approachable, honest, patient, and accountable. To help the trainee grow as much as possible, the evaluator uses any opportunity for correction as a path to learning.

Process Flow Diagram

- **Briefing**: Briefing the trainee consists of a friendly introduction. The evaluator explains the evaluation process and sets expectations for performing the PTB tasks. Because a trainee could complete a full PTB during a longer incident, the evaluator should always clarify which tasks are under evaluation for qualification. AHJs may require multiple deployments or activations before a trainee is eligible for qualification leading to certification. The evaluator should ensure that the trainee understands which tasks the evaluator will observe.

- **Task Observation:** Effective evaluation enables the trainee to make progress and enter the incident workforce as a competent, qualified team member. It is therefore crucial that the evaluator assess the trainee's performances thoughtfully, accurately, and honestly. Systematic observation is essential for completing an objective evaluation and identifying any necessary corrective actions. The evaluator watches, listens, and takes organized notes to collect consistent data.

  Proper documentation of the trainee's performance includes records of expected actions and actual actions, and a detailed time record of observed events. This evaluation documents competency in PTB tasks and does not replace the supervisor's performance evaluations.

- **Effective Evaluation:** The effective evaluator reviews the PTB and observes the trainee's performance of tasks. The evaluator rarely intervenes during task performance unless a safety issue arises. An evaluator's intervention typically ends the evaluation, as intervention likely indicates that the trainee is not yet competent in the observed task.

  When the task involves problem-solving, part of the competency evaluation may include asking for the trainee's rationale of actions after the performance. The evaluator should ask questions for clarification only.

  Examples of non-leading questions to use during the evaluation phase include the following:

  - "Why is [that action] important?"

- "What were you trying to accomplish with [task]?"

Remember the following guidelines when asking a question:

- Terminology– Keep it task oriented.

- Tone– Keep it professional and respectful.

- Timing– Do not interfere with task performance or evaluation.

- Technique– Make it appropriate to the situation.

Effective evaluation involves more than observation. It also depends largely on the evaluator's ability to accurately hear and process the trainees perform.

- Debriefing: After an evaluation, the trainee, mentor, and evaluator should all be present for debriefs. While debriefing the trainee, the evaluator does the following:

  - Ensures the trainee understands necessary next steps.

  - Reviews the certification process with the trainee (if the trainee has completed the PTB) and attaches any relevant documentation to the PTB.

If the mentor and evaluator disagree on the correct way to perform PTB tasks, they should talk together and reach a resolution, so the trainee, mentor, and evaluator have a common understanding of the task.

Next Steps for a Trainee

When everything is complete, the trainee, mentor, and evaluator work together to assemble a full application packet with all available supporting documents.

Consideration for qualification must align with the AHJ's policy and guidance. Once an AHJ issues a PTB, trainees are generally required to complete the PTB within five years; however, many positions typically take significantly less time to complete.

In addition to completing the PTB, the trainee must complete all required training listed on the qualification sheet for the position in question, including the AQS courses and any required certifications and licenses. Once the final evaluator has completed the Final Evaluator Verification, the packet is forwarded to the Qualifying Review Board (QRB) via the DEMA Quality Control Officer (QCO).

The QRB will review the packet and make a recommendation to the Certifying Officer (CO) of the respective AHJ.

If the individual has a positive recommendation from the QRB, the CO can submit the completed PTB with their final agency signature to the QCO. The QCO will process the PTB for issuance of an AQS credential and Gold Card.

> Note: If the QRB does not make a positive recommendation to the CO an AQS Credential and Gold Card will not be issued. In such cases the certification of that individual will only be recognized within the AHJ providing the certification.

ANALYSIS AND FEEDBACK

A trainee's success depends on receiving feedback on task performance from both a mentor and an evaluator. The mentor and evaluator take detailed and effective notes, carefully analyze those notes, and then give the trainee detailed, constructive feedback based on the analysis.

Effective Notetaking

The mentor and evaluator must remain attentive, closely observing the trainee and taking notes throughout the process. Effective notetaking during observations (whether for mentoring or evaluation) is vital to good analysis, questions, and feedback.

Tips for Effective Notetaking

- Keep a log of significant events.
- During observations, record important facts regarding the execution.
- Keep notes and comment's objective, legible, and appropriate since the trainee may request all notes.
- Encourage trainees to take their own notes as a valuable record of proper steps and ways to improve.

In addition to documenting the trainee's performance, mentors and evaluators observe the actions of others involved with the trainee, where applicable. They also record any relevant information in displays or documents the trainee may use.

Effective Analysis

Analysis involves using the observations, notes, collected work products, trainee answers to questions, and any other materials to make an objective judgment on task performance. For basic tasks, this analysis can occur concurrently with the observation and can be part of the mentor's immediate feedback. For complex tasks, however, this analysis should take place separately, so the mentor or evaluator can consider all collected data.

A mentor or evaluator should assess whether the trainee:

- Adequately demonstrated completion of the task.
- Deviated from the standard task completion procedure.
  - If so, the mentor or evaluator should determine whether the deviation was purposeful, whether the trainee understood the implications of the nonstandard actions, and whether the deviation had positive or negative effects. Deviation

from standard procedures can sometimes reflect a trainee's innovation and efficiency.

- Performed actions that could have created issues.

- Corrected previously unsatisfactory actions

- Knew the steps and gave a proper rationale for actions.

Ultimately, an effective assessment answers the question, can the trainee successfully perform the task without assistance? If the answer is no, the trainee returns to the mentoring phase.

Feedback as a Mentor

Mentors should build positive relationships with their trainees to help them effectively hear, understand, and accept feedback, including constructive criticism. Ways to foster positive relationships include providing encouragement and giving positive feedback more often than negative feedback.

A mentor can assess a trainee's preferred learning style, whether visual, auditory, or kinesthetic, by working consistently with the trainee. In addition, many trainees know what learning style works best for them and will tell their mentor. When trainees know how they work best, they can get more out of the training experience and have a better chance at success.

Knowing a trainee's learning style can help the mentor give useful feedback. For example, if the mentor delivers auditory feedback to a trainee who is a visual learner, the trainee may have more difficulty comprehending the feedback. By providing feedback through multiple avenues, mentors can ensure that trainees with different learning styles fully understand their strengths and weaknesses. Using the Notetaking Log (Job Aid C) in conjunction with a conversation with the trainee is a good way for a mentor to give multiple types of feedback.

How the mentor delivers feedback is also important. Mentors should avoid making subjective observations and discussing personal feelings or trainee personality traits. Feedback should be objective, constructive, and proactive. Providing high quality feedback relies on observed trainee actions, patterns, and behaviors.

Giving feedback is an ongoing process, and mentors should give trainees feedback soon after the performed task—if not immediately, then within a day or two. Scheduling a debrief meeting prior to demobilization is an ideal opportunity to provide summative feedback.

Feedback as an Evaluator

After evaluation, the evaluator may conduct a debrief meeting to provide feedback, with both the trainee and mentor present. Evaluator feedback is based on observation, notes, and analysis of the trainee's performance.

ACRONYMS

AHJ	Authority Having Jurisdiction
AQS	Arizona Qualification System
CO	Certifying Officer
EMI	Emergency Management Institute
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
ICS	Incident Command System
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIMS	National Incident Management System
NQS	National Qualification System
PTB	Position Task Book
QCO	Quality Control Officer
QRB	Qualification Review Board

RESOURCES

National Incident Management System (NIMS)

- On the NIMS website, users can find links to NIMS documents, guidelines, and operational tools, as well as training information, implementation guidance, updates, and contact information for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Regional NIMS Coordinators.

- The Resource Management section of NIMS contains details on the qualification, certification, and credentialing of incident personnel. It also defines pertinent terms to ensure common terminology among all qualification system users.

- www.fema.gov/national-incident-management-system.

National Qualification System (NQS)

- The NIMS Guideline for the NQS describes the components of a qualification and certification system, defines a process for certifying the qualifications of incident personnel, describes how to establish and implement a peer review process, and introduces the process of credentialing personnel.

- The NIMS NQS Supplemental Guide for Qualification Review Boards (QRBs) describes the basic principles of a QRB and provides general recommendations and practices to help an AHJ establish or enhance a QRB.

- NQS also provides Job Titles/Position Qualifications and PTBs for a range of incident management, incident support, and emergency management positions.

- . https://www.fema.gov/national-qualification-system.

FEMA PrepToolkit

- The Preparedness Toolkit is an online portal that provides the whole community with tools to aid in implementing all six areas of the National Preparedness System.

- https://www.preptoolkit.fema.gov/.

Incident Command System (ICS) Form 225

- ICS Form 225 provides a way for supervisors to rate incident personnel performance.

- http://training.fema.gov/icsresource/icsforms.aspx.

ICS Resource Center

- The Incident Command System (ICS) Resource Center, which the Emergency Management Institute (EMI) maintains, provides information about and links to an extensive array of ICS training materials, job aids, position checklists, and forms.

- https: //training.fema.gov/emiweb/is/icsresource/index.html.

JOB AID A: MENTOR/EVALUATOR CHECKLIST

EMPLOYEE INFORMATION

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Position:_____ Supervisor: _____

Position Task Book (PTB)

_____ Review PTB and tasks.

_____ Review key policies.

_____ Verify completion of Mandatory Classes.

_____ Verify completion of Foundational Classes.

_____ Review percentage of training, tasks, and overall PTB completed.

_____ Review associated behaviors and tasks.

Trainee-Related Tasks

Conduct introduction meeting with trainee

_____ Review assignment.

_____ Provide trainee with a clear understanding of the learning process, training phases, and the evaluation process.

_____ Create training and evaluation worksheet.

_____ Discuss PTB process.

_____ Review status of required training.

_____ Discuss roles and expectations.

_____ Establish guidelines for the relationship.

Assess

_____ Assess trainees' skills, abilities, experience, and aptitudes for the assigned position.

_____ Ask questions to gauge trainees' understanding of the task—what needs to be done, why it is necessary, and how it should look when completed.

_____ Conduct rigorous appropriate testing assessments that demonstrate the trainee's knowledge and ability to perform required skills safely and effectively through on-the-job performance during the mentoring phase.

<u>Discuss</u>

_____ Discuss opportunities to develop and demonstrate capabilities.

_____ Discuss realistic goals for the established time period.

_____ Review the observation process.

<u>Develop positive mentoring relationship</u>

_____Maintain friendly, optimistic approach to developing a positive professional relationship.

_____ Be proactive.

_____ Have clear expectations.

Training Tasks

_____ Discuss the skills and knowledge areas the trainee needs to develop.

_____ Give the trainee necessary resources.

_____ Discuss the trainee's learning and communication styles.

_____ Ask probing questions; identify perceived or real strengths, weaknesses, or hesitations.

_____ Interpret feedback and help trainee convert feedback into action.

_____ Look for developmental moments and discuss these with the trainee.

_____ Give feedback:

- Observations
- Consequences
- Assessments

Evaluation Tasks

_____ Develop task and behavior evaluation worksheet.

_____ Evaluate trainee's performance on key performance characteristics from the PTB.

_____ Identify performance strengths, weaknesses, and areas in need of improvement on the worksheet.

_____ Complete the evaluation record.

_____ Debrief the trainee.

Interview Support

Below are non-leading questions to use during the evaluation and mentoring phase:

- "Why is [that action] important?"

- "What were you trying to accomplish with [task]?"

Remember the following guidelines when asking a question:

- **Terminology** – Keep it task oriented.

- **Tone** – Keep it professional and respectful.

- **Timing** – Do not interfere with task performance or evaluation.

- **Technique** – Make it appropriate to the situation.

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JOB AID B: PRELIMINARY MEETING WITH TRAINEE

Preliminary Meeting   **Date:** _____

Remain open to new ideas, be flexible with scheduling, be available to mentor, and then evaluate each task the trainee undertakes. Your job is to support the trainee's efforts to become qualified in the new position.

Mentor's name: _____

Mentor's position/title: _____

Mentor's contact information: _____

Trainee's name:

_____

Trainee's contact information:

_____

Trainee's incident management, incident support, or emergency management experience:

_____
_____
_____
_____

If new, trainee's previous work experience:

_____
_____
_____
_____

Discuss trainee's preferred learning style (visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and so on):

_____
_____

Discuss tasks the trainee could master during current deployment:

_____
_____

Work with trainee to create a timeline for mentoring and evaluating during current deployment:

_____
_____

JOB AID C: SAMPLE NOTE-TAKING LOG

Note-Taking Log

(Attach additional pages as necessary)

Date:

_____

Purpose (meeting, mentoring, observing, evaluation):

_____

Task(s) you are discussing, observing, mentoring, or evaluating:

_____
_____

Your observations (include pictures, correspondence, and so on):

_____
_____
_____

Feedback for trainee:

- What went well:

  _____
  _____
  _____

- Areas for improvement:

  _____
  _____
  _____

- Is the task ready for signoff?

  _____

- Is another demonstration necessary?

_____

Trainee's observations:

_____

_____

Next steps:

_____

Interview Support

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