

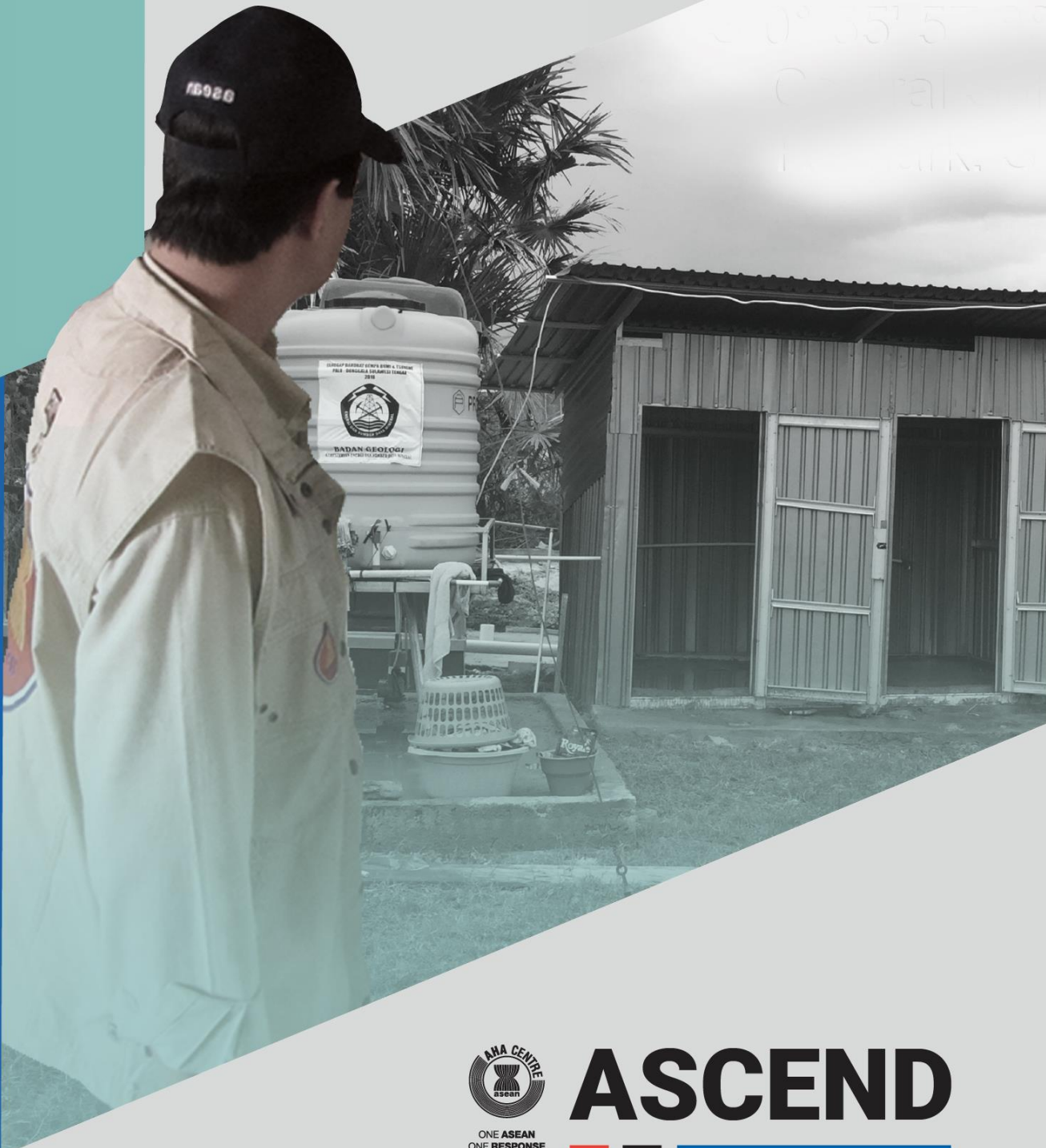
1st Edition



WATER, SANITATION & HYGIENE

Certification Scheme

MANAGER



ONE ASEAN
ONE RESPONSE

ASCEND

ASEAN Standards and Certification
for Experts in Disaster Management

ASEAN Standards and Certification for Experts in Disaster Management

WATER, SANITATION & HYGIENE Manager

ADM.CSC.009.1

Certification Scheme



ONE **ASEAN**
ONE **RESPONSE**



Project Sponsors:



The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was established on 8 August 1967. The Member States are Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Viet Nam. The ASEAN Secretariat is based in Jakarta, Indonesia.

The “ASEAN Standards and Certification for Experts in Disaster Management (ASCEND)” is under Priority Programme 5: Global Leadership of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) Work Programme 2021-2025 that envisions ASEAN as a global leader in disaster management.

The ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre) implements the ASCEND project in collaboration with the Korean National Fire Agency (KNFA) and support from the ASEAN Secretariat and the Republic of Korea.

The publication of this document is part of the “ASEAN Standards and Certification for Experts in Disaster Management (ASCEND) Toolboxes Development for Five (5) Professions” project.

General information on ASEAN appears online at the ASEAN Website: www.asean.org
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ASCEND Programme and Toolbox:

Introduction



1.1

The ASCEND Programme

Southeast Asian governments, through the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM), continue to invest in strengthening disaster management systems for a more secure and resilient region. However, the compounding risks and increasing uncertainty of disasters in our new climate reality threaten to set back the socioeconomic development gains of ASEAN societies. Widespread and recurring disaster damages and losses can overwhelm national capacities and worsen regional transboundary effects.

The Declaration on One ASEAN One Response (OAOR) at the 2016 ASEAN Summit in Vientiane, Lao PDR, reaffirms ASEAN's vision to move towards faster and more integrated collective responses to disasters inside and outside the region. However, ASEAN's past experiences responding to large-scale disasters showed that realising the OAOR can be challenging. Various responders from different countries, institutions, organisations, and companies seek to contribute to the overall response. Their goodwill is appreciated, and several provide much-needed assistance. But ASEAN and affected Member States sometimes found it challenging to determine what knowledge and skills responders have and how they can effectively contribute to national and regional efforts.

Learnings from past experiences and shared commitment to realising the OAOR vision increased the need to develop regionally recognised competency standards and a certification process for disaster management professionals. The increased support led to initiatives that eventually created the ASEAN Standards and Certification for Experts in Disaster Management (ASCEND) Programme. ASCEND is now part of Priority 5: Global Leadership of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) Work Programme 2021-2025, a programme that envisions ASEAN as a global leader in disaster management.

1.2

The Objectives of ASCEND

- To enhance the capacity of the ASEAN countries in the implementation of ASCEND.

- To establish regionally recognised competency standards and assessment processes covering five professions in disaster management.
- To improve the capacity of the AHA Centre to serve as the ASCEND Secretariat.
- To promote understanding of the ASCEND Framework among the ASEAN Member States (AMS) and other ASEAN sectors in preparation for the inclusion of ASCEND into the ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA).

1.3

Advantages and Benefits of an ASCEND Certification

For ASEAN

The ASCEND certification can assist Member States in ensuring that competent disaster management professionals handle emergency assistance and disaster relief across the region. It also supports mutual recognition of disaster management competencies to facilitate acceptance of external aid and faster response.

For AHA Centre

ASEAN, a rapidly developing and hazard-prone region, will need more competent disaster management professionals. The ASCEND certification can narrow current knowledge and skills gaps. It can also enable stronger cooperation and interoperability between disaster managers in their home countries and across regions.

For disaster management professionals

Disaster management professionals can use their ASCEND certification to promote themselves professionally and serve as evidence of their experience and qualifications. It can also make it easier for organisations to determine the ability of certificate holders to perform critical work functions of specific occupations in the disaster management sector.

1.4

The ASCEND Toolbox

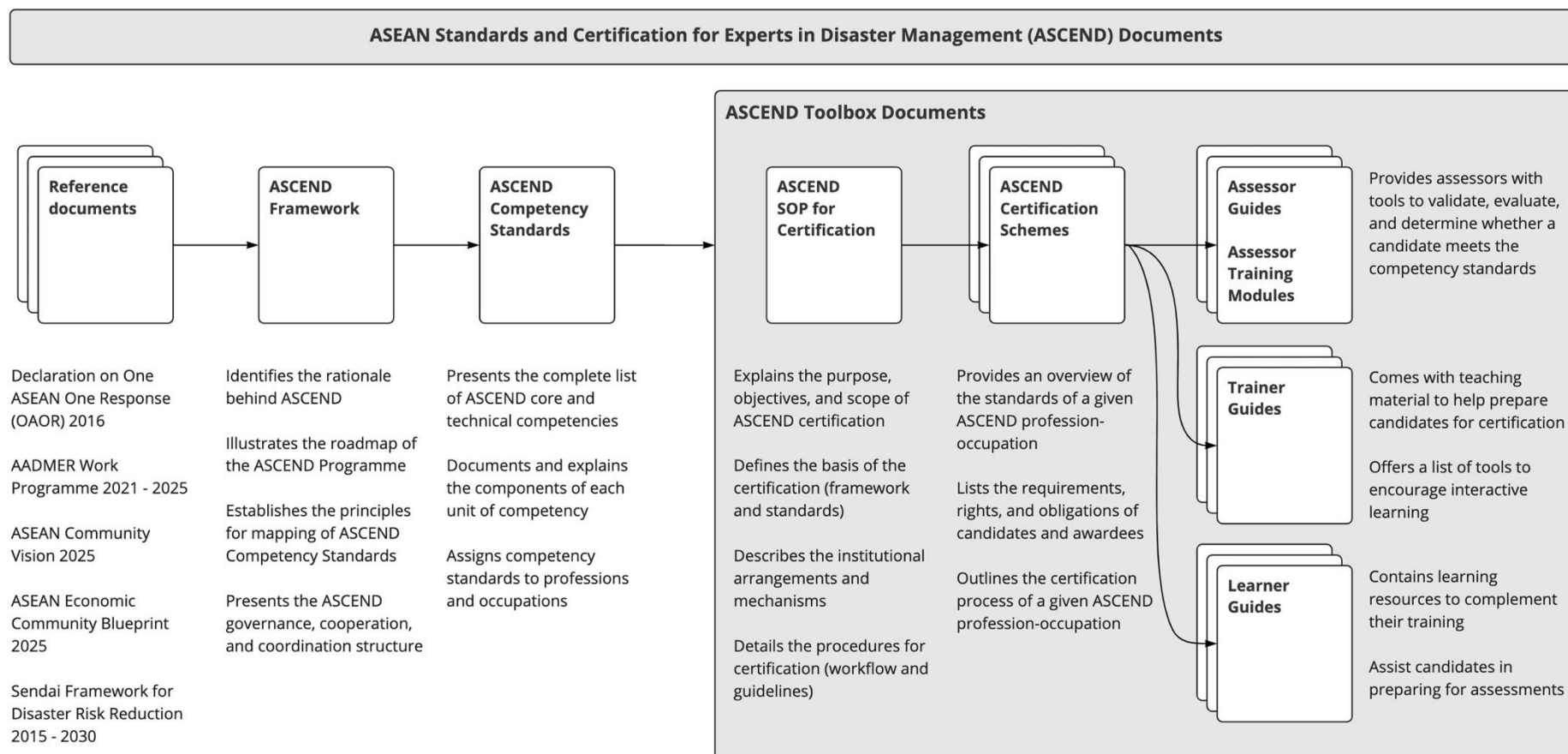
A set of technical requirements must exist before it is possible to implement the ASCEND programme in participating ASEAN Member States. The first requirement is the ASCEND Competency Standards, containing forty-three (43) regionally recognised core and technical competencies in selected disaster management professions. The Competency Standards outline the work elements and performance criteria that guide for certification of disaster management professionals across the region.

Another requirement is the development of ASCEND Toolboxes for five professions. These professions are Rapid Assessment, Humanitarian Logistics, Information Management, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), and Shelter Management. ASCEND Toolboxes consists of an SOP, Certification Schemes, Assessor Guides, Trainer Guides, and Learner Guides. The ASCEND Competency Standards, approved by the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management, are the primary basis of the Toolbox documents.

The **SOP** defines the basis of ASCEND, describes the institutional arrangements and mechanisms, and details the certification procedures. **Certification Schemes** present an overview of the standards of each profession-occupation and certification requirements, the rights and obligations of candidates and certificate holders, and general guidelines on the certification process. **Assessor Guides** provide assessors with tools to validate, evaluate, and determine whether a candidate meets the competency standards. **Trainer Guides** come with PowerPoint slides and presenter notes to help trainers prepare candidates for certification. It also offers a list of tools that trainers may use to encourage interactive learning. **Learner Guides** assist candidates preparing for ASCEND certification in their chosen disaster management profession and occupation. It contains learning resources and complementary readings that can help prepare them to undergo the required assessments.

The ASCEND Toolbox documents can assist the ASEAN Member States to identify, build the capacity of, and mobilise competent disaster managers across Southeast Asia to help reduce disaster risks and disaster losses in the region through timely and effective response.

Figure 1: Overview of ASCEND Toolbox Documents





ASCEND Certification Schemes: Overview



2.1

Purpose and Aims

The purpose of the ASCEND Certification Schemes is to describe the process for admitting, assessing, certifying, registering, and tracking candidates and certificate holders pursuing or maintaining an ASCEND certification in a particular disaster management profession and occupation. The Certification Schemes aim to assist ASCEND assessors and the ASEAN Member States in enhancing the capacities and quality of work of disaster management professionals by providing a model for validating and evaluating their learning and development against regionally recognised qualifications and competencies.

The Certification Schemes help ASCEND assessors and the ASEAN Member States ensure that candidates for certification have the experience and ability to use or apply knowledge and skills-sets to perform critical work functions in their chosen occupation in the disaster management sector. The focus of Certification Schemes is to outline the ASCEND competencies under selected professions and occupations, eligibility criteria, basic requirements and rights of candidates, and obligations of certification holders. Please refer to the ASCEND SOP for Certification for information about training ASCEND assessors in planning, conducting, and validating assessments.

2.2

Scope

There are fifteen (15) ASCEND Certification Scheme, one document for each disaster management profession-occupation combination. Please see a summary in Table 1. The certification levels of ASCEND occupations align with the Level Descriptors in Section 3 of the ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework or AQRF. The kind of work associated with each occupation and set of competencies required of disaster management professionals builds on the ASEAN Disaster Management Occupations Map.

Table 1: ASCEND professions, occupations, and certification levels

ASCEND Professions	Occupations	AQRF Levels	Count
Shelter Management	Manager	7	1
Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH)	Manager	7	1
Emergency Operation Centre / Information Management	Manager	7	1
Humanitarian Logistics	Manager	7	1
Shelter Management	Coordinator	6	1
Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH)	Coordinator	6	1
Emergency Operation Centre / Information Management	Coordinator	6	1
Humanitarian Logistics	Coordinator	6	1
Rapid Assessment	Coordinator	6	1
Shelter Management	Officer	5	1
Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH)	Promoter	5	1
Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH)	Engineer	5	1
Emergency Operation Centre / Information Management	Officer	5	1
Humanitarian Logistics	Officer	5	1
Rapid Assessment	Officer	5	1
Total			15

The AQRF Level Descriptors show the hierarchy of the complexity of learning outcomes of ASCEND occupations and define the differences in basic (officer/engineer/promoter-level), intermediate (coordinator-level), and advanced (manager-level) competencies. The Level Descriptors also provide

a reference point for linking the ASCEND certification to the national qualifications framework (NQF) and facilitating comparisons of qualifications and certification systems across the ASEAN Member States. AQRF levels have two domains: (i) knowledge and skills and (ii) application and responsibility. In line with this, the ASCEND Competency Standards and Toolbox Documents incorporate four kinds of competencies:

- Cognitive competence: Tacit knowledge gained through experience and explicit knowledge of concepts, facts, and theories acquired through formal education
- Functional competence: Know-how or skill of a person to apply their knowledge to function in a given work setting
- Personal competence: Knowing oneself and how to appropriately conduct oneself in specific situations to be able to perform a job
- Ethical competence: To know what professional values are essential and uphold those values in challenging conditions

2.3

Basis and Framework

The primary basis of the Certification Schemes includes the [ASCEND Framework](#), ASCEND Competency Standards, which draw from and build on the reference documents below. ASCEND Toolboxes Documents closely align with ASEAN policies and developments relevant to the Southeast Asian context and supplement existing international agreements.

- ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response ([AADMER](#)) 2009
- Declaration on One ASEAN One Response ([OAOR](#)) 2016
- ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) [Work Programme](#) 2021-2025
- ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework ([AQRF](#))
- ASEAN Guiding Principles ([AGP](#)) for Quality Assurance and Recognition of Competency Certification Systems
- ASEAN Disaster Management Occupations Map
- ASEAN Community [Vision](#) 2025
- ASEAN Economic Community [Blueprint](#) 2025
- [Sendai Framework](#) for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030

Please refer to the ASCEND SOP for Certification for more information about how the Toolboxes Documents link to these reference documents.

2.4

ASCEND Competency Standards

The ASEAN Competency Standards on Disaster Management (ACSDM), or ASCEND Competency Standards, identifies the key features of work in selected disaster management professions and performance standards professionals need to meet to be deemed competent. It also provides the list of the forty-three (43) core and technical competencies that serve as the basis for defining the regionally recognised disaster management qualifications across the ASEAN Member States. The five (5) professions covered by the ASCEND Competency Standards include Rapid Assessment, Humanitarian Logistics, Information Management, WASH, and Shelter Management. Under these professions are five (5) categories of occupations: Manager, Coordinator, Officer, Promoter, and Engineer. Overall, there are fifteen (15) profession-occupation combinations (e.g., humanitarian logistics manager, information management coordinator, WASH promoter).

Each ASCEND Competency Standard has its dedicated Toolbox documents: an SOP, Certification Scheme, Assessor Guide, Trainer Guide, and Learner Guide. Only one SOP applies to all profession-occupation combinations covered by the ASCEND certification. The Certification Schemes, one for each of the profession-occupation combinations. Both these documents align with the AQRF Level Descriptors, Section 4: Guiding Principles and Protocols for Quality Assurance of the AGP, and ASEAN Disaster Management Occupations Map. The Certification Schemes also outline the ASCEND competencies under selected professions and occupations, eligibility criteria, basic requirements and rights of candidates, and obligations of certification holders. Assessor Guides describe the components of particular competency standards and offer tools to determine the candidate's qualifications. Trainer and Learner Guides expound on a given competency standard's elements and performance criteria for learning and assessment preparation purposes.

The ASCEND Toolbox documents can assist the ASEAN Member States to identify, build the capacity of, and mobilise competent disaster managers across Southeast Asia to help reduce disaster risks and disaster losses in the region through timely and effective response. The Toolbox documents may also serve as a reference for ASEAN Member States' seeking to develop and implement national-level competency-based certification processes based on their respective capacities and needs. The ASCEND Competency Standards and its derivative Toolbox documents will be reviewed and updated every five

(5) years to ensure it reflects changes in the disaster management profession and remains relevant. Table 2 describes its main components.

Table 2: *Components of the ASCEND Competency Standards*

Component	Description
Unit title	Describes the critical work function to be performed in an occupation.
Unit number	<p>A coding system to organise the units of competency. It also indicates the types of competency standards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ADM.COR.000.0 are core competencies. These are general professional knowledge and skills related to international humanitarian principles and disaster management standards, including ASEAN mechanisms and procedures. ADM.TEC.000.0 are technical competencies. These are specific knowledge and skills needed to perform effectively in work areas under their chosen disaster management profession and occupation.
Unit description	Provides information about the critical work function covered by the unit.
Elements	Presents the occupational tasks required to perform the critical work function in the unit.
Performance criteria	Lists the expected outcomes or results from the occupational tasks to perform and the standard required.
Unit variables	Advises on how to interpret the scope and context of this unit of competence.
Assessment guide	Outlines the evidence to gather and evaluate to determine whether the candidate is competent in the unit.
Linkages to other units	Explains the connection of the competency standard to other units of competency.

Critical aspects of assessment	Lists the types of evidence or demonstrated abilities assessors need to observe to determine the candidate's competency.
Context of assessment	Notes the settings or situations in which candidates need to demonstrate their ability during ASCEND assessments.
Context of assessment	Identifies the resources needed to conduct the assessment.
Assessment methods	Describes the different assessment methods to assess the competency of candidates in the specific unit.
Key competencies	Presents the specific knowledge, skills, and attitudes related to the unit of competency that assessors need to evaluate to confirm whether the candidate for certification is qualified and competent.



ASCEND WASH Manager: **Certification**



The purpose of this segment is to assist the ASCEND Secretariat or Authorised/Licensed Certification Institutions, ASCEND assessors, and candidates for ASCEND certification in ensuring that:

- Candidates pursuing ASCEND WASH Manager certification meet the regionally recognised qualifications and competencies defined in the ASEAN Competency Standards.
- Certificate holders continue to uphold the standards in which they are certified.

Candidates pursuing certification for ASCEND WASH Manager need to satisfy the eligibility criteria and basic requirements of candidates for certification and complete all assessments associated with the ASCEND core and technical standard competencies of their chosen profession and occupation. The following sections describe these, including the rights of candidates for certification and obligations of certificate holders.

3.1

Overview of ASCEND WASH Manager

Profession and occupation title	ASCEND WASH Manager
ASCEND certification level	Level 7 Manager
Expected level of formal education	Holds at least a bachelor's degree issued by a higher education institution (e.g., University, Technical Institutes) recognised by the national government of where it operates. Formal education must be equivalent to the "Knowledge and Skills" descriptors of the ASEAN Qualification Reference Framework (AQRF) Level 7.
Expected level of work experience	With at least 7 years of relevant work experience similar to the "Application and Responsibility" descriptors of the AQRF Level 7.
General description of the profession	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene or WASH in humanitarian and disaster response contexts provide affected communities access to clean potable water, adequate sanitation utilities, and promotion of good hygiene practices that reduce environmental health risks and prevent disease outbreaks.

3.2

Competency Standards in Scope

The competency unit codes and titles below are the references that detail the experience, knowledge, skills, and attitudes (KSAs) that applicants or prospective candidates for certification need to demonstrate to show that they can perform well in their chosen occupation in the disaster management sector. Each competency unit listed below has a competency-specific Assessor Guide, Trainer Guide, and Learner Guide. The first sections of the ASCEND SOP for Certification and this document provide more information about the nature of these Guides.

ASCEND assessors must familiarise themselves with the structure and contents of the relevant Guides before conducting a briefing to explain the certification process, assessment methods, and learning approach to accepted candidates (see SOP activity 1.2.2). They should ensure that the candidate understands the learning material included in the assessment, how to read them, and in what order.

Table 3: ASCEND Competency Standards in Scope

Type of competency	Unit Code	Unit Title
Core	ADM.COR.001.1	Apply the core humanitarian standard and principles
Core	ADM.COR.002.1	Identify ASEAN humanitarian procedures and mechanisms
Core	ADM.COR.003.1	Manage humanitarian programme cycle
Technical	ADM.TEC.021.1	Conduct in-depth analysis on WASH in humanitarian settings
Technical	ADM.TEC.022.1	Deliver strategic direction on WASH
Technical	ADM.TEC.023.1	Develop strategy to link relief, recovery, and development

3.3

Basic Requirements of Candidates for Certification

Prospective candidates for certification must satisfy all the basic requirements listed below to be eligible for ASCEND certification. ASCEND certificate-issuing institutions are responsible for collecting, reviewing, and counter-checking the accuracy and validity of the supporting documents presented by prospective candidates. Please see the ASCEND SOP for Certification for details about activities, actors, and actions involved in candidate application for certification and admission.

Prospective candidates should be:

- Physically and mentally healthy
- Able to read, write, and speak fluently in English and at least one national language of any ASEAN Member State
- Formal education: Holds at least a bachelor's degree issued by a higher education institution (e.g., University, Technical Institutes) recognised by the national government of where it operates. Formal education must be equivalent to the “Knowledge and Skills” descriptors of the ASEAN Qualification Reference Framework ([AQRF](#)) Level 7.
- Work experience: Senior professional with advanced skills and at least 7 years of relevant work experience working on humanitarian or disaster management WASH-related job functions (similar to the “Application and Responsibility” descriptors of the [AQRF](#) Level 7.

3.4

Rights of Candidates for Certification

- Right to be awarded the certification after completing assessments and deemed “competent” in all the core and technical competencies of their chosen profession and occupation.
- Right to appeal the assessment results and recommendations and request for re-assessment if deemed as “not yet competent” – subject to the final decision of the ASCEND Secretariat or Authorised or Licensed Certification Institutions.

- Right to use the certification to promote themselves professionally and as evidence of their qualifications as an ASCEND WASH Manager

3.5

Obligations of Certificate Holders

- Act according to ASCEND competency standards, disaster management professional ethics, ASEAN values, and humanitarian codes of conduct.
- Abide by the rules, regulations, and requirements set by ASEAN and its Member States.

3.6

Certification Fees and Costs

A discussion on the certification fees and costs will happen later (part of the sustainability strategy document). It will likely include a one-time certification fee of the same amount across the region to cover the assessment cost. Certification fees do not include transportation, accommodation, and other living costs (e.g., food and drinks) of candidates completing certification activities.



ASCEND Certification Scheme:

Process

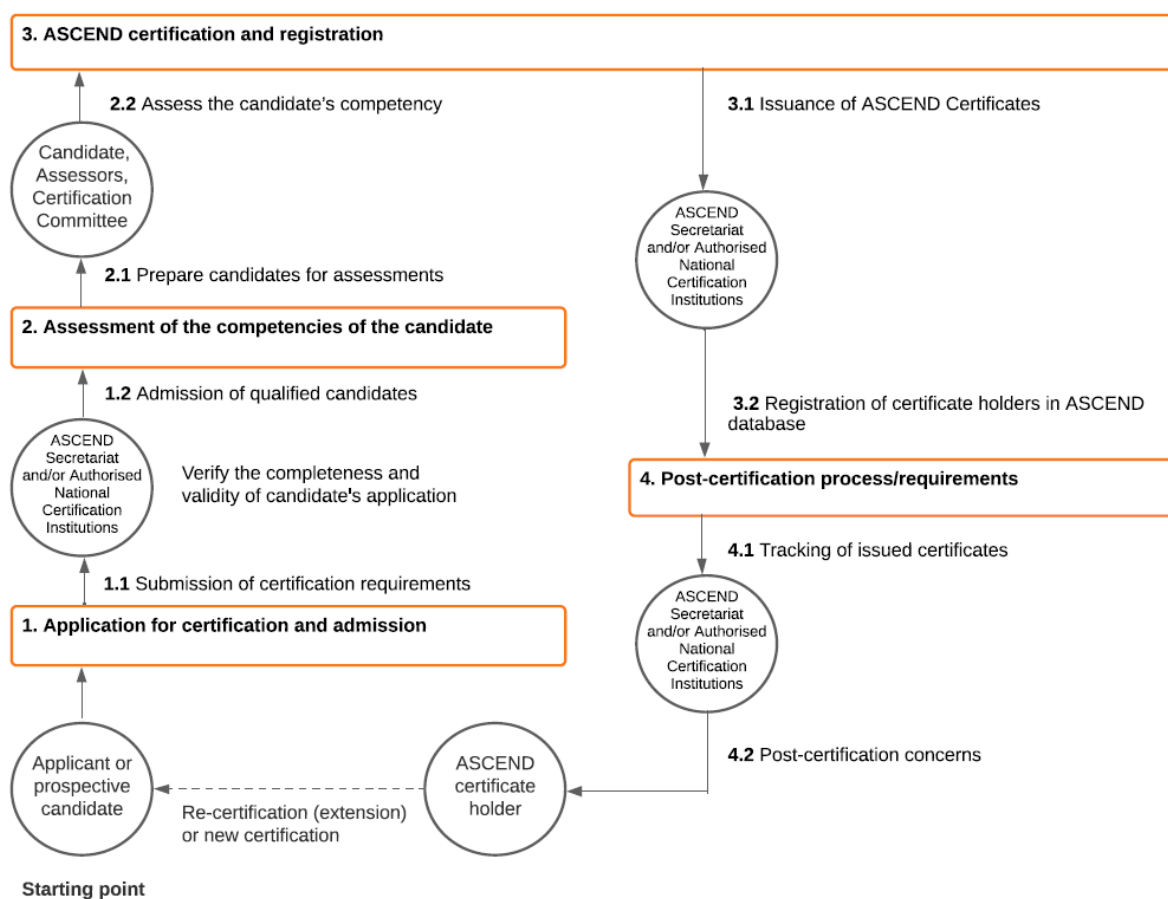


4.1

Summary of the Certification Process

The figure below illustrates and summarises the main stages of the certification process. **For ASCEND Secretariat or Authorised or Licensed Certification Institutions and Assessors:** Please refer to the ASCEND SOP for Certification for a more detailed activity-based workflow chart and the comprehensive guidelines for implementing the certification. **For candidates:** The section below provides useful information about the general sequence of activities and actors involved in the ASCEND certification.

Figure 2: Main stages and activities of the certification process



Actor-based table of ASCEND certification activities

No.	Actors	Actions	Remarks
1. Application for certification and admission			
1.1 Submission of certification requirements			
1.1.1	Applicants or prospective candidates	If eligible, submit application forms, supporting documents, and application letter to ASCEND Secretariat or Authorised / Licensed National Certification Institutions (licensed given by NPCA or its equivalent).	See the <i>Certification Schemes</i> for the list of requirements and expected prior education, training, work and volunteer experience.
1.1.2	ASCEND Secretariat and/or Authorised/Licensed National Certification Institutions - can be assisted by Assessors or Certification Committees	Verify the completeness and validity of their application for ASCEND certification.	The <i>Certification Schemes</i> contain information about the eligibility criteria for each disaster management occupation included in ASCEND. Contact higher education institutions and employer/previous employers of the candidate if needed.
1.2 Admission of qualified candidates			
1.2.1.a	ASCEND Secretariat and/or Authorised/Licensed National Certification Institutions	Accept applications of selected candidates for ASCEND certification and inform them of the decision.	Enrol accepted candidates, record their application details, and endorse regional assessors.
1.2.1.b	ASCEND Secretariat and/or Authorised/Licensed National Certification Institutions	Notify unsuccessful applicants, provide recommendations on what applicants need to complete or fulfil and thank them for their interest. Applicants can re-apply as soon as they meet qualifications and requirements.	See the Guidelines Section of <i>ASCEND SOP</i> for information about waitlisting and re-application of prospective candidates.

1.2.2	ASCEND Secretariat and/or Authorised/Licensed National Certification Institutions	Conduct a briefing to explain the certification process, assessment methods, and learning approach to accepted candidates. Ensuring that the candidate understands the learning material included in the assessment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See the <i>Certification Schemes</i> for the set of competency standards included in the ASCEND profession and occupation chosen by candidates. • See <i>Assessor Guides</i> for more information about the competency-based assessment.
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2. Assessment of the competencies of the candidate

2.1 Prepare candidates for assessments

2.1.1	Assessors and/or Certification Committees	Provide Learner Guides to accepted candidates and conduct briefing to explain its relevance to the assessments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See <i>Learner Guides</i> for learning resources of the ASCEND profession and occupation chosen by candidates. • See <i>Assessor Guides</i> for more information about the assessment tools.
2.1.2	Accepted candidates	Study and prepare for assessments.	See the <i>Learner and Trainer Guides</i> for learning resources, recommended readings, and training presentations.

2.2 Assess the candidate's competency

2.2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accepted candidates • Assessors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete competency assessments. • Conduct competency assessments. • Determine if accepted candidates meet the ASCEND Competency Standards of their chosen profession and occupation. • Record assessment results and provide feedback to the candidate. • Submit report and recommendation to a Certification Committee for verification. 	See the <i>Assessor Guides</i> for the assessment methods and tools (oral interviews, written tests, and observation checklists).
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2.2.2	Certification Committee (can be a group of assessors)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verify the completeness and validity of assessments. • Check for errors and irregularities in assessment reports and recommendations. • Endorses assessment reports and recommendations to ASCEND Secretariat or Authorised and Licensed National Certification Institutions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See <i>Certification Schemes</i> for Master Checklist. • See the <i>Assessor Guides</i> for a template of the competency recording sheet.
2.2.3.a	Certification Committee (can be a group of assessors)	If a candidate is “competent”: Endorse assessment reports and recommendations to ASCEND Secretariat or Authorised and Licensed National Certification Institutions.	See the Guidelines Section of <i>ASCEND SOP</i> for information about the endorsement of assessment reports recommendations.
2.2.3.b	Certification Committee (can be a group of assessors)	If a candidate is “not yet competent”: Review appeals of candidates (those that decide to submit) and decide whether to grant re-assessment.	See the Guidelines Section of <i>ASCEND SOP</i> for information about the appeal process.

3. ASCEND certification and registration of certificate holders

3.1 Issuance of ASCEND Certificates

3.1.1	ASCEND Secretariat and/or Authorised/Licensed National Certification Institutions	Issue ASCEND Certificates to qualified and competent candidates that passed all the required assessments.	See the Guidelines Section of <i>ASCEND SOP</i> for information about the details and validity period of certificates.
3.1.2	ASCEND Secretariat and/or Authorised/Licensed National Certification Institutions	Explain the guidelines and limitations on the use of the ASCEND certificates.	See the Guidelines Section of <i>ASCEND SOP</i> for information about what certificate holders can and cannot do when using the certificate.

3.2 Registration in ASCEND database

3.2.1	ASCEND Secretariat and/or Authorised/Licensed National Certification Institutions	Input details of ASCEND certificate holders as a member in the ASCEND registry	See the Guidelines Section of <i>ASCEND SOP</i> for more information.
3.2.2	ASCEND Secretariat and/or Authorised/Licensed National Certification Institutions	Explain membership obligations to ASCEND certificate holders.	See the Guidelines Section of <i>ASCEND SOP</i> for more information.

4. Post-certification process/requirements

4.1 Tracking of issued certificates

4.1.1	ASCEND Secretariat and/or Authorised/Licensed National Certification Institutions	Track the number and validity of issued certificates, including adherence of certificate holders to ASCEND Competency Standards, professional ethics, ASEAN values, and humanitarian codes of conduct.	See the Guidelines Section of <i>ASCEND SOP</i> for more information about the tracking process.
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4.2 Post-certification concerns

4.2.1	ASCEND Secretariat and/or Authorised/Licensed National Certification Institutions	Suspend or revoke ASCEND certificates whenever appropriate.	See the Guidelines Section of <i>ASCEND SOP</i> for more information about how to respond to non-adhering ASCEND certificate holders.
4.2.2	ASCEND Secretariat and/or Authorised/Licensed National Certification Institutions	ASCEND certificate holders who maintain “good standing” (certificates are not suspended or revoked) can apply for re-certification.	See the Guidelines Section of <i>ASCEND SOP</i> for more information about the process for requesting an extension.



ASCEND

ASEAN Standards and Certification for Experts in Disaster Management

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