

# ASSE Guidelines for Certification of Service Plumbers and Residential Mechanical Service Technicians



## 13000 Certification

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# Overview

This section provides insight into the organizational structure of the ASSE International Chapter of IAPMO, LLC (hereafter referred to as ASSE), and the operation of the ASSE Guidelines for Service Plumber Certification (hereafter referred to as Guidelines).

## Introduction

The primary responsibility for the 13000 Certification Program belongs to the ASSE Board of Directors and the professional qualifications coordinator, except for those specific areas of responsibility that may be delegated to the appropriate committee.

Certification exams shall only be administered to classes taught by an ASSE approved instructor at an ASSE accredited school. The certification exam shall be witnessed by an ASSE approved proctor. An Instructor shall not proctor any examinations, either written or practical, for any class in which they were the instructor.

ASSE reserves the right to inspect any school's facility without prior notice.

## Program Quality Control

Program quality control for the ASSE 13000 Certification Program shall be the responsibility of the ASSE Board of Directors and the professional qualifications coordinator. Quality control is maintained through ASSE, the 13000 Technical Committees and sub-committees and the School/Instructor/Proctor Committee.

The ASSE Board of Directors may revoke the accreditation of any school, instructor or proctor that has shown deceit, displays gross negligence, incompetence or misconduct in the performance of their duties as stated in the *ASSE /IAPMO/ANSI Series 13000, Service Plumber and Residential Mechanical Service Technician Professional Qualifications Standard* (hereafter referred to as Series 13000), and these Guidelines. Any school that conducts a class that does not meet the requirements of the Series 13000 and these Guidelines shall have their accreditation reviewed. Students enrolled in a school that has had its accreditation revoked may be required to repeat the course and certification exam at an ASSE accredited school. ASSE shall not be held responsible for any financial losses.

Schools must adhere to these Guidelines. Schools found in violation may be placed under review and possibly have their ASSE approval removed. A signed document agreeing to the Guidelines must be submitted to ASSE prior to a class being held. If a school is found to be in violation of the program Guidelines, the following procedures will be followed;

1. Written notification of the violation will be sent to the school.
2. The school will have thirty days to present, in writing, their evidence of compliance.
3. All evidence will be presented to the ASSE International Board of Directors.
4. The ASSE International Board of Directors will decide the appropriate corrective action.
5. The school will be notified, in writing, of the ASSE International Board of Directors decision.

## **Program Record Keeping Responsibility**

ASSE shall maintain a record keeping system for the 13000 Certification Program.

## **Equal Opportunity**

ASSE respects each participant in the Certification Programs as an individual and assures that no participant will be subjected to discrimination in ASSE's performance of its certifying authority because of the individual's race, color, religion, national origin, non-disqualifying disability, sex, age or other protected class as defined by federal or state law.

ASSE recognizes that its responsibility to certify plumbing and mechanical professionals is intended to support and enhance the protection of public health. ASSE will exercise its authority hereunder without regard to the status of the employer/employee or any prospective employer/employee of any program participant.

## **Disclaimer**

In no event shall ASSE, its Board of Directors, committees, consultants or employees incur any obligation or liability for damages, including, but not limited to, consequential damages arising out of, or in connection with, the applicable certification.

## **Committees**

The committees governing the program are the Service Plumber Technical Committee and the Residential Mechanical Technical Committee and the School/Instructor/Proctor Committee. With the approval of the Board of Directors, the committees may enlist outside expertise as necessary or required, and within budget.

### **Technical Committees:**

- Are appointed by the ASSE International president and include the chairman of the School/Instructor/Proctor Committee as well as the professional qualification's director.
- At least one member of each technical committee should represent contractors.
- Are responsible for maintaining the technical aspects of the program. The committee maintains the question bank and practical for certification exams and ensures the validity of the exam content.
- Reviews and updates these Guidelines and the course requirements.
- Conducts other activities as directed by the ASSE Board of Directors and the 13000 Technical Committee chairpersons.
- Are responsible for inspections of school facilities and classes as directed by the ASSE Board of Directors or the 13000 Technical Committee chairpersons.

### **School/Instructor/Proctor Committee**

- Is appointed by the ASSE International president.
- Reviews the applications of the schools, instructors, and proctors for approval.
- Reviews curriculum and facilities of schools applying for accreditation.
- Conducts other activities as directed by the ASSE Board of Directors or the 13000 Technical Committee chairpersons.

# Certification

## Introduction

ASSE third-party certification affirms that an individual has completed the required course of instruction, has passed the required written and practical exams and has met all the criteria as stated in the Series 13000 and these Guidelines.

## Service Plumber Certification

- A. An approved course of instruction shall mean the course curriculum as approved by the Service Plumber Technical Committee. This includes the minimum requirements as stated in the Series 13010.
- B. Certification to Standard 13010 for Service Plumbers is available only to individuals who have a minimum of five (5) years experience in the installation, maintenance or repair of plumbing systems. Certification shall consist of a minimum of forty (40) hours of instruction and exams.

## Residential Mechanical Certification

- A. An approved course of instruction shall mean the course curriculum as approved by the Residential Mechanical Technical Committee. This includes the minimum requirements as stated in the Series 13020.
- B. Certification to Standard 13020 for Residential Mechanical Service Technicians is available only to individuals who have a minimum of five (5) years of experience in the installation, maintenance or repair of mechanical systems. Certification shall consist of a minimum of forty (40) hours of instruction and exams.

## Participant's Application

An application will be distributed to each student at the time of the exam. Failure to provide accurate contact information on the application may result in the certification not being processed by ASSE. The applicant shall forfeit the full application fee. By signing the bottom portion of the application, the instructor verifies that the applicant attended the required course.

## Course Instructional Objectives Checklist

An applicable Instructional Objectives Checklist (IOC) will be presented by the instructor to each course participant. The IOC outlines the required course content. By signing the IOC, participants verify that the required items were covered during the course of instruction.

## Instructional Materials

The training materials used by schools in teaching classes are determined by the school. The list of training materials shall be submitted for review at the time of application for accreditation. Training materials shall be provided to ASSE upon request. Additional reference materials for the classes shall include the *ASSE/IAPMO/ANSI Series 13000, Service Plumber and Residential Mechanical Service Technician Professional Qualifications Standard*, the cost of which shall be included in the certification fee.

## Exams

- A. The professional qualifications director and the 13000 Technical Committees shall prepare such written and practical exams as will properly reflect the minimum criteria as outlined in the Series 13000 and these Guidelines.
- B. Each student seeking certification must successfully complete a written and practical exam. An ASSE approved proctor shall administer certification exams. Both the written and practical exams shall be completed without the aid of reference materials or study guides.
- C. In the event an applicant fails to appear for a scheduled exam, a new exam date shall be arranged between the school and the applicant.
  - 1. The request for an exam must occur within thirty (30) days of the original exam date. A test fee is required by ASSE.
  - 2. The applicant shall complete the exam within six (6) months of the original exam date. After six (6) months, the applicant shall repeat the appropriate course of instruction.
  - 3. Any costs related to the certification exam or repeated course of instruction shall be the responsibility of the applicant. A test fee is required for each attempt.
- D. In the event the applicant fails an exam, a re-test date shall be arranged between the school and the applicant.
  - 1. The request for a re-test must occur within thirty (30) days of notification of failure by the school. An applicant must wait a minimum of 24 hours before attempting a retest of the practical exam.
  - 2. The applicant shall complete the exam within six (6) months of the original certification exam failure date. After six (6) months, the applicant shall repeat the appropriate course of instruction.
  - 3. Should the applicant fail three (3) exam attempts, the applicant shall repeat the entire course of instruction. A new application is required. This includes applicants who fail the practical exam.
  - 4. Any costs related to the exam or repeated course of instruction shall be the responsibility of the applicant. A re-test fee is required for each attempt.

## Written Exam

The written exam is administered by an ASSE approved proctor or an exam facilitator.

## Service Plumber Practical Exam

The practical exam is administered by an ASSE approved proctor. The exam shall be conducted in a one to one, proctor to student ratio. ASSE 13010 certification requires the demonstration of knowledge, in a customer-based situation, customer service skills, and service of fixtures and appliances as found in residential and commercial environments, see *ASSE/IAPMO/ANSI Series 13000, Service Plumber and Residential Mechanical Service Technician Professional Qualifications Standard*, section 10-2.4.4. The candidate must complete the testing within a 2-hour time period.

## Residential Mechanical Practical Exam

The practical exam is administered by an ASSE approved proctor. The exam shall be conducted in a one to one, proctor to student ratio. ASSE 13020 certification requires the demonstration of knowledge, in a customer-based situation, customer service skills, and service of appliances found in residential environments, see *ASSE/IAPMO/ANSI Series 13000, Service Plumber and Residential Mechanical Service Technician Professional Qualifications Standard*, section 20-2.4.4. The candidate must complete the testing within a 2-hour time period.

## Procedures for Certification

- A. A class application shall be submitted to ASSE thirty (30) days prior to the course completion. It is the responsibility of the school to ensure that each student meets the prerequisites for the class the student is enrolled in. The application shall include the class start date, exam date, names of proctors, exam facilitators and instructors, number of students and names of students, together with a signed statement that each student has demonstrated at least five (5) years of experience as required.
- B. Upon receipt of the aforementioned information, ASSE will forward the *ASSE/IAPMO/ANSI Series 13000, Service Plumber and Residential Mechanical Service Technician Professional Qualifications Standard*, to the school for distribution to the students. The exams will be forwarded to the appropriate party prior to the exam date.
- C. All paper exams, complete and incomplete, must be returned to ASSE along with the required applications and IOCs. Exams are processed in the ASSE office and results are sent to the school. ASSE does not give paper exam results to students. Students have the option to receive the results of electronic exams at the conclusion of the exam. All student contact shall be through the school.
- D. Protests of the exam results shall be filed by the student. Such protests shall be submitted in writing to the professional qualifications director within thirty (30) days of notification of the exam results. The professional qualifications coordinator shall make an inquiry of the protests and render a determination in writing within sixty (60) days. All expenses incurred shall be borne by the candidate.
- E. Appeals of the professional qualifications director's determination shall be submitted in writing within thirty (30) days to the ASSE Board of Directors. The appellant shall resubmit all original data and shall offer supporting documentation or rationale to justify a second hearing. The Board of Directors shall make their determination within sixty (60) days. The decision of the Board of Directors shall be final.

## Issuing a Certificate

- A. Upon satisfactory fulfillment of the requirements provided herein, ASSE shall issue a suitable certificate and/or wallet card along with uniform patches. The certificate shall state the classification for which the applicant is certified.
- B. The certificate shall indicate that the holder has satisfactorily fulfilled the requirements as stated in the Series 13000 and these Guidelines.
- C. Any certificate used in accordance with these regulations shall be valid for a period of three (3) years from the date of issuance.
- D. Certified individuals must renew their certification within six (6) months of the printed expiration date. Recertification up to six (6) months before the expiration date will not result in any loss of certification time. Recertification up to six (6) months after the expiration date is permitted. The certification is not valid between the expiration date and the renewal date. Recertification up to six (6) months after the expiration date does not result in any gain of certification time. The new expiration date will be three (3) years after the original expiration date. Failure to recertify by six (6) months after the expiration date will result in the individual having to retake the initial course and exam. The 13000 Technical Committees may make exceptions; i.e. for active duty military personnel. ASSE, at its sole discretion, may extend certification expiration dates as an emergency measure as appropriate in response to unforeseeable disasters or emergencies.
- E. Certified individuals failing to renew their certificates prior to the expiration date shall have their names removed from the certification list.
- F. The Board of Directors shall revoke the certificate of any person who, after a hearing before the Board of Directors, is found to have obtained a certificate by fraud or deceit, or displays gross negligence, incompetence or misconduct in the performance of his/her duties as a certified service plumber or residential mechanical service technician. All costs incurred for the hearing shall be the responsibility of the individual.

## **Recertification**

Recertification shall be to the requirements of the current Series 13000.

- a) An ASSE approved service plumber instructor may recertify without exam if they have taught an ASSE approved service plumber course within the previous three (3) years. The recertification fee is required.
- b) An ASSE approved service plumber proctor may recertify without exam if they have proctored an ASSE approved service plumber exam within the previous three (3) years. The recertification fee is required.
- c) An ASSE approved residential mechanical service technician instructor may recertify without exam if they have taught an ASSE approved residential mechanical course within the previous three (3) years. The recertification fee is required.
- d) An ASSE approved residential mechanical service technician proctor may recertify without exam if they have proctored an ASSE approved residential mechanical exam within the previous three (3) years. The recertification fee is required.

## **Fees for Certification**

The application fee for certification shall be payable to ASSE and is the responsibility of the school conducting the class.



# Proctors & Exam Facilitators

The following outlines a program that will establish uniformity to the exam procedures and credibility to the proctoring process and certification programs.

Responsibility for maintaining the proctor and exam facilitator requirements falls to the professional qualification's director and the Technical Committees. The Technical Committees may, at their discretion, establish additional requirements as appropriate.

## Service Plumber Proctor Qualifications

To qualify for the proctor pool, an individual shall submit an application, a résumé of trade related experience and supporting documentation to ASSE to be evaluated for approval by the School/Instructor/Proctor Committee. The applicant must show evidence of:

- A. Five (5) years of service plumbing experience.  
Or
- B. Completion of an ASSE recognized train-the-trainer program (minimum 20 hours) specific to the teaching of service plumbing.

In order to continue to qualify for the proctor pool, an individual must maintain a current ASSE 13010 certification.

Only ASSE approved proctors having a 13010 certification can proctor the ASSE 13010 exam. Exceptions to these requirements shall only be made by the School/Instructor/Proctor Committee.

## Residential Mechanical Proctor Qualifications

To qualify for the proctor pool, an individual shall submit an application, a resume of trade related experience and supporting documentation to ASSE to be evaluated for approval by the School/Instructor/Proctor Committee. The applicant must show evidence of:

- A. Five (5) years of Residential Mechanical service experience.  
Or
- B. Completion of an ASSE recognized train-the-trainer program (minimum 20 hours) specific to the teaching of residential mechanical service.

In order to continue to qualify for the proctor pool, an individual must maintain a current ASSE 13020 certification.

Only ASSE approved proctors having a 13020 certification can proctor the ASSE 13020 exam. Exceptions to these requirements shall only be made by the School/Instructor/Proctor Committee.

## Proctor Responsibilities

Proctor(s) shall be responsible for maintaining an atmosphere conducive to an exam process. The Proctor Guide is available at the ASSE office and shall be followed whenever an ASSE exam is given. The Proctor Guide gives a detailed explanation of the proctor's role in administering the practical and written exams. Schools may choose to use an exam facilitator to proctor the written portion of the exam. Refer to the Proctor guide for the pass/fail criteria and testing requirements.

## **Exam Facilitators**

A school may choose to use an exam facilitator to proctor the written portion of the exam. The exam facilitator and the school are responsible to protect the integrity of the written exam. Each time an exam facilitator proctors a written exam, they are required to sign an affidavit indicating that they protected the integrity of the exam and followed the requirements as stated in the Proctor Guide. The Proctor Guide gives a detailed explanation of the requirements for the administration of the written exams. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in the school accreditation being revoked.

## **Compensation**

Proctors and exam facilitators are not employees or sub-contractors of ASSE. Schools accredited by ASSE are responsible for the compensation of the proctor and exam facilitator as well as the scheduling of the certification exams.

# Instructors

## Service Plumber Instructor Qualifications

To apply to be an ASSE approved instructor, an individual must be sponsored by an ASSE accredited school with the intent of teaching for that school. The applicant must submit a completed application, a résumé and supporting documentation as to their qualifications. To qualify as an instructor, a person shall have:

- A. A minimum of five (5) years of experience in service plumbing.
- B. Knowledge or experience in all subjects described in the Series 13010.
- C. A valid 13010 certification.
- D. Meet one (1) or more of the following criteria:
  - 1. Minimum of three (3) years of teaching experience.
  - 2. Completion of an ASSE recognized train-the-trainer program (minimum 20 hours) specific to the teaching of service plumbing.

In order to continue to qualify for the instructor pool, an individual must maintain a current ASSE 13010 certification. Exceptions to these requirements shall only be made by the School/Instructor/Proctor Committee.

## Residential Mechanical Instructor Qualifications

To apply to be an ASSE approved instructor, an individual must be sponsored by an ASSE accredited school with the intent of teaching for that school. The applicant must submit a completed application, a resume and supporting documentation as to their qualifications. To qualify as an instructor, a person shall have:

- A. A minimum of five (5) years of service experience in the mechanical and/or plumbing industry.
- B. Knowledge or experience in all subjects described in the Series 13020.
- C. A valid 13020 certification.
- D. Meet one (1) or more of the following criteria:
  - 1. Minimum of three (3) years of teaching experience.
  - 2. Completion of an ASSE recognized train-the-trainer program (minimum 20 hours) specific to the teaching of residential mechanical service.

In order to continue to qualify for the instructor pool, an individual must maintain a current ASSE 13020 certification. Exceptions to these requirements shall only be made by the School/Instructor/Proctor Committee.

## Instructor Responsibilities

Instructors shall be responsible for maintaining an atmosphere conducive to the learning process. The instructor shall be responsible for teaching, at a minimum, every item on the course outline as it was submitted to ASSE for approval. ASSE approved instructors are not employees of ASSE, nor are they compensated by ASSE. Schools accredited by ASSE are responsible for the compensation of instructors.

# Facilities and Equipment

ASSE recognizes that the quality of training is dependent on the training environment and believes that any approved training program should be adequately equipped to train the number of people in any given training session.

ASSE shall conduct a site visit prior to making a determination to approve a training facility. All classes shall be conducted in an ASSE approved facility by an ASSE approved instructor. ASSE reserves the right to inspect any facility without prior notice. This includes during class periods and when an exam is being given. ASSE reserves the right to appoint a representative for these inspections and to survey participants to assure compliance with these Guidelines.

## Classroom

A. The classroom of an ASSE approved training facility shall be of such a size as to adequately and comfortably accommodate:

- 1) The maximum number of students per class in accordance with the school approval, never exceeding 20.
- 2) The equipment necessary for the class.
- 3) A minimum of 15 square feet of classroom space per student.

B. There shall be:

- 1) Sufficient tables and chairs for each registered student.
- 2) Adequate lighting
- 3) Sufficient sanitary facilities

A school may not exceed the maximum class size for which it was approved.

## Service Plumbing Lab

An ASSE approved wet lab shall contain plumbing fixtures, appliances and equipment and a means of providing an adequate water supply pressure and drainage. At a minimum, the lab shall include:

- 1) Flush tank water closet
- 2) Flush valve water closet and/or urinal
- 3) Lavatory/sink with faucet
- 4) Gas water heater
- 5) Electric water heater
- 6) Recirculating pump
- 7) 1 ½" – 3" horizontal drain line, with P-trap, which has the ability to be compromised
- 8) Shower Valve
- 9) Pressure assist water closet
- 10) Thermal mixing valve (ASSE 1017, 1069, 1070, or 1071)

For all fixtures and appliances in the lab there must be the necessary:

- 1) hand tools
- 2) testing equipment
- 3) drain cleaning machine
- 4) repair parts
- 5) closet auger

## Residential Mechanical Lab

An ASSE approved wet lab shall contain appliances, equipment and a means of providing adequate water supply pressure, gas and electrical needs. At a minimum, the lab shall include:

- 1) Heat Pump with electric heat
- 2) Gas Furnace with A/C and a humidifier
- 3) Electrical troubleshooting trainer with relays, contactors, switches, lights etc.
- 4) Evacuation of refrigerant
- 5) Ductless mini split systems

For all appliances in the lab there must be the necessary:

- 1) hand tools
- 2) testing equipment
- 3) repair parts

### **Off-Site Training Classes**

ASSE accredited schools may apply to conduct off-site training classes after a minimum of one (1) year, or upon conducting a minimum of 4 classes at their permanent location. All ASSE accredited schools must maintain a permanent location.

A separate application per each off-site location shall be required to be submitted to and approved by ASSE no less than 30 days prior to conducting off-site training. All mobile equipment shall meet the same criteria as required for permanent classrooms and wet labs within these Guidelines.

### **Changes to Schools**

Should an ASSE approved training facility make any changes, a notice of the change, together with a full description of the change, shall be submitted to ASSE for review. A change shall include, but not be limited to, a physical change of address, additions or deletions to the course outline, equipment or training material.

Every three (3) years a school shall be audited by ASSE. The school shall review the qualifications of the instructors and proctors. If there were any changes to the facility, or to the listed instructors or proctors, the school must provide documentation of the change. To be renewed, a school shall have held a minimum of one (1) ASSE certification class within the previous three (3) years. If no class was held, the school shall reapply as a new school.

## Trademark Usage Guidelines

### Trademark Usage Guidelines for ASSE International Approved Training Providers

The ASSE International Chapter of IAPMO, LLC (“ASSE International”) considers its trademarks and service marks to be among its most valuable intellectual property assets. As such, ASSE International acts consistently to preserve the strength of and retain its exclusive rights to use its trademarks. To the extent a school uses an ASSE International mark to refer to ASSE International in literature or marketing, usage must follow these Guidelines. Questions about the Guidelines should be directed to [Marianne.Waickman@asse-plumbing.org](mailto:Marianne.Waickman@asse-plumbing.org).

Schools may use this Mark to indicate that they are an approved training provider:



Schools may not alter the shape, proportion, color, text, typography, or orientation of the Mark in any way. This includes re-coloring the Mark, rotating the Mark, repositioning individual elements of the Mark, outlining the Mark, and altering or adding text to the Mark. The Mark may only appear in black or white. The black version is preferred, but the white logo may be used on backgrounds darker than 50% grey to provide sufficient contrast. The Mark must be displayed at a sufficient resolution and size for legibility; generally, the Mark should never appear less than 1/2" tall in printed materials or less than 36px tall in digital media. Provide as much clear space (padding) around the logo as possible; we recommend surrounding the Mark with clear space of at least 1/4 the height of the top ASSE rectangle.

When a school uses the Mark, it must make clear that the school is approved to provide training for ASSE International certification. It is improper to imply that a school *is* ASSE International, that classes are *offered or taught by* ASSE International, or that the school provides ASSE International certification.

Please report any misuse of Marks to ASSE by email to [Marianne.Waickman@asse-plumbing.org](mailto:Marianne.Waickman@asse-plumbing.org).