



INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR  
NON-DESTRUCTIVE TESTING

*The World Organisation for NDT*

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## ICNDT Operating Procedure OP23: Management of the ICNDT Examination Question Bank (EQB)

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### Executive Summary

The ICNDT Examination Question Bank (EQB) comprises a stand-alone database application containing over 7,000 multiple choice questions covering Levels 1, 2 and 3. The database application is capable of generating question papers manually or automatically, with selection options for sector, method, level and difficulty.

The objectives of the EQB are to:

- satisfy requirement for fairness, validity and reliability in qualification examinations
- help harmonise the standard of qualification examinations
- help to make examinations more rigorous by enabling users to ensure that papers more evenly cover the required body of knowledge for a particular subject
- enable national bodies to share effort in generating suitable questions
- improve the quality of examination papers by increasing the number of questions available

This document is a strategic level Operating Procedure as defined in Operating Procedure OP18 and is subject to approval by the ICNDT Executive Committee (IEC) and the Policy & General Purposes Committee (PGPC).

As specified in OP 18 the EQB is operated by the ICNDT Certification Executive Committee (ICEC), supported by Work Instruction OP 23/WI/1 approved by the ICEC and ICNDT Working Group 1 (WG1).

### Disclaimer

The ICNDT accepts no liability for the use of the EQB by purchasing Personnel Certification Bodies.

### Jurisdiction

The sale and maintenance of the ICNDT EQB is subject to the jurisdiction of Austria.

## Revision and Approval Status

Issue / Draft	Date	Details	Status / Approval
OP23 Draft Issue 1 Rev 0	30/07/2013	Document includes both strategic and operating level documents as appendices.	For ICEC discussion
OP 23 Issue 1 Draft A	15/11/2013	Document reformatted to include only strategic level content. Operating level Work Instructions to be provided in separate documents.	For ICEC discussion
OP 23 Issue 1 Draft B	05/12/2013	Incorporated comments from PGP; additional cosmetic changes	For ICEC/WG1 approval
OP 23 Issue 1 Draft B1	10/12/2013	Minor changes in response to comment from ICEC and WG1; no adverse comments	Approved by ICEC and WG1
OP 23 Issue 1 Draft C	13/12/2013	Updated draft and date; passed to PGP	For PGP approval
OP 23 Issue 1 Draft D	20/12/2013	Value of fees taken out of OP	Approved by PGP
OP 23 Issue 1	31/12/2013		Approved for issue

## Scope

This Operating Procedure covers the operation of the ICNDT Examination Question Bank. The Operating Procedure is supported by Work Instruction OP 23/WI/1 which is under the control of ICEC.

## References

- OP 18: ICNDT Certification Executive Committee  
OP 19: ICNDT Multilateral Recognition Agreement  
OP 23/WI/1: Management of the ICNDT Examination Question Bank (in preparation)

## Abbreviations

EQB	Examination Question Bank
ICEC	ICNDT Certification Executive Committee
ICNDT	International Committee for Non-Destructive Testing
IEC	ICNDT Executive Committee
MRA	Multilateral Recognition Agreement
OP	Operating Procedure
PCB	Personnel Certification Body
PGPC	Policy & General Purposes Committee
WG1	ICNDT Working Group 1

## Access to the EQB

The EQB is available for purchase by Personnel Certification Bodies (PCB) meeting two main requirements:

1. The PCB has been proposed by a member of ICNDT which is a signatory of the ICNDT Multilateral Recognition Agreement (Operating Procedure OP 19 Schedule 1).
2. The PCB has registered in the ICNDT Multilateral Recognition Agreement (Operating Procedure OP 19, Schedule 2), or committed to apply for registration.

In addition the prospective Client PCB shall agree to the following conditions of purchase and use:

1. The ICNDT will give no guarantee regarding the suitability of the questions or operating software and accepts no liability for the use of the EQB.
2. A purchase and license fee is payable prior to release of the ICNDT examination question bank and associated software.
3. ICNDT EQB questions held at examination centres shall be subject to strict measures of security and confidentiality to prevent loss or compromise.
4. Only personnel authorised by the Purchasing Certification Body shall have access to the ICNDT examination question bank software and database, which must be rigidly controlled.
5. The PCB's approved examination centre(s) shall have in place an operating procedure which ensures that candidates are, at all times during examination, closely supervised by

an authorised representative of the purchasing Certification Body in order to ensure that no ICNDT examination material is removed by any candidate.

6. ICNDT examination questions shall not be re-sold or further distributed by the purchasing Certification Body.
7. Failure to abide by these conditions of use shall result in withdrawal of the right to use the ICNDT EQB and cancellation of registration of the purchasing Certification Body under the ICNDT MRA.

## Fees

The fees comprise:

- A one-off outright purchase fee;
- An optional annual fee to support:
  - Advice on use;
  - Solutions to user or application problems;
  - Improvements to the application;
  - Extensions to the question bank.

The fees for will be set by the IEC and confirmed at the Annual Meeting of ICNDT.

The ICEC may on their own responsibility offer reduced fees in cases where a purchaser is offering payment in kind, for example providing additional questions or translations into another language.

## Processes

### Application to purchase

The process map for application to purchase is shown in Figure 1.

The decision to accept or reject the application to purchase shall represent a consensus view of all ICEC members. This may be achieved in a meeting or, if that would introduce delay, by email exchanges. If a unanimous agreement cannot be reached the decision will be made by a simple majority of ICEC members with the ICEC Chairman having a casting vote in case of a tie.

### Identification, development and validation of new questions

The Administrator will collate comments and proposals from Client PCBs, WG1 and other organisations for changes and extensions to the question bank. These may include but not be limited to:

- comments on grammatical or technical errors in existing questions
- the need for additional questions to cover certain topics or sectors
- the need for new questions to cover revised standards and syllabi, and areas of new technology
- new questions offered by Client PCBs or donated by other organisations

At least annually, the Administrator shall provide a paper summarising all comments and proposals. This will form the basis for discussions by the ICEC and WG1 on what changes are needed and how these should be resourced.

Any new questions shall be validated by nominees of the WG1 for accuracy and relevance.

### Translation

Where a need is identified, the ICEC shall assess the possibility of translation of the question bank into other languages, on a cost-shared basis, based on a cost / benefit analysis and noting the possibility of offering the EQB on favourable terms to organisations prepared to offer a payment in kind by providing translations. The ICEC shall take adequate steps to ensure that any translation is accurate both in grammatical and technical aspects.

## Summary of Roles and Responsibilities

ICEC membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Monitor process</li><li>• Approve Work Instructions</li><li>• Approve recommendations for sale of EQB</li><li>• Recommend fees and provide financial reports to IEC</li><li>• Contribute to discussion on resourcing of changes to the exam question bank</li></ul>
Administrator (ICEC Secretary)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Process applications</li><li>• Recommend sales to ICEC</li><li>• Inform prospective Client PCBs of the ICEC accept / reject decision</li><li>• Distribute database application and user manual to new Client PCBs</li><li>• Distribute annual updates if PCB has paid for support option</li><li>• Respond to questions from Client PCBs, passing them to Software Support Consultant as necessary</li><li>• Collate comments from Client PCBs, WG1 and any other sources on the need for changes to the question bank; produce paper annually to form basis for ICEC and WG1 discussion on how to resource changes</li><li>• Receive and forward validated questions to Software Support Consultant for import into database</li><li>• Maintain files to demonstrate that the EQB is operated in accordance with this Operating Procedure</li></ul>
ICNDT Treasurer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Raise invoice for payment when notified that application has been accepted</li><li>• Advise Administrator when payment has been made</li></ul>

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| Software Support Consultant (CKS Consulting Ltd) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide copies of database application to Administrator as required</li><li>• Distribute unlock code to new Client PCBs</li><li>• Provide annual updates, where applicable, to Administrator</li><li>• Fix issues with application as required</li><li>• Import new questions to database</li><li>• Develop enhancements to application as required and specified by ICEC</li></ul> |
| Client Personnel Certification Body (PCB)        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Report technical or grammatical errors to the Administrator</li><li>• Report issues with the application to the Administrator</li><li>• Contribute new questions for validation and importation</li></ul>   |
| WG1  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify the need for new questions to cover revised standards and syllabi, and areas of new technology</li><li>• Contribute to discussion on resourcing of changes to the exam question bank</li><li>• Arrange for review and validation of new questions</li></ul>  |

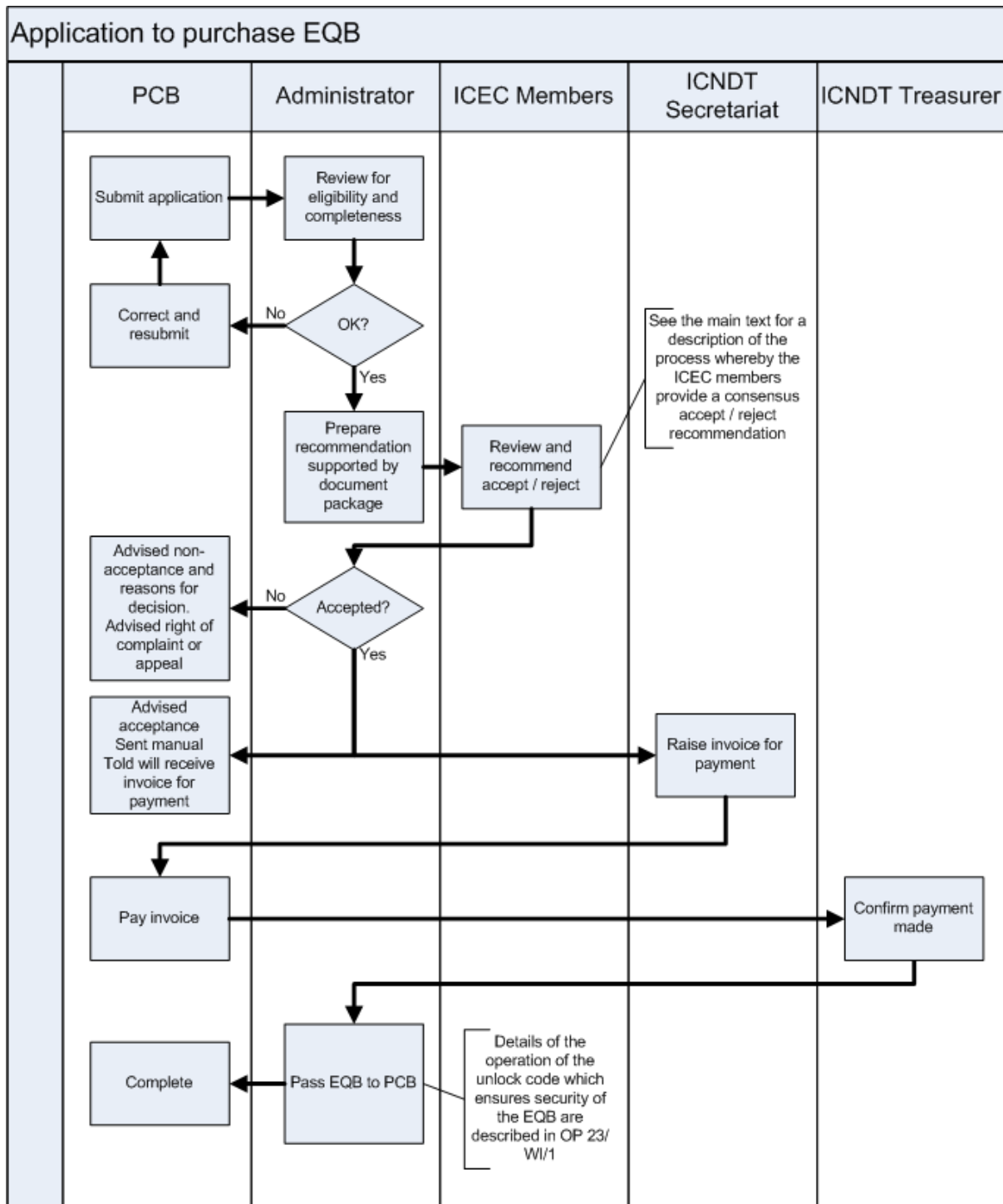


Figure 1 Process map for EQB application to purchase