Certification Frequently Asked Questions

What is a Welder Certification?
The American Welding Society (AWS) has developed a program for certifying welders to national standards that are recognized by many industries. A welding certification lets employers know that you have successfully completed a practical test of your ability to perform one type of weld in accordance with industry standards. This certification is in the form of a card indicating the weld you are certified in which must be renewed every six months, or it will expire.

What is the purpose of Welder Certification?
The certification process was developed to determine the ability of welders to deposit sound welds in accordance with standardized requirements and to impose sufficient controls on the documentation and maintenance of certification to allow transfer between employers.

How many tests are there?
There is no one universal test to certify welders to all welding conditions. Welders may have to be certified in each process used (SMAW, GMAW, GTAW, and FCAW, etc.) and for each group of metals (mild steel, stainless, aluminum, etc.). Some tests restrict the thickness of metals that can be welded, as well as the direction of travel. Tests can be done with or without backing, and with various joint designs. In addition, some tests cover all positions of welding while some restrict positions.

What type of test should I take?
Consult your company's welding engineer, quality control engineer or quality assurance manager for the proper test. If you are self-employed, please conduct research to ensure the certification matches the work you will be performing. Also consider other qualifications that may cover the positions you will be welding.

What if there is a unique testing need for an employee?
You may submit written acceptance criteria to the Welding Supervisor for use in evaluating your employees' qualification test results. The acceptance criteria become a part of the Welder Certification Record and will be submitted to the AWS.

When will I find out if I passed the certification testing?
The Test Supervisor will notify you immediately of your test results.
When will I receive my certification card?

Upon successful completion of your certification, your test results will be submitted to the AWS. Expect to receive your qualification card and a supply of Certification Maintenance Forms from the AWS Certification Department in four to six weeks. At this time, your name will be placed on AWS's national list for certified welders.

If I fail, what are the rules for retesting?
Retesting rules follow D 1.1, which states that a retest will be allowed if evidence is provided showing that the welder has had additional training or practice after the failed test. No immediate retests will be allowed.
How do I maintain my welder certification?
Your certification period begins on the date of completion of the examination results and remains

valid for a period of six months unless you submit a Maintenance Certification Form each year. The form is used to document that you continue to engage in the welding process for which you are certified. Forms must be postmarked prior to the expiration date of certification and are extended for a period of twelve months from the date of the last use of the process. For more information, see AWS QC7-93 C12, Maintenance of Certification.

How do I update my welder certification after the certification period has expired?
A single test using any thickness for each process in which you were formerly certified will be conducted. Successful completion of the test rescores all of the previous qualifications for the process tested.

Does Davis Tech offer training?
The College offers a Welding Technology program. Information about the program is available at www.davistech.edu/welding.

What if my personal safety equipment is broken or I forget something?
There is a campus bookstore that sells welding supplies. The store hours are Monday - Thursday 7:30 am to 7:30 pm, Friday 7:30 am to 3:30 pm.

Whom should I contact for additional information?

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