

# ICAPGen Accreditation Process Overview

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## Accreditation Exams

The accreditation exams are designed to distinguish the professional-level genealogist from the hobbyist and the amateur. Hence, the exams are rigorous and intensive.

## Testing Regions

Credentials are awarded on a regional basis which allows the applicant to demonstrate their depth of knowledge of the key records, history, geography, and language of the region of interest in measurable ways.

## Professional Ethics

Each applicant is required to sign an agreement with ICAPGen(SM) indicating that he or she is willing to adhere to high ethical and research standards and to abide by the ICAPGen(SM) code of ethics.

## The Accreditation Process

The accreditation process involves three levels of testing of the applicant's skills and knowledge. Attainment of any level results in public recognition.

ICAPGen practices blind rating. The contact information form is used to collect the information needed to assign each applicant a unique identification number to their project for rating purposes.

**Level 1:** includes completion of a questionnaire that assesses readiness to test, a contact information form, submission of a four-generation research project, and paying of fees.

### Level 1: Genealogical Research Experience- Questionnaire

The Level 1 Questionnaire is part of the Level 1 test. We allow you to take it before paying your fees to self-assess whether your experience meets the minimum requirements.

### Level 1 - Application Project

The purpose of the ICAPGen Four-Generation (Application) Project is to test an applicant's ability to do the following:

- Conduct research based on a well-defined objective.
- Report all research findings, analysis of evidence, and conclusions based on that evidence, as if to a client.

The project may encompass research in both compiled and original records. It is expected that the project will consist primarily of research in original records. These records could be viewed or obtained from record repositories, Internet resources, or from local sources. They should represent the best sources to answer the four-generation problem.

The project should present four connecting generations who lived within the same geographic region. Your presentation of four connecting generations in your project should represent your knowledge of a variety of records that are useful at different times in your chosen region. The regional focus allows for practice in records that might be included in the written exams.

Many of our U.S. ancestors migrated from one geographical region to another so we might have to choose a family other than our own for the four generation project. This might be the ancestry of another family member, a client, or a family that is known to have four generations that lived in the same geographic region. We might also select from our own ancestry a related descendant line that meets the criteria. Note that privacy issues are not violated because the records are for events of people born before 1900 and identities of living persons are not included in the report. The following items must be submitted as part of the project:

- A pedigree chart going backward four generations showing only the one line discussed in the four-generation project report.
- Family group records, normally four to a submitted lineage.
- A four-generation project research report.
- Key documents referred to in the four-generation research report need to be scanned and submitted.
- A research calendar or log (a list of sources searched) showing both positive and negative searches.

The written exam is scheduled after achieving a score of 90% or better on the application project. Testing is scheduled on a quarterly basis (<http://www.icapgen.org/testing-dates-and-deadlines/>).

**Level 2 – Written Exam:** In general, the exam attempts to assess the depth and breadth of your genealogical knowledge and your familiarity with genealogical records, methodologies, and repositories. This 8-hour exam is open book so bring your Research Portfolio or any other materials that might be of assistance to you. Do not plan to use your own laptop, cell phone, or flash drive during any segment of the test. Plan to take breaks between the test segments to clear your mind and release tension.

The Level 2 Written Exam includes four sections of the written exam that test knowledge of history, geography, methodology, records, etc.

**Level 3 – Written Exam & Oral Review:** The Level 3 Written Exam includes two sections of the written exam that test skills in data analysis, research planning, methodology, and report writing.

The final part of the formal testing is an oral review, which is scheduled when a grade of 90% or better was achieved on the written exam. The review is typically one to three hours in length and involves two or three interviewers. The purpose of the interview is to give candidates an opportunity to demonstrate the full breadth of their knowledge and ability. Interviewers may cover three areas:

- Questions about the strategies and procedures used in the four-generation project and the conclusions made by the applicant.
- Questions that allow the applicant to explain or elaborate on answers given in the written exam.
- General questions about records and methodologies common in the area of accreditation.

Candidates who successfully pass the written exams and Oral Review are welcomed into the ranks of Accredited Genealogist® professionals, sign the Code of Ethics, are encouraged to volunteer a portion of their time and talents to ICAPGen, can use the AG® credential, and receive their certificate and an AG® pin.