



CERTIFIED MANUFACTURING ASSOCIATE CERTIFICATION (CMfgA) CERTIFICATION PROCESS GUIDE 2025

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What is certification?

Earning a professional certification is a voluntary process by which candidates are assessed against predetermined and standardized criteria for knowledge, skills, competencies, and/or abilities required of a profession. Those successfully completing certification requirements are granted a time-limited credential.

[Code of Ethics](#)

Why become certified?

Whether you are just starting out, or a seasoned professional, certification can help you become a high-value commodity to your employer and be among the most sought-after individuals in your industry. Certifications not only help you attain knowledge, they prove it. Certifications are recognized and respected industry credentials. Professional certifications:

- Validate your knowledge against industry standards.
- Provide a portable, industry-recognized credential that travels with you throughout your career.
- Enhance your career opportunities — certification can provide a competitive advantage in the job market.
- Improve your marketability by demonstrating your commitment to continuous learning.

SME certification standards

As a certifying body, SME is held to rigorous standards to ensure certification integrity. SME's Certification Oversight & Appeals Committee, composed of member volunteers representing industry and academia, routinely evaluate all exam questions for performance, relevance, currency, and integrity.

CMfgA Certification

SME's Certified Manufacturing Associate (CMfgA) is an industry certification focused on basic manufacturing concepts, demonstrating an individual's potential for high-demand, entry-level manufacturing roles. It was designed for individuals new to manufacturing who may not currently possess enough knowledge or experience for more advanced technical certifications. This might include high school students, dislocated workers, and individuals coming from other non-manufacturing sectors who wish to pursue a role as an assembler, manufacturing associate, production laborer and other entry-level manufacturing occupations. It is not required that individuals be SME members to pursue the certification.

Covering fundamental topics such as shop math, assembly, maintenance, machining, inspection, and more, this industry-driven certification demonstrates that the individual has basic knowledge of manufacturing and may be an ideal candidate for entry-level manufacturing employment.

Career Pathways

The Certified Manufacturing Associate offers an initial step into a technology-rich industry filled with opportunities for continued growth and advancement into higher level positions. After earning the CMfgA, SME encourages individuals to explore a variety of available career pathways in manufacturing and continue with training or education to earn more advanced technical certifications. There are other leading certification providers offering advanced technical certifications (MSSC, NIMS, AWS, etc.). The CMfgA can be a first step and feeder into these more advanced technical certifications offering careers with higher pay and skills.



Groups

To inquire about certification for groups (companies, schools, etc.) please contact Tooling U-SME at info@toolingu.com or 866.706.8665.

Individuals

Individuals may pursue the Certified Manufacturing Associate (CMfgA) as part of their own professional development journey. Individuals must identify a proctor to monitor the individual while taking the exam. You may apply for the exam directly online or contact certification@sme.org with questions.

Process to Earn Your Certification

1. Assess your knowledge and experience

The Body of Knowledge or BOK is a detailed content outline that focuses on documenting the topics, subtopics, importance, competency level and weighting of each content area. A completed BOK is utilized to build the certification exam. The BOK is a guide to what content areas will be tested and the weighting determines how much coverage from each content area will be presented on the certification exam.

[Certified Manufacturing Associate Body of Knowledge](#)

A skills checklist is a list that details the skills required to perform or have the knowledge of using the topics outlined on the body of knowledge.

[Certified Manufacturing Associate Skills Checklist](#)

2. Preparation materials for the CMfgA certification

Candidates may pursue the CMfgA credential on their own, work with their local training provider, or access Tooling U-SME resources to help prepare for the exam. Tooling U-SME offers an optional preparatory program of 25 online classes covering Additive Manufacturing, Applied Mathematics, CNC, Inspection, Lean, Quality, Robotics, and Safety – topics driven by manufacturing experts as being relevant exposure for entry-level positions and wide-ranging industries.

For more information about Tooling U-SME's classes to prepare for the CMfgA exam, please contact Tooling U-SME at info@toolingu.com or 866.706.8665. Note that the Tooling U-SME training program is not required.

[Optional Online Classes](#)

3. Review the exam preparation tips

You may bring printouts of the downloadable PDF format of the online classes and notes into the exam room and use them during the exam. If you would like to use the PDF format of the class electronically, you may use the PDF as long as it is on a separate device from the device being used for your online exam. Sharing of materials and notes during the exam is **not permitted**.

Tab sections of your materials to make it easier to find information during the exam. You will not have time to look up every answer, so be thoughtful about what you want to access quickly and easily such as topics that you think have a high probability of being on the exam based on the Body of Knowledge.

[Exam Preparation Tips](#)

4. Apply for the exam, schedule and take the exam

The Certified Manufacturing Associate (CMfgA) exam is offered in online format only. You have six months to take the exam from the date you apply.

Certified Manufacturing Associate (CMfgA)	Online Exam Pricing
Nonmember	\$250
SME Member	\$125
College Student	\$75

[Apply Here](#)

SME Membership

At SME, we are committed to offering an extensive range of membership options tailored to suit the diverse needs of our members. From entry-level to experienced professionals, SME Membership is your partner in every phase of your manufacturing career lifecycle.

With a wealth of resources, networking opportunities and professional development programs, SME Membership is your key to advancing in the world of manufacturing. Join or renew now and invest in a thriving future for your manufacturing career.

Membership Benefits at a Glance

- 15,000+ members across 15+ countries for global connections.
- 125+ local chapters for networking opportunities.
- Free [engagement programs](#) for professional development.
- Member-exclusive [newsletters](#).
- Access to [Jobs Connection](#), a job board specifically for manufacturing industry jobs. When logged in, SME Members receive additional premium features at no cost.
- Up to 50% off [SME certifications](#) and free access to [peer-reviewed journals](#).
- Member discounts on [10+ industry conferences](#), including free expo hall passes to SME-produced events.
- Access to a robust technical library through on-demand webinars, [Tooling U-SME](#) training courses, and [Manufacturing Engineering magazine](#).

[SME Member Benefits](#)

5. Secure an exam proctor

Individuals must identify a proctor to monitor the individual while taking the exam. Your exam proctor can be your manager, supervisor, Human Resources representative, or a key administrator. They can also be a member of an SME chapter, or AME region, staff at your local college/university, library, or an authorized facilitator at the exam after a review program. All exam proctors must be approved by SME in advance. The proctor form should be completed and submitted at least two weeks before taking the exam. Your online exam details will be provided to your proctor directly and they will provide you with the information on the day of your exam.

Individual examinees may also request to have your exam scheduled with an online/virtual proctor. **This service is not available for groups.** Arrangements would be made through SME on your behalf. Please send your inquiry to certification@sme.org. There is a \$55 proctor fee for this service. Please note: There is a \$8.00 fee you will be responsible to pay if you are a no-show on the date and time of your scheduled exam. Reschedule if needed.

[Proctor Form](#)

6. Take the exam

The Certified Manufacturing Associate (CMfgA) exam is a two-hour, open book/notes exam. It consists of approximately 75 multiple-choice questions mapped to the Body of Knowledge.

To pass the Certified Manufacturing Associate (CMfgA) Certification exam, you will need to score 70% or higher.

7. Exam results

How will I find out my exam results?

After completing the online exam, you will learn your results immediately.

When will I receive my results?

You will receive your official results within 30 days of your exam date.

What happens if I pass the exam?

Examinees who successfully pass the exam, will be issued a digital badge via Credly. Once you accept your badge and create a Credly account you will be able to download your badge and certificate.

What happens if I do not pass the exam?

If you do not pass your exam, you may retake it 30 days from your original exam date. Candidates may use this time to study and prepare for the retake. There is a reduced exam fee each time you retake the exam.

8. What is Credly?

- A digital badge is a graphic representation of the successful completion of a program or course. Metadata within the badge contains a verifiable description of the specific knowledge, skills, and criteria required to earn the badge.
- Badge earners can have a profile on Credly where their badges can be displayed and shared. They can also download a printable certificate through their profile.
- Access to Credly is free for those who earn the certification.
- Badge earners can link to their Credly profile on their resumes and share their badges on other social networks to show potential employers that they have up-to-date and relevant skills.
- Through their Credly accounts, badge earners have access to Credly's Talent Directory to help them find jobs and connect with employers.



9. How do I accept digital badges?

An examinee who successfully passes the CMfgA exam will receive an email via Credly on behalf of SME to accept their badge within 30 days of your original exam date. Upon accepting, you will be prompted to create a Credly account. Watch the videos below on how to accept your badge and download a copy of your certificate.

[How to accept and manage your digital badge](#)

[How to download your certificate](#)

Certification Appeals

For information on the appeals process please review the documents below:

[Certification Appeals](#)

[Recertification Appeals](#)

For more information about SME's other certification programs please visit:

<https://www.sme.org/training/certifications/>

For Certification FAQ's please visit:

<https://www.sme.org/training/certification-resources/>