

## IT Architect Certification (ITAC) Program

### Features & Benefits

- Receive industry recognition for professional accomplishments as an architect
- Establish an effective architect professional development program
- Proven, standards-based approach
- Widespread adoption



### Price

Contact APG

### Service #

07-0201

### Overview

Many organizations seek to establish an accredited program for guiding and recognizing the professional development of their enterprise architecture practitioners. The Open Group has established an industry-recognized process and a set of criteria for certifying that individual Information Technology (IT) professionals have successfully practiced as IT architects, known as the IT Architect Certification (ITAC) program.

Unlike knowledge-based certifications (such as TOGAF certification) that measure one's understanding of a body of knowledge (which is still important), ITAC is a practice-based certification. That is, becoming ITAC-certified is much more about what an individual has actually done as an architect and less about what an individual knows about a particular architecture framework.

ITAC has three levels of certification to indicate the extent of an individual's experience, skills, and contributions.

Level	Name	Description
Level 1	Certified IT Architect	Entering the profession
Level 2	Master Certified IT Architect	Experienced practitioner
Level 3	Distinguished Certified IT Architect	Leader within organization and industry

This very successful program is the basis of the architect certification programs for organizations such as International Business Machines (IBM), Electronic Data Systems (EDS), and Computer Associates (CA). There are over 2000 ITAC-certified architects listed in the ITAC Directory of Certified Architects.

Armstrong Process Group (APG) offers a set of services to individuals and organizations that wish to pursue an ITAC-based certification program. APG can help individual practitioners prepare their certification packages and conduct trial candidate interviews. APG can also help organizations establish their own internal architect certification program based on ITAC.

### About Armstrong Process Group

Armstrong Process Group, Inc., (APG) is committed to providing proven and practical process guidance for aligning business strategies with IT capabilities through the combination of integrated strategic process improvement consulting, customized classroom training, professional development products, and project coaching. APG is an Influencing member of the Object Management Group (OMG) and contributes to the UML 2.0 and SPEM 2.0 specifications. APG is a member of The Open Group Architecture Forum and contributes to the ongoing evolution of The Open Group Architecture Framework (TOGAF) and the IT Architect Certification (ITAC) program. APG is also a contributor to the Eclipse Process Framework (EPF) initiative. APG is an IBM Business Partner, an IBM Independent Software Vendor, a Telelogic Partner, and a Value-Added Reseller for Sparx Systems. APG is a privately-held corporation located in New Richmond, Wisconsin.

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## Certification Requirements

The three levels of certification describe the level of skills and experience an individual must have in order to meet the certification program requirements.

Skill requirements fall under four categories:

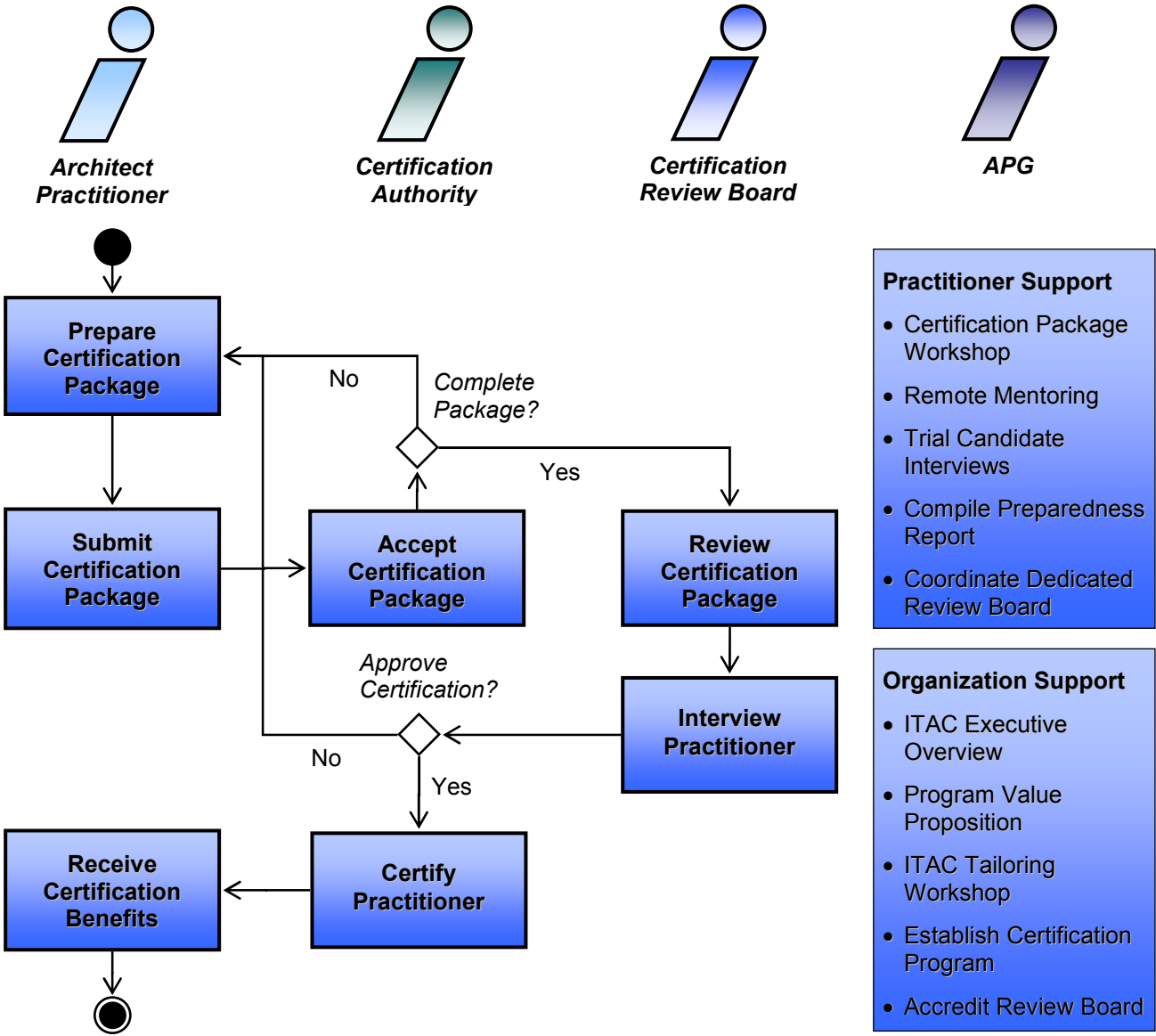
- People
- Project Management
- Business
- Architecture

Practitioner requirements include demonstrating:

- Experience
- Professional Development
- Contributions to IT Architect Community

## Certification Process

Candidates start the process by preparing a Certification Package that describes how they meet the various skill and practitioner requirements for the level they are applying for.



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The Certification Package is subsequently submitted to The Open Group (the Certification Authority). The Certification Review Board (a group of three Master and/or Distinguished Certified IT Architects) then reviews the certification package and interviews the practitioner. For Level 1 – Certified IT Architect a telephone interview is sufficient. For Level 2 and Level 3 a face-to-face interview is required (see Coordinate Dedicated Review Board below, for more details).

Once approved by the Board, the Certification Authority grants the practitioner the architect certification and the practitioner is added to the Directory of Certified Architects, with all privileges therein, including the ability to:

- Download certificates
- Alter visibility level within the Directory of Certified Architects
- Download the IT Architect Certification Program logos applicable to the level of certification
- Amend certain fields of Certification Records
- Set the initial and later amend the personal confirmation code to give out to third parties for obtaining details from the Directory of Certified Architects (when selected not to be visible)
- Renew certification within the defined period prior to expiry of the certification period

Each practitioner must pay a fee to The Open Group for going through the process (usually funded by their employer). For more information on the ITAC program, including the complete set of conformance requirements, accreditation policies, and all fees, please visit The Open Group's website at [www.opengroup.org/itac](http://www.opengroup.org/itac).

## ITAC Practitioner Support Services

APG offers a set of services to help individuals prepare for the certification process and help navigate them through the process. Activities for establishing an internal certification program (such as identifying additional conformance requirements and establishing an internal review board) is described separately (see below).

- **Certification Package Workshop**  
This activity consists of a one day overview of the ITAC program and an additional day for the candidates to begin work on their certification packages with an ITAC-certified architect from APG.
- **Remote Mentoring**  
Over the course of the next several weeks, the APG architect can be available via email and teleconference to support candidates while they complete their certification packages.
- **Trial Candidate Interviews**  
Once the candidates have completed their certification packages, candidates can be interviewed and assessed by the APG architect in an environment similar to the formal certification board.
- **Compile Preparedness Report**  
Subsequent to the interviews, the APG architect can compile a certification preparedness report highlighting the candidates ready for formal certification, and what gaps exist in experience and knowledge for remaining candidates. Recommendations would be made for professional development activities for the remaining candidates to prepare them for certification.
- **Coordinate Dedicated Review Board**  
APG can assist the organization to schedule its ITAC candidates for direct review by The Open Group ITAC Board. Regular ITAC Boards are scheduled concurrently with The Open Group meetings and conferences (typically once per quarter). Another option is to request a private ITAC Board from The Open Group, which requires that the organization pay the travel expenses of the ITAC Board members to a centralized location where all of their candidates can be interviewed at one time. This option is often more cost effective than having many employees travel to an Open Group conference for the regularly-scheduled ITAC Board meeting.

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**ITAC Organization Support Services**

APG also provides a set of services to organizations that wish to establish an internal certification program that is accredited by The Open Group, based on The Open Group’s ITAC Board process. This option is for organizations that have a large number of architects and allows organization-specific or domain-specific conformance requirements to be added to those specified by The Open Group.

- **ITAC Executive Overview**  
This activity consists of a half-day overview of the ITAC program regarding executive management support and organization requirements, lead by an ITAC-certified architect from APG.

- **Program Value Proposition**  
There are two main questions for an organization when starting an internal certification program:
  - What’s in it for the company?
  - What’s in it for the candidate?

APG can work with executives and sponsors to establish the value proposition for an architect professional development program that includes an internal ITAC-based certification program. This value proposition would address the value to the company and the value to the employee.

- **ITAC Tailoring Workshop**  
APG can work with executive management and leaders in the architect community to establish what it means for an IT Architect to practice in the organization, industry, and geography. Organization-specific criteria can be added to the core ITAC requirements to align the program with job roles or technical specialties.
- **Establish Certification Program**  
Once the certification criteria have been identified, APG can work with executives and sponsors to formally establish the certification program. Starting with The Open Group ITAC Board process will help ensure accreditation. Adapting that process is a critical step in the deployment of a successful ITAC program. APG would also help to select and prepare an initial set of review board members.
- **Accredit Review Board**  
The final step in this process is having The Open Group accredit the operation of the internal ITAC board as meeting their criteria for granting certification to its successful candidates. This involves filing a conformance document with The Open Group and passing an administrative audit of the internal program. APG can be a liaison between the organization and The Open Group to successfully accredit the ITAC-based program.

**Summary**

The Open Group IT Architect Certification (ITAC) program is an open and proven approach for augmenting the enterprise architecture capability of an organization. With our team of ITAC-certified architects, APG can dramatically accelerate an organization’s adoption of a professional development program for architects that delivers sustainable business value.

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