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# Standard for AWS Certified Welders



**Keywords** — AWS certified welders, welders,  
welder certification, welder  
qualification

**AWS QC7-93**

# **Standard for AWS Certified Welders**

Prepared by  
AWS Qualification and Certification Committee

Under the Direction of  
AWS Education and Certification Council

Approved by  
AWS Board of Directors

## **Abstract**

This standard describes a program administered by the American Welding Society (AWS) for the certification of welders. The AWS Certified Welder Program provides a means for the transference of welder qualifications from employer to employer without retesting. The standard defines the minimum requirements for welder participation in the program and the methods to be used by employers for adopting the program.



**American Welding Society**

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# Foreword

(This Foreword is not a part of the AWS QC7-93, *Standard for AWS Certified Welders*, but is included only for information.)

The American Welding Society (AWS) Certified Welder Program is established to identify all elements necessary to implement a National Registry of Certified Welders. Four key elements are identified:

- (1) Welder Performance Qualification Standards criteria
- (2) Welding Procedure Specifications
- (3) Accredited Performance Qualification Test Facilities
- (4) AWS welder certification requirements

The purpose of this standard for AWS Certified Welders is to document the ability of welders to deposit sound welds and to impose controls on the documentation and maintenance of certification.

This standard contains the criteria for the AWS Certified Welder Program and the AWS National Registry of Welders. Public listing or disclosure is at the option of the individual welder. This standard will, in many cases, allow the transfer of welder qualification from employer to employer. This potential transfer of welder qualification may affect financial savings to the welding industry.

The 1993 revisions to the standard are a major change in format of the document. Some sections of the previous issue of AWS QC7-93 have been relocated into the Supplements rather than the standard. Some technical content changes were made and are marked with double bars in the margin.

*Comments and suggestions for the improvement of this standard are welcome. They should be sent to the Secretary, Qualification and Certification Committee, American Welding Society, 550 N.W. LeJeune Road, P.O. Box 351040, Miami, Florida 33135.*

Official interpretations of any of the technical requirements of this standard may be obtained by sending a request, in writing, to the Director of Qualification and Certification Department, American Welding Society. A formal reply will be issued after it has been reviewed by the appropriate personnel following established procedures.

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## Forms

QC-WF4A Application for AWS Welder Certification

# Standard for AWS Certified Welders

## 1. Scope

**1.1 Program.** The rules for the American Welding Society (AWS) Certified Welder Program and the requirements for maintenance of certification are provided in this standard. This standard requires the use of accredited test facilities for qualification testing.

**1.2 Exclusion.** This standard does not prevent a manufacturer, fabricator, or contractor from continuing to qualify welders according to other standards. Employers may impose requirements in addition to this standard, as deemed necessary.

**1.3 Limitation.** Certification under the American Welding Society Certified Welder Program shall be limited to those welding performance variables provided in the applicable supplements to this standard.

**1.4 Safety Precautions.** This document is not intended to address safety and health matters regarding the training of certified welders. This document only covers the rules of certification.

## 2. Definitions

Terms used in this standard are defined in ANSI/AWS A3.0-89, *Standard Welding Terms and Definitions*, and as follows:

**Acceptance Criteria.** Specified limits placed on characteristics of an item, process, or service as defined in codes, standards, or other contract requirement documents.

**Applicant.** An individual who makes application for AWS certification.

**Certification.** The act of determining, verifying and attesting in writing to the qualification of personnel in accordance with specified requirements.

**Inspection.** Examination or measurement to verify whether an item or activity conforms to specified requirements.

**Inspector.** A person who performs an inspection function to verify conformance to specific requirements.

**NDE Level I, II, III.** Individuals qualified and certified by their employer to function as NDT Technicians within the limits as outlined in the Recommended Practice SNT-TC-1A<sup>1</sup> and company written practice.

**Q&C Committee.** The Qualification and Certification Committee of the American Welding Society. (Address correspondence to: Qualification and Certification Department, AWS, 550 N.W. LeJeune Road, Miami, Florida 33126.)

**Q&C Department.** The AWS Qualification and Certification Department, American Welding Society, 550 N.W. LeJeune Road, Miami, Florida 33126. Telephone 305-443-9353.

**Qualification.** Verification by testing of the characteristics or abilities gained through training or experience or both that enable an individual to perform certain functions.

**Qualification Standard.** Any standard that provides rules for welding procedure and performance qualification.

**Terminology Guidelines.** As used in this standard, the word *should* indicates a recommendation; the word *shall* indicates a mandatory requirement. The word *may* indicates a choice.

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1. Copies of SNT-TC-1A may be obtained from the American Society for Nondestructive Testing, 1711 Arlingate Lane Caller #28518, Columbus, Ohio, 43228, (800) 222-2768.



**Testing.** An element of verification for determining that an item conforms to the specified requirements by subjecting the item to a set of physical, chemical, environmental, or operating conditions.

**Test Facility.** A welder testing operation that has been accredited by AWS in accordance with AWS QC4, *Standard for Accreditation of Test Facilities for AWS Certified Welder Program*.

**Test Facility Representative.** The individual(s) designated by the Test Facility, who can make legally binding commitments and statements on behalf of the facility.

**Test Supervisor.** An AWS Certified Welding Inspector (CWI) designated by the Accredited Test Facility.

**Verification.** The act of reviewing, inspecting, testing, checking, auditing, or otherwise determining and documenting whether items, processes, services, or documents conform to specified requirements.

**Welder.** One who performs a manual, machine, automatic, or semiautomatic welding operation. Whenever the terms *welder* or *welders* are used in this document, welding operator or welding operators are also intended.

**Welder Performance Qualification.** The demonstration of a welder's ability to produce welds meeting prescribed standards.

**Welding Procedure Specification.** A document providing in detail the required variables for specific application(s) to assure repeatability by properly trained welders and welding operators.

### 3. Employers and AWS Responsibility

**3.1 Employer's Responsibility.** The employers of AWS Certified Welders are responsible for the work performed by their employees. The employers may accept the AWS certification without additional testing or may add requirements as deemed necessary to meet a specific need. Some standards or contract documents may require the owner, engineer, or other individuals to approve the use of AWS Certified Welders (without requalification) on their work.

**3.2 Employers' Obligation.** Companies who employ AWS Certified Welders shall be fully aware of the provisions of this standard. The employers shall specifically note the extent of qualification as stated on the AWS welder identification/qualification limits card. The employers are responsible for all work performed by their employees; and therefore, should verify the employee's prior work history, or otherwise determine that the qualification(s) apply to the employer's work. The weld-

er's current status should be verified with the Q&C Department (call 800-443-9353, ext. 273).

#### 3.3 AWS Responsibility

**3.3.1** The AWS Q&C Department shall be responsible to maintain the following:

- (1) Application for AWS Certified Welder
- (2) Welder Qualification Test Record
- (3) Decertification action reports
- (4) Maintenance of certification records
- (5) National Registry of Welders
- (6) List of Accredited Test Facilities

**3.3.2** The Q&C Department will provide, upon request, individual welder verification of maintenance of certification.

**3.3.3** The Q&C Department will provide database searches upon request. These searches will include only those authorizing public disclosure on the application form.

**3.4 Test Facility Responsibility.** The Test Facility is responsible for safety and health matters during testing at that location in addition to other requirements stated herein.

### 4. Provisions for Testing

**4.1 Test Facility Accreditation.** Each test facility that participates in the program shall be accredited by AWS. The process of accrediting test facilities is defined in the latest edition of AWS standard QCa4.

**4.2 Arrangement for Testing.** A list of Accredited Test Facilities may be requested from the Q&C Department. Applicants shall arrange for a test appointment through the Test Supervisor at an Accredited Test Facility.

**4.3 Restriction.** An applicant shall not be tested by a Test Supervisor who conducted or was responsible for training the applicant.

For the AWS Welder Certification Program, testing by the applicant's current employer is allowed only if the employer's test facility is accredited by AWS as being a function independent from the training, fabrication, manufacturing, or construction operation(s).

**4.4 Site Testing.** Test Supervisors may conduct welder performance tests at an employer's place of business, if the Test Facility Quality Assurance System was approved for remote location testing.

### 5. Certification Requisites

**5.1 Application.** The applicant shall complete an application form (See form QC-WF4A). The application

form shall identify the performance tests selected from a supplement(s) for which certification is being sought. The applicant shall have photographic identification, such as drivers license or similar document, that has the photograph as an integral part of the document. The applicant shall submit the completed application form, with appropriate fees, to the test facility.

**5.2 Weld Test.** Each applicant shall comply with all requirements of the applicable Supplement(s) and this document. The Test Supervisor shall be provided with the applicant's Performance Test Description form(s), and the completed application form. Each applicant's test assembly(ies) shall pass the examination(s) described in the Supplements for which application has been made.

**5.3 Physical Requirements.** Physical requirements of the applicant shall be as specified in the supplement.

## 6. Test Requirements

Supplements to this standard provide test requirements for each welder qualification testing method in the AWS Welder Certification Program.

## 7. Retests

If an applicant fails to meet the requirements of one or more test welds, rules for retesting shall be according to the applicable supplement.

## 8. Documentation of Welder Performance Qualification

**8.1 Reporting.** For those applicants who have successfully completed all requirements, the Accredited Test Facility shall provide the Q&C Department with the following:

- (1) Completed records as required by the supplement
- (2) The original application (Form QC-WF4A) accompanied by the application fee

**8.2 Record Verification.** Each Welder Performance Qualification Record shall be signed and dated by the welder, Test Supervisor, and the test facility representative.

## 9. Period of Effectiveness

The AWS certification of a welder shall be effective for a period of time defined in the applicable supplement to this standard.

## 10. Identification/Certification Documents

**10.1 Cards.** AWS will issue a certification card to those qualified under this program.

**10.2 Card Care.** Welders certified under this program shall maintain the card in good condition. The cards are the property of the AMERICAN WELDING SOCIETY and shall be returned on demand. If the card becomes illegible, a new one must be requested. The welder shall, as soon as possible after it is discovered, report lost or stolen cards to the Q&C Department.

Evidence of tampering with the card shall require return of the card to the Q&C Department for investigation. An investigation by the Q&C Committee may result in dismissal of the charges, suspension, revocation of certification, or renewal qualification, depending upon circumstances. The Committee will provide an explanation for its actions.

## 11. Maintenance of Certification

The welder shall be responsible for the following:

- (1) Completing the forms required in the supplement(s) to maintain each certification
- (2) Obtaining the signature of the employer, customer, or Test Supervisor of the test facility
- (3) Returning forms to Q&C Department postmarked prior to expiration date of certification

## 12. Renewal of Certification

When a welder's certification has expired, renewal of qualification for each specific welding process shall be through testing as outlined in each supplement. Testing shall be accomplished and verified by an Accredited Test Facility.

## 13. Revocation

The Q&C Committee has the authority to refuse, suspend, refuse renewal, or revoke a welder's certification for due cause. The methods to be used by the Q&C Department and Q&C Committee in proceeding with revocation action are defined in the *Administrative Procedures for Alleged Violations of AWS Certification Programs*. Copies of the document are available on request from the Q&C Department.



