

# IHEA-USA Online Course Assessment Standards

## Assessment Standard 1

In order to receive IHEA-USA approval, all Internet Course Assessments, whether presented as an entire course or as part of an independent study requiring a field day, must be submitted for review.

## Assessment Standard 2

The assessment must be well designed and comprehensive in covering IHEA-USA's standards for hunter education. Well-designed comprehensive assessments evaluate hunter education skills and knowledge equally well as an independent exam or as an exam at the end of a course.

Rationale – Well-designed comprehensive assessments, whether administered as part of a course of study or independently as a challenge test, are equal. Experts in educational testing recommend that the assessment equally measures hunter education skills and knowledge however it was obtained. A well-designed assessment covers the entire body of skills and knowledge as outlined by the IHEA-USA Hunter Education Standards however, certain standards carry more importance and should receive more attention within the assessment.

## Assessment Standard 3

Each assessment submitted for review must be accompanied with a plan that explains how the test administrator will seek to maintain assessment integrity. The plan must address security issues commensurate with the purpose of the exam and perceived opportunity to commit assessment fraud.

Rationale – It is essential that assessment security be designed to be appropriate for the exam purpose and the context of the assessment. Assessment security plans might address procedures such as: confirming the identity of the assessment taker; randomizing assessment items; using different versions of an assessment; observing assessment takers during the assessment; protecting the security of the assessment item answers; using distinctive, hard to duplicate certificates; maintaining assessment taker records; etc. Rather than mandate a single assessment security procedure for all assessments regardless of format or context, reviewing assessment security plans provides IHEA-USA with the opportunity to determine appropriate levels of security for varying levels of assessment circumstances. Assessment security can be thought of as an escalating series of procedures that respond in kind to potential threats to assessment integrity.

## Assessment Standard 4

Students will proceed through all of the credited time course content pages in each chapter prior to taking each end-of-chapter assessment to receive credited time for taking the course. "Chapter" is defined as a module, section, unit or any other segmentation or packaging of materials within a course. Online courses must have an assessment at the end of each chapter. "Assessment" is defined as a chapter review, practice quiz, final examination, chapter test or any other form of evaluation of the student's progress.

## Assessment Standard 5

**Standard 5.1** - The final examination must consist of at least 50 questions based on the IHEA-USA Hunter Education Standards. If a state does not wish to require a final examination, then the aggregate of the assessments must consist of at least 50 questions based on the IHEA-USA Hunter Education Standards.

**Standard 5.2** - The assessment questions for an online course will be randomly selected from a pool of questions such that the resulting assessment meets the weights specified below. The number of questions in the pool from which the random selection draws will be at least four times the number of questions presented on the assessment. Furthermore, the questions in the assessment pool must be distributed according to the weights specified below:

Hunter Education Standards - Weighted Question Scale a 50 Question Test	for	# Questions	%
<b>I. Reasons for Hunter Education and Justification for Hunting</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>A. Justification for Hunter Education</b>			
<b>1. Why hunter education is important</b>			
<b>B. Hunter's Role in Wildlife Conservation</b>			
<b>1. Role of hunting in conservation</b>			
<b>2. North American Model of Wildlife Conservation</b>			
<b>3. Conservation funding - wildlife management &amp;     hunter education</b>			
<b>C. Key Wildlife Ecology &amp; Management Principles</b>			
<b>1. Basic factors of wildlife conservation</b>			
<b>2. Biological basis for hunting</b>			
<b>II. Safe Firearm Handling</b>		<b>20</b>	<b>40%</b>
<b>A. Safe Firearm Handling (mechanics)</b>			
<b>1. Major causes of incidents</b>			
<b>2. Basic rules of firearm safety</b>			
<b>3. Parts of a firearm including safety mechanisms</b>			
<b>4. Differences between rifles, shotguns and handguns</b>			
<b>5. Common firearm actions</b>			
<b>6. Parts of ammunition</b>			
<b>7. Proper ammunition</b>			
<b>8. Performance characteristics of ammunition</b>			
<b>B. Safe Firearm Handling</b>			
<b>1. Passing firearms safely</b>			
<b>2. Failure to fire</b>			
<b>3. Loading and unloading firearms</b>			

	<b>4. Crossing obstacles</b>		
	<b>5. Shooting skill</b>		
	<b>6. Eye and ear protection</b>		
	<b>7. Transporting firearms</b>		
	<b>8. Cleaning firearms</b>		
	<b>9. Storing firearms</b>		
	<b>III. Safe Firearm Field Practices</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>20%</b>
	<b>A. Safe Firearm Field Practices</b>		
	<b>1. Handling firearms in hunting situations</b>		
	<b>2. Proper field carries</b>		
	<b>3. Safe zones of fire</b>		
	<b>4. Barrel obstructions</b>		
	<b>B. Hunter Field Safety</b>		
	<b>1. Elevated Stands/Climbing Systems</b>		
	<b>2. Full Body Harness/Fall Arrest Systems</b>		
	<b>C. Hunter Best Practices</b>		
	<b>1. Avoid alcohol and drug consumption</b>		
	<b>2. Outdoor preparedness</b>		
	<b>3. Preparing a "Hunt Plan"</b>		
	<b>4. Physical Conditioning</b>		
	<b>IV. Hunting Laws, Regulations and Wildlife Identification</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8%</b>
	<b>A. Hunting Regulations</b>		
	<b>1. Reasons for hunting laws/regulations and who regulates/legislates</b>		
	<b>2. Resources for locating current hunting Regulations</b>		
	<b>B. Wildlife Identification</b>		
	<b>1. Wildlife identification skills for hunters</b>		
	<b>V. Personal Responsibility and Next Steps</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>12%</b>
	<b>A. Personal Responsibility and Behavior</b>		
	<b>1. Responsible &amp; respectful behaviors that promote positive image of hunters/hunting</b>		
	<b>2. Fair chase principles that show respect for game and others</b>		
	<b>B. Responsibility to Wildlife</b>		
	<b>1. Effective shot placement/angles to ensure a quick, clean kill</b>		
	<b>2. Game Recovery – Tracking techniques and reading sign</b>		
	<b>3. Proper and legal care of game to prevent</b>		

violations/meat spoilage		
4. Proper selection of sporting arms to satisfy legal requirements and ensure accuracy		
VI. General Questions from Standards I-V	5	10%
<b>Total Questions (minimum)</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Total (out of 50 questions) 100%**

**Standard 5.3** - Each item in the assessment will be a four-option multiple-choice question composed of a premise (or stem); a key (or correct alternative); and three distractors (or incorrect alternatives).

- A. A premise that states an opinion of an author or source, rather than reflecting a fact or principle, should use the statement, "According to. . ."
- B. The alternatives must be in a logical order if one exists. Alternatives beginning with the same words should follow each other.
- C. A test item must be a grammatical and logical completion of the premise or a concise reply to the question asked.
- D. Avoid overlapping alternatives.
- E. Alternatives must not combine options such as 'all of the above', 'none of the above', 'a and b', or '(1) or (2).'
- F. When possible, avoid developing questions using negative words, i.e.: no, not, never. Also, NEVER use double negatives.
- G. Avoid repeating information in all the alternatives that can be included in the premise.
- H. Alternatives should not be distinguishable from the correct answer based on length.
- I. Each test item must be linked to a IHEA-USA Standard.
- J. The test should include clearly written directions to the candidates on how to respond to the questions.
- K. The correct answer for the test items should be equally distributed (or as nearly so as possible) among each of the options, i.e. 25% of the answers should be option a, 25% should be option b, 25% should be option c, and 25% should be option d.
- L. There should be no more than three items in a row with the same option as the correct answer.

**Standard 5.4** - If an online course presents more than one assessment to the same student, the assessment presentation algorithm will ensure that no two assessments have more than 50 percent of the same questions on the assessments. A question will be considered to be the same as another question if it has substantially the same stem and the same set of distractors as the question it is replacing.

Rationale – Unlike a classroom course, the assessments in an online course are the only form of evaluation available. Therefore, it is imperative that the online assessment standards be established and regulated. The feedback should be designed to encourage students to review, comprehend, and understand the course content rather than to memorize questions and answers.

**Standard 5.5** - In order to receive IHEA-USA approval, any assessment offered for hunter education certification through online courses in a state must conform to the assessment plan adopted by the Hunter Education Administrator of that state.

### **Assessment Standard 6**

The state specific portion of the assessment must contain A MINIMUM OF 10 state specific assessment questions provided by the Hunter Education Administrator of that state. It is recommended that the state-specific questions be in addition to the 50 questions covering the IHEA-USA Hunter Education Standards.

However, if an assessment of 60 or more questions is not feasible, the state may choose to replace some of the 50 questions required by Assessment Standard 5.2 with state-specific questions. In this case, the state-specific questions will not only address course content defined by the IHEA-USA Hunter Education Standards, but also address course content as defined by Assessment Standard 5.2. The resulting assessment must have at least 50 questions, including 10 or more state-specific questions, and conform to the standard weighting of the assessment plan adopted by the Hunter Education Administrator of that state.

### **Assessment Standard 7**

Developing a passing score for each assessment should not be arbitrarily determined. Using court approved testing techniques (e.g., Angoff method, Ebel method) for establishing a passing score is recommended, but not required. The minimum passing score will be determined by each state in which the course is approved. In addition, the decision as to what happens when a student scores below the state established threshold will be determined by the states.

Rationale -Professionals in test writing identify four essential components: 1) validity 2) reliability 3) fairness 4) practicality. These components and assessment standards will provide IHEA-USA with a Professional and legally defensible assessment program.

### **Assessment Standard 8**

Students who fail an end-of-chapter assessment, will be required to review the entire chapter for the credited time again before re-taking the end-of-chapter assessment.

### **Assessment Standard 9**

Once a student has successfully completed an end-of-chapter assessment, the content pages for that chapter will be available for additional review by the student at any time with no time requirements. However, content pages will not be made available to the student via any means while the student is taking any assessment.

**Assessment Standard 10**

All assessments will be graded automatically and the student shall be provided with his/her score online. The course provider must provide the student with a certificate of completion or voucher that can be printed by the student. The certificate of completion or voucher must be approved by the state administrator.

**Assessment Standard 11**

If an online assessment provides for each question, no feedback will be given until an answer has been submitted. Once an answer is submitted, it cannot be changed by the student.

**Assessment Standard 12**

In an online course, the course provider will not provide links which allow a student to reference the course materials during any assessment.