COGNICERT VERIFIED COMPETENCE INITIATIVE

# 10 Questions to Ask Before Trusting a Professional Credential

A practical checklist for employers, HR teams, universities, clients and professionals.

## How to use this checklist

Mark Yes only when you have clear evidence, Unsure when evidence is incomplete, and No when the credential does not meet the test. This checklist supports due diligence; it is not a Cognicert assessment or endorsement of a third-party credential.

| # | Question | Yes | Unsure | No | Evidence / notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | **Is the credential issuer clearly identified?** | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | |
| 2 | **Does the credential clearly state the competence it claims to demonstrate?** | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | |
| 3 | **Was there an assessment?** | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | |
| 4 | **Is what was assessed clearly documented?** | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | |
| 5 | **Was the individual required to pass?** | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | |
| 6 | **Were defined assessment criteria used?** | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | |
| 7 | **Can the credential be independently verified?** | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | |
| 8 | **Can its current status be confirmed?** | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | |
| 9 | **Is the certification relevant to the work the individual claims competence to perform?** | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | |
| 10 | **Is supporting evidence available for the certification decision?** | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | |

## Interpret your result

| | |
|---|---|
| **Strong evidence** | 8-10 Yes answers, including independent verification and current-status confirmation. Continue normal role-specific checks. |
| **Needs further verification** | 5-7 Yes answers, or any uncertainty about who issued the credential, the assessment or current status. Request more evidence before relying on it. |
| **Insufficient evidence** | 0-4 Yes answers, or no credible evidence of assessment and verification. Do not treat the document alone as proof of competence. |

## Why this matters

AI can accelerate learning and help people communicate what they know. It can also make expertise easier to present. As presenting expertise becomes easier, evidence of expertise becomes more important. Reliable professional certification should connect defined competence requirements, meaningful assessment, a certification decision and a credential whose authenticity and current status can be checked.

## Useful next steps

Verify a Cognicert certificate: cognicert.com/verify-certificate

Explore professional certification: cognicert.com/professional-certification

Explore Cognicert training: cognicert.com/courses

## About ISO/IEC 17024:2026

ISO/IEC 17024:2026 is the international standard for bodies operating certification of persons. It supports consistent, reliable and internationally recognised certification and includes updated expectations for the use of AI in certification processes. Learn more from ISO at iso.org/standard/17024.