

Personal Injury
Education Foundation

Certified Return to Work Coordinator (International)

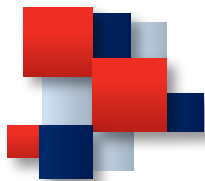


About PIEF

The Personal Injury Education Foundation (PIEF) was established in 2006 by a consortium of Australian and New Zealand accident compensation regulators, insurers and claims management organisations who shared the vision of creating leading educational programs focused on the needs of those working in the personal injury industry.

The programs developed by PIEF have been designed to enrich and enhance the range and depth of personal injury management skills, leading to better outcomes for all personal injury schemes and the communities they are designed to serve.

PIEF holds the exclusive Australian licence to administer the International Disability Management Standards Council's (IDMSC) international certification program for Return to Work Coordinators. Currently there are 14 countries licensed to administer the international certificates.



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Certified Return to Work Coordinator (CRTWC™)

The Certified Return to Work Coordinator (CRTWC™) designation is aimed at Return to Work Coordinators. The responsibilities of a Return to Work Coordinator usually includes, but are not limited to, expediting, coordinating and facilitating the return to work of persons with injuries, illnesses and disabilities in a range of settings.

Professionalising return to work

Generally, having a job is better for the health of an individual than not having a job. Unemployment can have psychological and social consequences, as well as causing financial problems and stress. Being out of work can have an impact on a person's physical and mental health, as well as affecting their family.

When a worker is injured in the workplace, they may require time off work. This may have an impact on their physical and mental health further to that of the injury itself. Thus, returning the worker to work becomes a valid goal of treatment.

Research suggests that the sooner an injured worker can return to work in some capacity, the more likely they are to make a full recovery, both physically and emotionally. Conversely, failing to return to work results in a higher risk of poor health, mental illness, depression and even death.

That is why the Return to Work Coordinator is a very important role and why it is critical that they have the necessary skills and attributes to assist injured workers return to work as soon as practicable.

Professional certification for Return to Work Coordinators

Professional certification provides Return to Work Coordinators with evidence that they have the knowledge, experience, and skills to perform their job or role. The evidence comes in the form of a certificate earned by passing an exam that is accredited by the IDMSC which is responsible for monitoring and upholding the internationally recognised Occupational Standards in Disability Management.

Professional certification demonstrates to employers and clients that you are committed to your profession, are well trained and have a desire to achieve excellence in practice. It gives them confidence in your ability to perform your job to the highest standards and professionalism in providing return to work services for workers, employers and insurance / rehabilitation providers.

Many industry professional bodies like PIEF are involved in the development and delivery of professional educational programs, the updating of skills, and promoting professional certification as a means of validating skills and knowledge required to deliver excellence in the field of return to work.

What are the benefits of being a certified professional?

There are a number of important benefits associated with undertaking an internationally recognised return to work designation. Some of these include:

- international recognition of skills and knowledge in return to work by professional associations and employer groups
- an opportunity for career advancement
- an opportunity to build professional skills
- an opportunity to gain knowledge of current industry practices
- an opportunity to network with other professionals and international experts within the industry
- access to the latest international research and best practice through a “members only” online portal dedicated to supporting certified professionals
- access to online forums conducted throughout the year
- access to continuous professional development through seminars and conferences.

How do I gain international professional certification?

To gain international certification there are two steps to complete.

Step 1

Complete an application to sit the certification examination. This application involves addressing eligibility criterion and payment of administration and exam fees. When deemed eligible you will be notified of the examination date and provided with the preparation guidelines.

Step 2

Complete an examination based on the International Disability Management Standards 9 domains of essential skills and competencies.

What is the eligibility criterion to sit the exam?

To be eligible to undertake the certification examination, applicants must have a combination of education and documented work experience in return to work. The following table identifies the education and experience required in order to be eligible to apply for the certification examination.

	Education	Work experience required	Evidence required
1	Masters degree in health related field	6 months providing return to work services	• Copy of academic testamur (certificate) plus • Letter of verification from employer*
2	Bachelor degree in health related field	12 months providing return to work services	• Copy of academic testamur (certificate) plus • Letter of verification from employer*
3	Diploma or certificate program in injury management or return to work	18 months providing return to work services	• Copy of academic testamur (certificate) plus • Letter of verification from employer*
4	Short courses in injury management or return to work	2 years providing return to work services	• Copy of statement of completion / attendance plus • Letter of verification from employer*

** If self-employed, a letter of verification from a key supplier will suffice.*

How is the certification examination conducted?

The certification examination is conducted every year (usually in May). There are two booklets of questions to complete. Up to 3.5 hours is allocated in the morning to complete question booklet one. There is a mandatory one hour break at 12:30pm followed by up to 3.5 hours allocated time to complete question booklet two. The majority of candidates complete the examination within 5 hours.

NOTE: *no textbooks or other reference materials can be brought into the examination room.*

What is involved in the certification examination?

The certification examination consists of 300 multiple choice questions based on the 9 domain areas of knowledge identified in the Occupational Standards in Disability Management. The format is based on a combination of contextually based questions following a brief case study and a series of independent questions.

Awarding of certificates

Upon successful completion of the certification examination, candidates will be awarded certificates under the auspices of the IDMSC entitling the use of the official designation mark

What is the cost of certification?

The certification examination fee covers the cost of applying and undertaking the certification examination, awarding of the certificate, use of credentials for one year and publication and inclusion in the registry of professionals. The current cost of the examination is located on the PIEF website.

Maintaining professional certification status

Ongoing maintenance of international professional certification status requires annual submissions which include the completion of a renewal application form, proof of ongoing work experience, proof of continuing education credits, a signed Statement of Agreement for Ethical Standards and Professional Conduct and payment of the annual membership fee.



Continuous professional development

Ongoing professional development is a requirement for maintaining certification status. This can include completing online courses, attending conferences, workshops and seminars (including in house training programs). The professional development completed can be easily documented and submitted on the Certified Return to Work Coordinator website.

Further information

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www.pief.com.au



www.idmsc.org