

Accreditation of the SPARK ARPC Designation Program

Professional Development Solutions (PDS) and the Society of Professional Asset-Managers and Record Keepers (SPARK) are extremely pleased to report that the ARPC designation program is accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA).



NCCA accreditation provides independent third-party validation that the ARPC program meets or exceeds 21 standards regarding its purpose, structure, governance, psychometric foundation, policies and procedures. NCCA accreditation meets the requirements of the NASAA Model Rule on the Use of Senior Specific Certifications and Professional Designations.

PDS and SPARK formed the SPARK ARPC Certification Committee in 2009 to develop and administer the ARPC designation program. The ARPC examination is designed to measure the knowledge and skills required for competent and effective performance in the retirement plan industry.

The exam was developed through a collaborative effort between the ARPC Certification Committee, subject matter experts, and expert testing consultants. The content of the ARPC exam is based on a job analysis study performed in 2008. The job analysis study was conducted to identify the practice, tasks performed, and knowledge required for effective performance of retirement plan consultants on the job. A diverse group of subject matter experts participated in developing a job analysis survey that identified a list of knowledge required for the competent and effective performance of tasks carried out by retirement plan consultants. The survey was then distributed to a group of ARPCs that represented various geographical locations, organizations, and experience levels for validation. The outcome of this process was the development of a set of exam specifications that has been used to develop the questions on the ARPC exam. This job analysis and exam specifications development process will be repeated periodically to ensure exam content remains relevant.

Once the exam content outline was finalized, a diverse group of subject matter experts participated in writing and reviewing exam questions. Each exam question was reviewed for accuracy, clarity and bias. The final exam was reviewed and approved by the SPARK ARPC Certification Committee. We appreciate the experience, expertise and significant effort provided by members of the ARPC Certification Committee:

Daniel Notartomaso, ARPC, LPL Financial, Committee Chair

Beverly Alleman, ARPC, Alliance Benefit Group of Illinois, Committee Vice Chair

Virginia Miller, Bank of America, Committee Secretary/Treasurer

Christopher Barrett, ARPC, Transamerica

Dan Campanelli, ARPC, ADP

Rosemary Graham, ARPC, ARPS, Professional Development Solutions, LLC, Certification Manager