

IADLEST

Training Standards



The International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Standards and Training encourages “best practices” in training design and delivery.

What constitutes good training?

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IADLEST maintains national training standards through the National Certification Program (NCP) and also publishes the *Model Minimum Standards* outlining POST and Academy recommendations to improve law enforcement training development and delivery at the State and local level.

These standards are outlined below:

1. All training programs should have complete and detailed written instructor and student lesson plans developed from valid job task and training needs analysis, with current and complete references. Instructor lesson plans should be written with sufficient detail so other instructors can deliver them. It is not enough to teach from slides or provide only the slides to the students. To be legally defensible, lesson plans should be complete and should detail the knowledge, skills, and abilities required of the participants. Using an endnote system clearly indicates what reference materials were used and validates the source.
 - Curricula should have dates of original writing and dates at which time it was updated or revised. A tickler file should trigger an automatic review and update consideration. A competent curriculum committee with the appropriate education and background should review and recommend all curriculum. Whenever POST commission directors are the sole curriculum approving authority, they should have the background, education, and credentials necessary to make such judgments. The committee or commission director should have statutory authority to approve or deny curricula.
 - Validation procedures for curricula should be job task-related, contain performance objectives based upon identified training needs, and test construction should be valid and reliable in testing the performance objectives.
 - Curriculum design should include comprehensive research of the topic(s) or curriculum, source documents written from the research, lesson plan(s) developed from the source documents, and the source documents and lesson plans should be kept on file for reference.
 - Handout materials or any reference materials should be serialized, and corresponding numbers placed on lesson plans and curricula related to the handout.
2. All training programs should be engaging and challenge the participants both mentally and physically with well-designed lesson plans that include discussion questions, in-class collaborative exercises, and realistic, practical exercises replicating actual police-related scenarios. Moreover, training should be delivered using dynamic and competent instructors with advanced knowledge in the specific topic area.
 - Instructors should have the ability to communicate with students in a supportive manner and yet be able to render objective judgments concerning student efforts.

- Instructors should be able to instruct in a manner that motivates students to learn.
 - Instructors should be able to research and write training materials such as source documents, lesson plans, and tests.
3. All training programs should incorporate learning preferences.
- Visual learners need to see the instructor’s movement, facial expressions, and body language. They tend to sit in the front of the classroom to see the visuals and take detailed notes about the training. They prefer visually stimulating slides and detailed lesson plans, and handout materials. Seeing the curricula helps them to remember the essential points.
 - Kinesthetic/Tactile learners prefer to learn through their sensory experiences of touching, feeling, doing, acting. These participants favor learning from experiential activities, including role-playing, physically performing skills, and collaborating with others to solve problems.
 - Auditory learners learn best through discussion, listening to others, and structured lectures.
 - All training should incorporate all three preference styles to accommodate most of the students’ needs.
 - Research current information concerning the use and development of instructional technology to maximize training techniques. The goal should be to apply training technology to enhance the students’ learning ability, not solely to expedite the training process.
4. Students should demonstrate content mastery with pre-and post-testing and skills-based criteria.
- Student grading policies should be established in terms of pass/fail, re-testing in regards to a failure (if permitted), the appeal of test results, and necessary repeating of a subject area if a failure is substantiated or in case of excessive absence from class. All remedial or re-training should be applied equitably.
 - Attendance at courses should be mandated. If a percentage of time is allowed for excused absences (for any reason), the percentage of time a student is allowed to be absent and still pass the course should be determined by the POST commission.
 - Methods of developing test questions conforming to the performance objectives stated in the course should be explained to each student. The test development process should be noted in a procedural format, outlining how the testing program is administered.
 - Testing, whether pre-test or post-test, should be valid and reliable. If pre-testing is used, it should be done with a specific purpose in mind and accurately measure the instructional results.
 - Critical skills areas (vehicle stops, use of deadly force, de-escalation techniques, responding to individuals with mental illness, etc.) should be tested using graded practical exercises. Acceptable pass/fail criterion should be established for each skill, and students should demonstrate proficiency to pass the activity.
5. All courses should be evaluated at a minimum of Kirkpatrick’s level two, preferably level 3 and above. Donald Kirkpatrick identified level one as course “smile” sheets that provide direct feedback on the course content and instructional delivery. Level two refers to measuring student retention by asking the question, “Did the students learn?”, measured by pre and post-testing and with practical skills assessment, as indicated in #4 above. Level three refers to *training transfer*. Did the learning content and skills-based activities change the participants’ behavior in the field? This level three evaluation is missing in many law enforcement training programs, but it critical to gauge program success. Level 4 evaluation determines agency benefits from incorporating a training program, measured by identifying the tangible and intangible advantages an agency receives from a well-trained workforce.
6. Good training should be evidence-based and developed in an unbiased manner. Training should be developed using proven adult learning theory pertaining to instructional design and delivery mentioned above. Lesson plans that are well documented, detailed, and containing scripted exercises to include current references to corroborate the content should be used in all course development. Curriculum designers should ensure training materials reflect the law enforcement profession’s diversity and the communities they serve. Special care should be used to ensure that slides, videos, and lesson content do not disparage any individuals’ ethnicity, race, or gender.