

The New Waypoint Along the CRM Journey: **Certified Records Analyst**

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For some records and information management (RIM) professionals, the journey toward earning the Certified Records Manager (CRM) designation may appear to be or already has been too long. For others, the pursuit of the CRM may be hindered by limited time or financial resources. Still others may not need a certification as comprehensive as the CRM but

need to demonstrate their professional competence. Anyone falling into one or more of these categories should consider a new certification offered by the Institute of Certified Records Managers (ICRM): Certified Records Analyst (CRA).

To earn the CRA certification, applicants must meet the same educational and professional experience that is required to sit for the CRM

exam, but they need to pass only Parts 2, 3, and 4 of that six-part exam.

“We are excited to deliver the CRA certification to the RIM profession,” said Brice Sample, president of the ICRM. “This new certification follows our time-tested approach and allows for more professionals to obtain a value-added RIM credential.”

Earning the CRA designation demonstrates the individual has a



solid RIM foundation with knowledge and experience in the lifecycle management of active and inactive records and their systems, electronic records, regulatory compliance requirements, and more.

RIM professionals who attain the CRA will potentially be on the path to attaining the CRM designation. Sample, in fact, said the ICRM fully expects “many to use the CRA as a spring-board to achieving their CRM over a timeline that meets their individual needs.”

Qualifying for the CRA

Potential candidates must submit an application form online (available at icrm.org) with supporting documentation of earning a four-year (bachelor’s) degree from an accredited institution and having at least one year of professional RIM experience. Alternatively, one year of professional RIM experience can be substituted for each year of college education.

Applicants may not sit for the exams until their application has been approved.

According to the ICRM, CRM candidates that have already passed Parts 2, 3, and 4 of the examination are eligible for immediate CRA certification. Sample said the ICRM already has contacted those who are eligible under this criteria and will invite those who become eligible in the future to declare the CRA credential. He advises any candidates who believe they are eligible but have not been contacted to call the ICRM business office at 877.244.3128.

Preparing for the CRA Exam

The ICRM has resources to support CRA candidates, an annotated bibliography, sample questions, and guidance that is available online, and a licensed Examination Preparation product that offers comprehensive workshops for CRM exam Parts 1 through 6, including case studies.

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The product is delivered through ARMA chapters and industry-specific associations. Other materials relevant to RIM competencies and educational sessions are offered through ARMA International. For a comprehensive list of materials, resources, and prep workshops, go to www.icrm.org/exam-preparation-resources.

Taking the CRA Exam

The exam requirement consists of CRM Exam Part 2 (Records Creation and Use), Part 3 (Records Systems, Storage, and Retrieval), and Part 4 (Records Appraisal, Retention, Protection, and Disposition).

The exams, which are offered on a quarterly basis at Pearson VUE professional testing services around the world, can be taken together or in any order, but candidates must pass all three parts within five years of their acceptance as a candidate. Dates for each exam cycle are posted on the ICRM website at www.icrm.org/public/exams/.

Maintaining the Certification

The CRA maintenance process ensures that members maintain professional competencies, update their existing knowledge and skills, and continue to attain new knowledge and skills. Active CRAs must submit 100 certification maintenance points for approved educational activity during each five-year period following initial certification.

Going the Next Step

Once certified, CRAs who wish to pursue the CRM certification can elect to take the additional parts of the CRM exam (i.e., Parts 1, 5, and 6) at their own pace (not limited to the

five-year exam cycle). Credit toward the CRM is awarded for having passed Parts of 2 through 4 during the CRA certification process.

Taking Advantage of Other CRA Benefits

Earning the CRA provides many benefits of ICRM membership. CRAs may:

- Vote in ICRM elections
- Serve as a member or chair of an ICRM commission, committee, or task force, although the CRA cannot hold office
- Attend the ICRM business meeting and the ICRM reception held annually at the ARMA International Annual Conference & Expo
- Access the ICRM website, the membership directory, and all publications and information provided as a benefit of ICRM membership

Learning About the ICRM

The ICRM is an international certifying organization of and for RIM professionals. It was incorporated in 1975 to establish a standard by which persons involved in RIM could be measured, accredited, and recognized according to criteria of experience and capability established by their peers. The primary mission of the ICRM is to develop and administer RIM certifications. It serves as the certifying body for the CRM, CRA, and the CRM-NS designations; the CRM-NS is the Nuclear Information and Records Specialist designation conferred to CRMs who meet NS qualifications. **END**

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