



# CMMI Appraisal – Benchmark Appraisal Observation Policy

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## Purpose

This policy details the minimum requirements for a CMMI® Benchmark Appraisal Observation.

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## Scope and Applicability

All candidate CMMI Institute Certified Lead Appraisers (LAs) are subject to the requirements of this policy, and CMMI Institute Licensed Partners are responsible for verifying that the status and certifications of each LA sponsored under their agreement meet all CMMI Method Definition Document (MDD) and policy requirements. This includes verifying that the candidate satisfies all observation requirements. This policy applies to any CMMI Benchmark appraisal regardless of versioning, e.g., V1.3, V2.0.

The CMMI Method Definition Document (MDD) is the authoritative source for all appraisal requirements and must be used, followed, and adhered to for all registered appraisals. CMMI Institute appoints a CMMI-Approved Observer, referred to as Observer throughout this policy. Candidates may not request specific Observers.

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## Background

As the final step in the certification process, an observation is intended to provide a uniform level of mentoring and observation for candidate CMMI Institute Certified LAs. The goal of this mentoring is to ensure a smooth transition to the role of Appraisal Team Leader (ATL). The scope of a Benchmark Appraisal could, in principle, range from a single Process or Practice Area (PA) examined for a single project, to a Maturity Level 5 scope covering a multi-site organization with numerous projects. An observation appraisal cannot exceed Maturity Level 3; however, it should still reflect a scope robust enough to allow the Observer to determine if the candidate possesses the knowledge and skills to effectively perform as an ATL. Because an overly narrow scope might limit the opportunity for mentoring, and an overly ambitious scope might create challenges that overwhelm the mentoring process, a middle ground is recommended. The policies established by CMMI Institute regarding observed appraisals are designed to facilitate a valid, useful appraisal and to provide opportunities for mentorship.

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## Implementation Detail

The following criteria are evaluated by the Observer assigned to each candidate LA during the process of planning the observed appraisal. The criteria are intended as guidelines (to be interpreted, with good judgment, by a CMMI Institute authorized and trained Observer) to

address the needs of an individual candidate LA, working in an organizational setting where the observed appraisal is to occur. Process context details—such as organization size, the size and duration of typical projects, lifecycles in use, and business practices of the appraised organization—could potentially lead to tradeoffs among the criteria numbered below.

CMMI Institute may cancel a scheduled observation if any one of the items listed in this document is not accomplished.

- **Certification Exam:** After completion of the CMMI Lead Appraiser Training course, candidates must successfully complete the LA qualification exam. (For more information about the exam, please contact [info@cmmiinstitute.com](mailto:info@cmmiinstitute.com).)
- **Observed Appraisal:**
  - Must be a Benchmark or SCAMPI A Appraisal, based on CMMI.
  - Sustainment, Evaluation, SCAMPI B, and SCAMPI C appraisals may not be used for observations under any circumstance.
  - Is not eligible for an Action Plan Reappraisal (APR).
  - Must appraise no more than one CMMI constellation or model view, and no more than one OU.
  - Must be set up in accordance with all requirements found in the relevant appraisal system policy (*CMMI Appraisal - Required Use of SCAMPI Appraisal System (SAS) Policy for SAS*, or *CMMI Appraisal – CMMI Appraisal System Usage Policy for the CMMI Appraisal System*)
  - Must include a minimum of five days for the onsite period.
  - Must include all PAs up to and including Maturity Level 2 for either one CMMI v1.3 constellation or one CMMI V2.0 Benchmark Model View (as predefined by CMMI Institute), or for a target of up to and including Capability Level 2 for a minimum of eight PAs plus II and GOV.
    - PAs beyond the minimum requirements may be included.
    - SAM may be excluded only if there is valid rationale for the exclusion.
    - All goals in scope must be rated. If a Maturity Level is not generated, a Capability Profile must be created showing the goal ratings.
  - SCAMPI v1.3 appraisals may not include Maturity Level 4 and 5 PAs. CMMI V2.0 appraisals may not include Practice Group Levels 4 and 5.
  - Must submit the drafted appraisal plan to the Observer 30 days prior to the Phase 2 period.
  - Appraisal Sponsor must complete and submit a Sponsor Role and Responsibilities Acceptance Form and an appraisal feedback form.
  - All appraisal reporting must be completed and submitted through the appropriate appraisal system within 30 days after the appraisal delivery.
  - Must meet all other MDD and policy requirements for conducting a Benchmark Appraisal or SCAMPI A Appraisal.
- **Organizational Scope:**
  - At least two projects or instantiations.
  - Scope large enough to require at least 12 interviewees.
- **Appraisal Team Composition:** The Observer assigned to the observation must be listed in the appraisal plan and the appraisal system record; however, they may not be considered a member of the appraisal team.

- **Interpreters:** If an interpreter is required, the candidate's organization is responsible for obtaining, and providing payment of a qualified interpreter. This includes appraisals subject to the use of CMMI Institute-approved Registered Interpreters.
- **Appraisal Sponsor:** Should not be in the management reporting chain of the candidate LA.
- **Candidate Lead Appraiser:** Should not have significant conflicts of interest (COI) relating to the appraisal.
- **Security:** If your appraisal is delivered at a sensitive compartmented information facility, the candidate is responsible for obtaining the appropriate entry documents for the Observer.
- **Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDA):** Observers may request to view organizational documents to assess a candidate's interpretation of a PA. If the appraised organization requires an NDA, it is the candidate's responsibility to ensure that the required documents are processed a minimum of 14 days prior to the appraisal Phase 2: Conduct Appraisal activity start date.
- **Certification Validity Period:** To complete the certification process, candidates must:
  - Ensure that all appraisal feedback forms are submitted by Appraisal Team Members and the Appraisal Sponsor.
  - Submit the appraisal for review; it must be accepted/closed by CMMI Institute.
  - Ensure the licensed CMMI Partner pays all observation fees.
  - Complete any remediation activities and submit them to the Observer for review.
  - Review the final observation report.
  - The certification validity period of three year begins when all above items are completed.
- **Policies and Guidelines:** Certification as a CMMI Lead Appraiser requires compliance with CMMI Institute's formal policies regarding appraisals. Lead Appraisers are also expected to comply with the Code of Professional Conduct (COPC), the Partner Guide, and the Certification Agreement. These items must be understood and adhered to by LAs throughout the life of their certifications.
- **Certification Renewal:** Certification as a CMMI Institute Certified Lead Appraiser includes a commitment to ongoing professional development to maintain a high level of proficiency in the practice. Candidate LAs must review CMMI Certification - V2.0 Partner-Sponsored Renewal Policy for reference and guidance regarding the activities required to maintain the certification.

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## Additional References

- To schedule an observation, complete the observation request form available at <https://cmmiinstitute.com/resource-files/public/pcs/general/observation-request-form> or contact [partner@cmmiinstitute.com](mailto:partner@cmmiinstitute.com).
- Questions regarding this policy should be directed to [quality@cmmiinstitute.com](mailto:quality@cmmiinstitute.com).
- Published policies are available at [cmmiinstitute.com](https://cmmiinstitute.com/partners/policies) on the policy page: <https://cmmiinstitute.com/partners/policies>

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## Revision History

Version Number	Date Published	Date Effective	Changes
V2.1	30 September 2019	01 January 2019	Updated format & structure, policy number changed from 0018-R to PA010; minor clarifications throughout
V2.0	01 January 2019	01 January 2019	Updated
V1.0	02 September 2015	02 September 2015	Initial release