

UNIVERSAL CRITERIA

IACC reviews the Universal Criteria periodically to ensure that they reflect the current best practices of the conference center industry. Contact the IACC office at (314) 993-8575 or by e-mail to info@iacconline.org for updated information. All active members of the **International Association of Conference Centers** must meet the following criteria for membership:

PRIORITY OF BUSINESS

1. A minimum of 60% (based on net area) of meeting space in the conference center is dedicated, single-purpose conference space.

2. A minimum of 60% of total revenue from guest rooms, meeting space, food & beverage, conference technology (A/V) and conference services is conference related. If conference center is *non-residential* or *ancillary* (see definition below), 70% of total sales of the conference center is generated from conferences.

3. Average group size — 75 people or less.

4. Conference center offers and actively promotes a package plan which includes conference rooms, guest rooms, three meals, continuous refreshment service, conference services and conference technology. Non-residential package includes conference rooms, lunch, continuous refreshment service, conference services and conference technology. (See also #28 below.)

CONFERENCE CENTER DESIGN

5. Dedicated conference rooms are separated from living and leisure areas.

6. Conference center has at least one dedicated main conference room that contains a minimum of 93 square metres or 1,000 square feet and can accommodate flexible seating arrangements. In addition, conference center has at least three other dedicated conference rooms with no moveable walls.

7. Conferees that have multi-day meetings can safely store materials and equipment overnight in dedicated conference rooms.

8. Conference center has sufficient inventory so that no less than 60% of all meeting space can be set up using ergonomically designed chairs.

(The North American Chapter also requires that chairs have arms, that they swivel and tilt synchronously and allow height adjustment. Chairs have a rounded or waterfall edge on the front of the seat pan. Chair seats have a minimum width of .46 metre or 18 inches, a minimum depth of .4 metre or 16 inches and seat height adjustable within at least 7.5 centimetres or 3 inches of the range between .38 and .53 metre (15 - 21 inches). The seat and inside back of the chair are fully upholstered or constructed of Pellicle[®] or like material. The arms and outside back of the chair are fully upholstered or constructed of ABS molded plastic or of Pellicle[®] or like material. The base of the chair has five-prong design with casters.)

9. Conference center has sufficient inventory so that no less than 60% of all meeting space can be set up using tables that are at least .6 metre or 24 inches wide and that have a non-reflective, hard writing surface with a high-pressure laminate or hardwood veneer

finish. Tables have sufficient length to allow at least .76 metre or 30 inches of space per occupant. Draped, skirted banquet tables are *not* acceptable.

(The North American Chapter also requires that the edge of the table is comprised of a high-pressure laminate finish or a decorative edge banding material that is constructed of vinyl or wood products. Tables have a reverse “T” style leg mechanism or its equivalent with offset legs that are permanently affixed or that fold, and that do not impinge upon the tables’ occupants.)

10. Wherever meeting rooms have windows, the conference center has built-in manually or electrically operated curtains that substantially eliminate light from outside the room.

11. All meeting rooms have lighting with in-room controls that produce maximum illumination levels between 500 and 700 lux or 50 and 70 foot candles at tabletop.

12. Dedicated conference rooms larger than 93 square metres or 1,000 square feet have zoned lighting and controls that permit dimming across the spectrum from full-power to off.

13. All meeting rooms larger than 160 square metres or 1,750 square feet have fixtures that can illuminate a targeted area and can be controlled separately from other zones and/or task lighting.

14. Dedicated conference rooms have individual climate controls.

15. Dedicated conference rooms have wall surfaces suitable for tacking or other display of flip chart-type sheets.

16. Acoustical rating for sound transmission between dedicated conference rooms and all adjacent areas meets or exceeds 50-60 NIC (Noise Isolation Class) for all fixed walls and 45-50 NIC for all operable walls.

17. Ambient sound levels within all dedicated conference rooms range from 25-35 NC (Background Noise Criteria) and Reverberation Time (RT) falls between 0.8 and 1.2 seconds at mid-frequencies.

18. All meeting rooms larger than 93 square metres or 1,000 square feet have built-in voice reinforcement sound systems; at least one microphone input point in the floor, podium, table or wall at the head of the room; and a minimum of one set of in-room sound system controls.

19. Each dedicated conference room has one in-room telephone outlet, simultaneous Internet connectivity and multiple power outlets located throughout the room. All meeting rooms larger than 55 square metres or 600 square feet have a minimum of two communications access plates for the connection of both telephone and Internet devices.

20. Within all meeting rooms, High-Speed Internet Access (HSIA) services are available to conferees.

21. Dedicated conference rooms have unobstructed interior views.

CONFERENCE AND BUSINESS SERVICES

22. Conference center staff includes skilled conference planners who are thoroughly proficient in effective meeting room setups, menu and special event planning, conference technology (A/V) equipment and services, and other special needs of the client.

23. A designated conference planner is assigned to each conference group.

24. Within the conference center, there is a staffed business services center or desk that can provide at least the following products and services: basic office supplies (e.g., paper clips, tacks, pens/pencils, tape, scissors, etc.); computer workstations with current office software applications and Internet access; facsimile services, including message/fax notification and delivery system; paper shredder; word processing; photocopying; computer printing; laptop/notebook computer rental; digital media (blank diskettes and CD's); blank audio and video cassette tapes; shipping supplies and services, including postage metering and express shipping; nametag and tent card paper stock.

FOOD & BEVERAGE

25. Separate dining and conference facilities, with at least one dedicated conferee dining area available specifically for the convenience of conference groups. (The dedicated conferee dining area *must* be in one consistent location and *cannot* be within conference or meeting rooms.)

26. Conference center provides dining facilities designed to accommodate conference groups on a flexible meeting schedule (at convenience of group), at least for breakfast and lunch, and to accommodate the capacity of the conference facility for lunch in no more than two seatings of one hour each.

27. Within the conference center, continuous refreshment service is available outside of meeting rooms.

TECHNOLOGY

The "Total Meeting Environment" must naturally provide a minimum amount of technology infrastructure and equipment to support a successful meeting. Because the best possible environment for meetings and adult learning experiences is exactly what every IACC-member conference center strives to deliver, all dedicated conference space must have interior architecture, sufficient power accessibility, signal infrastructure, design elements and physical arrangement to support the convenient and unobstructed use of all up-to-date portable equipment for audio-visual presentation technologies.

28. Package plan includes flip charts, microphones, and computer/video-image display equipment.

29. Dedicated conference rooms larger than 93 square metres or 1,000 square feet have at least one built-in remote-input computer/video-image display system.

30. High-tech, high-finish board and video-teleconferencing rooms as well as dedicated conference rooms larger than 93 square metres or 1,000 square feet have at least one manually or electrically operated, retractable projection screen which is installed either in the ceiling or mounted on the wall.

31. Conference center provides skilled technicians who are thoroughly proficient in creative program consultation; equipment setup, operation and instruction; and who are available for immediate response to service needs.

GUEST ROOMS

(Not applicable to non-residential centers)

32. Guest rooms have work areas that include a desk or table with hard writing surface and a comfortable chair; desk or table lighting which is controllable separately from overhead lighting and gives adequate illumination for reading and writing; a phone line and simultaneous high-speed Internet connectivity; and adequate, easily accessible power outlets.

33. Guest rooms are separated from conference and leisure areas to allow maximum privacy and comfort.

ANCILLARY CONFERENCE CENTERS

Definition: *Ancillary conference centers* are located at properties where one part of the venue is a readily identifiable conference center which qualifies for IACC membership. An ancillary conference center may occupy one (or more) floor(s), a wing, or some other clearly distinct portion of a resort, convention hotel, exhibition and/or convention hall, or other hospitality venue. Every meeting room within the designated conference center meets all IACC standards above, but IACC does not evaluate guest rooms or any meeting space outside of the conference center. In addition, IACC requires all ancillary conference centers to:

34. Name the conference center in a way that readily identifies the conference center and clearly differentiates it from the remainder of the complex (e.g., the Conference Center at Raintree, *not* the Raintree Hotel & Conference Center).

35. Install signage that displays the distinct name of the conference center at each public entrance to the conference center.

36. Have at least one public entrance with a door that clearly separates the conference center from the remainder of the facility.

37. Have a conferee reception area or lobby within the conference center.

38. Have at least one set of public restrooms within the conference center.

39. Have at least one conference planner dedicated exclusively to the conference center.