



ICAPGenTM
The International Commission for the Accreditation of Professional Genealogists

Perspectives on Accreditation

Why Accreditation? Benefits and Opportunities - Diana Elder AG[®]

- **Increased trust of clients**
 - The AG[®] credential has been recognized by the professional genealogical community for over fifty years.
 - Ability to use the Accredited Genealogist[®] or AG[®] post nominals after your name.
 - Greater appeal to consumers who seek expert genealogical assistance, since you will have proven your research abilities and signed a code of ethics.
- **Greater marketability and networking opportunities in the genealogical community**
 - Advertise services on the ICAPGen website, bringing more clients and credibility.
 - Earn a professional credential that will stand in most courts as a qualified expert witness in estate and kinship matters.
 - May have more opportunities to present at conferences, seminars, and workshops throughout the nation.
 - With an acknowledged credential, clients and employers may be willing to pay a higher rate for your expertise.
- **Increased research skills**
 - The ICAPGen study groups, webinars, and other study materials developed by experienced Accredited Genealogist professionals can greatly improve research skills.
 - Becoming proficient in order to pass the three levels of the accreditation process will provide confidence needed to tackle any difficult research project.

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Overview of the Accreditation Process – Julie Stoddard AG®

- **General Information**

- Applicants test for one of over 30 geographical regions throughout the world on their knowledge of the key sources, history, geography, methodologies, and language of that region.
- Three levels of testing must be passed with a 90% or better. Any test that is not passed may be retaken.

The AG® credential is awarded by the International commission for the Accreditation of Professional Genealogists (ICAPGen), a fully independent nonprofit organization.

- **Level 1: Application process**

- Read the “Guide to Applying for an Accredited Genealogist® Credential” and other resources on ICAPGen’s website, <https://www.icapgen.org/>.
- Complete the application and the “Accreditation Readiness Assessment,” which includes a minimum of 1,000 hours of combined genealogical experience, with 500 hours of those hours being in the region of choice.

- **Level 1: The four-generation research project**

- The research project requires a treatment of four couples in a direct lineal ancestry, with each generation having lived in the accreditation area for at least one life event.
- The project has no time limit and can be adapted from research already completed.
- The project can be peer-reviewed. ICAPGen provides a Level 1 Study Group where participants review each other’s research and provide feedback.
- The grading rubric can be found on the ICAPGen website and provides a checklist that can also guide any client research project.
- The four-generation project should include the following components:
 - The report written as if for a client, with a well-defined research objective, background information, evidence analysis, source citations, transcriptions or abstractions, summary, and recommendations for future research. (The average report is 25 to 40 pages).
 - Research log, pedigree chart, family group sheets, and source documents.

- **Level 2: A four-hour open-book, proctored test**

- The ICAPGen YouTube Video “Creating a Research Reference Guide” gives suggestions on information to compile for reference during the test. This guide will also benefit future research.
- **Section 1: Document interpretation**
 - Identification of documents representative of the area and knowledge of where to access them.

- Basic paleography and creating transcriptions or abstracts,
- Some regions have language requirements and will have basic translation questions.
- **Section 2: General Questions**
 - Facts pertaining to the history, geography, and research methodologies of the region being tested.
 - The types of records available in the region - their content, availability, and coverage.
 - Research planning based on a pedigree chart or story problem.
- **Level 3: A four-hour, open-book, client-type research project.**
 - Prove expertise by producing high quality research in a limited amount of time, recreating a real-world experience.
 - A story problem will be provided and a written report, research log, pedigree chart, family group sheets, and documents will need to be produced as if for a client.
 - The Level 3 project is proctored and designed to test the candidate's skills in data analysis, research planning, methodology, and report writing.
- **Level 3: Oral Review** (about 2 hours)
 - An interview where AG professionals in the region of interest will ask questions to determine the candidate's overall readiness for accreditation.
- Investing time and energy to learn the information needed to become an expert in a specific region will reap multiple benefits. An Accredited Genealogist researcher has learned an excellent research process that will carry over to all areas of research.

Start Now – Lisa Stokes AG®

- **Education** – Take advantage of numerous opportunities to increase research skills and learn new methodologies and resources in the chosen region for Accreditation.
 - **Watch Videos and webinars**
 - ICAPGen YouTube Channel
 - Legacy Family Tree Webinars
 - Ancestry Academy
 - Ancestry's YouTube Channel: Desktop Education Series
 - BYU Family History Library Webinar series
 - **Take courses and attend institutes to broaden your genealogical knowledge**

For links to numerous learning opportunities please see the ICAPGen website.
<https://www.icapgen.org/preparation-resources/>

- **University Programs:** Brigham Young University, 4-year degree; Brigham Young University Idaho, 2-year program; University of Strathclyde (Online)
 - **Online Courses:** Boston University 4-month online course; American Ancestors form at NEHGS, Family Tree Magazine Courses
 - **Conferences:** Attend national and local conferences to learn from a variety of presenters.
 - **Institutes:** Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy (SLIG-Jan), Genealogical Research Institute of Pittsburgh (GRIP-Summer)
- **Read Books, Magazines and Professional Articles**
 - Learn about the history, geography and resources available in your chosen region.
 - Discover proven methodologies for your chosen region.
- **Research and Writing Experience**
 - Join study groups to receive peer feedback on your work
 - ICAPGen Study Groups (<https://www.icapgen.org/icapgen-study-groups/>)
 - Research Like a Pro with Diana Elder (<https://familylocket.com/services/research-like-a-pro-study-group/>)
 - ProGen Study Groups (<https://www.progenstudy.org/>)
 - Watch ICAPGen skill building videos designed to teach excellent research protocol and genealogical writing skills.
 - Practice using those skills to learn the following:
 - Research planning
 - Documentation and source citation and using a research log
 - Finding original documents and correctly interpreting the information
 - Analyzing and correlating evidence
 - Writing proof summaries, proof arguments, and research reports
 - Become proficient researching in physical repositories such as archives, libraries, and courthouses as well as online research.
- **Social Media – Connect with other genealogists**
 - Blogs: Evidence Explained; Family Locket; Best Steps Genealogy; Family History Fanatics; The Legal Genealogist and many more.
 - Websites: ICAPGen Preparation Resources; BCG Skill building
 - Facebook groups: ICAPGen Accreditation Mentoring Group

Start now to reap the many benefits of Accreditation!