ASCEND - User Guide

Accessing the program and using the assessment platform

Follow this guide to create your account, sign in to the assessment, complete the sections, save your progress, attach supporting evidence, and submit the completed assessment.

1 Accessing the program website

1. Open your browser and go to https://usmfs.org/ascend/
2. Review the ASCEND program information and locate the "**START YOUR ASSESSMENT**" button at the top of the page.

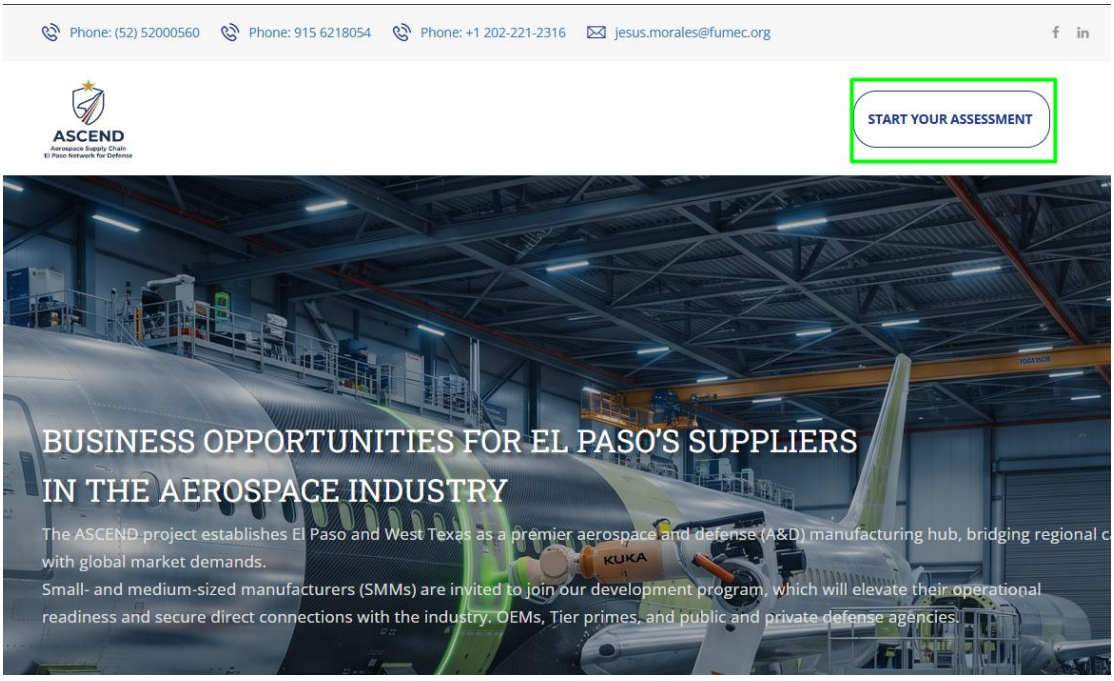


Figure 1. ASCEND program home page.

The website presents the program benefits, the profile of participating companies, and the participation stages. Click "**START YOUR ASSESSMENT**" to access account registration and the assessment sign-in page.

2 Opening the assessment sign-in page

1. From the program home page, click "**START YOUR ASSESSMENT**". You can also go directly to https://usmfs.org/ascend/assessment

2. Locate the Welcome ASCEND form. From this page, you can create an account for your company, sign in, or request password recovery.

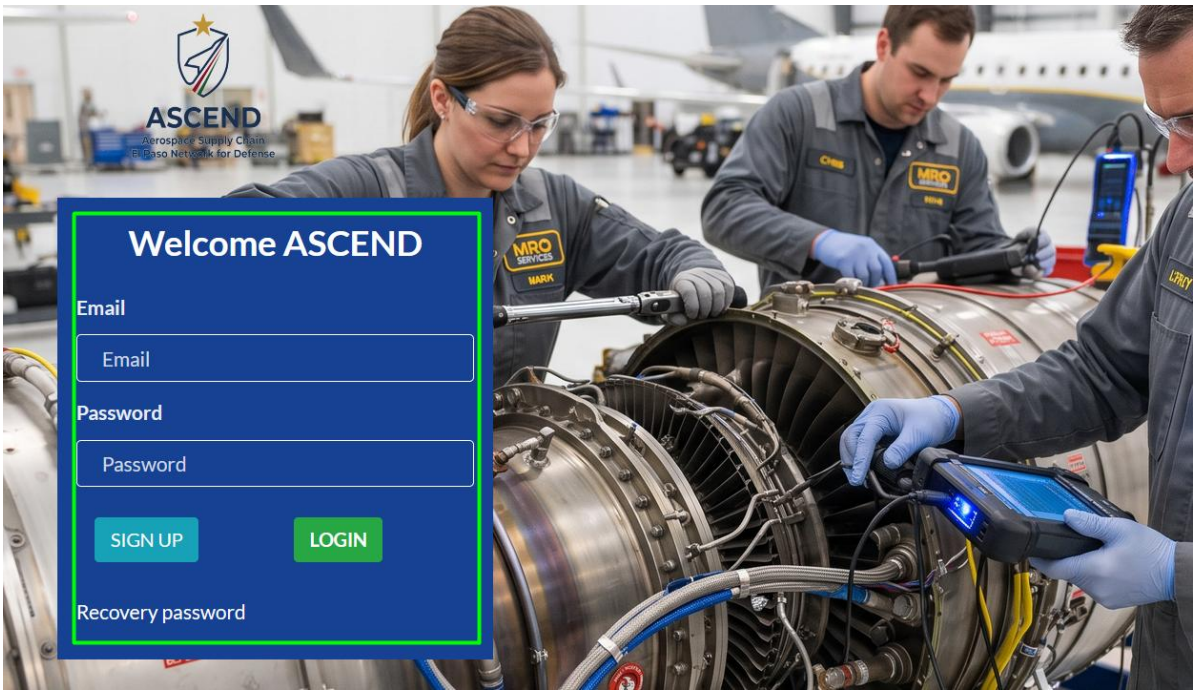


Figure 2. Welcome ASCEND form.

Control	Function
Sign up	Open the account registration form.
Email and Password	Enter the sign-in details for an existing account.
Log in	Access the assessment platform.
Recovery password	Request password recovery.

3 Creating an account

1. In Welcome ASCEND, click **Sign up** to open the registration form.
2. Enter the required information in the fields and click **Create account**.

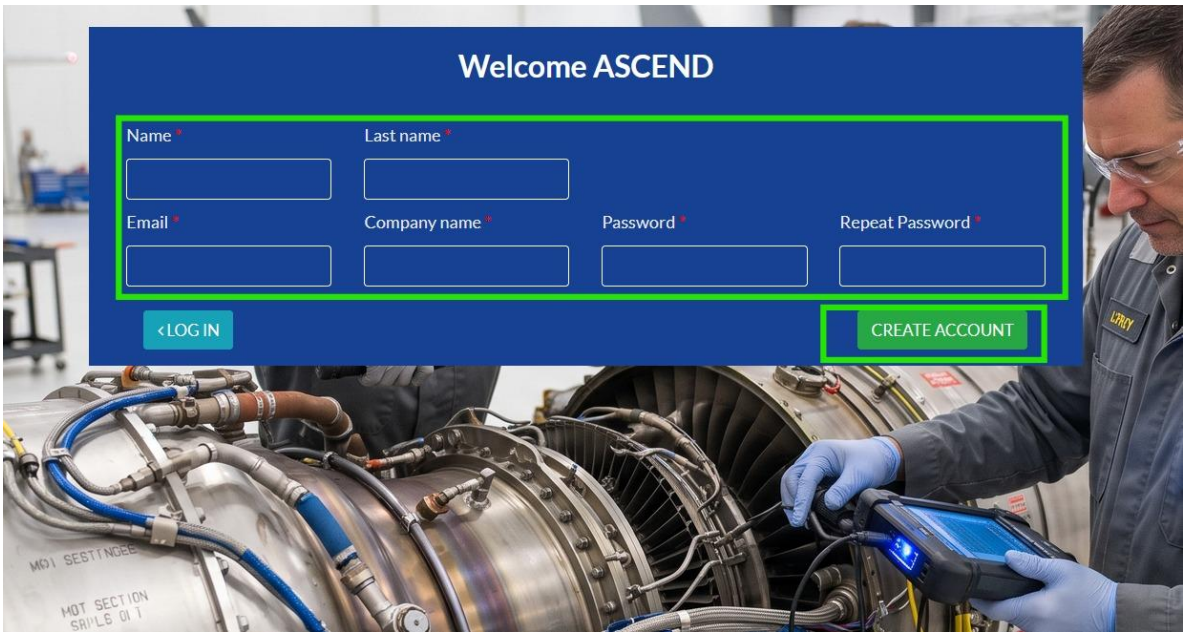


Figure 3. Account registration form.

Field	Information to enter
Name *	Name of the person who will use the account.
Last Name *	Last Name.
Email *	Email address you will use to sign in.
Company name *	Company name.
Password *	Account password.
Repeat Password *	Confirm your password.

3. Check your email address and make sure Password and Repeat Password match. Click "**Create account**" to submit your registration, and follow any messages displayed by the platform.

4. Once registration is complete, return to the sign-in page using "**Log in**" to access your account with your email address and password.

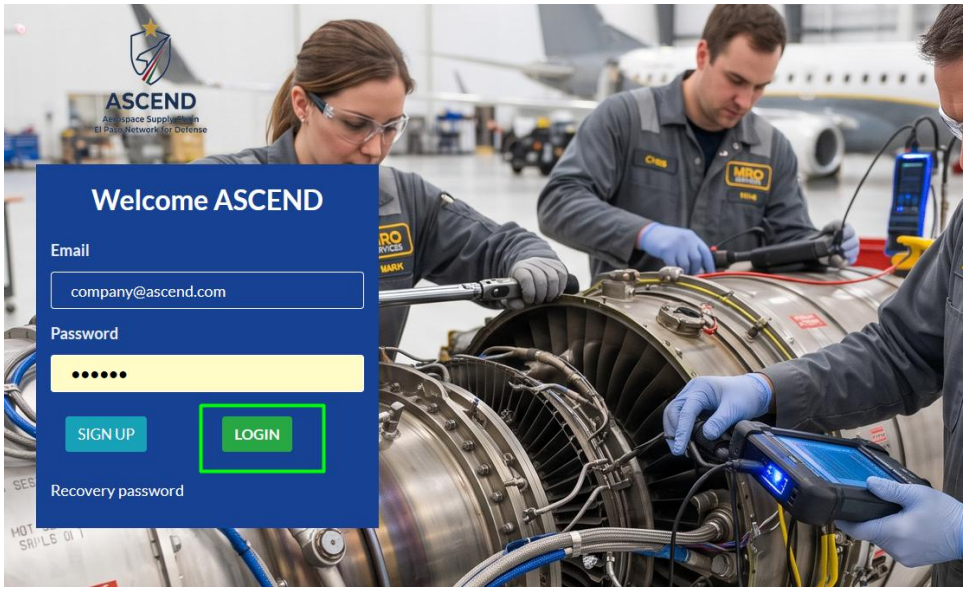


Figure 4. Sign-in screen.

4 Signing in to the platform

1. Go to Welcome ASCEND at https://usmfs.org/ascend/assessment
2. In "Email", enter the email address associated with your account.
3. In "Password", enter your password.
4. Click "**Log in**". Once you have signed-in, the assessment dashboard will appear.

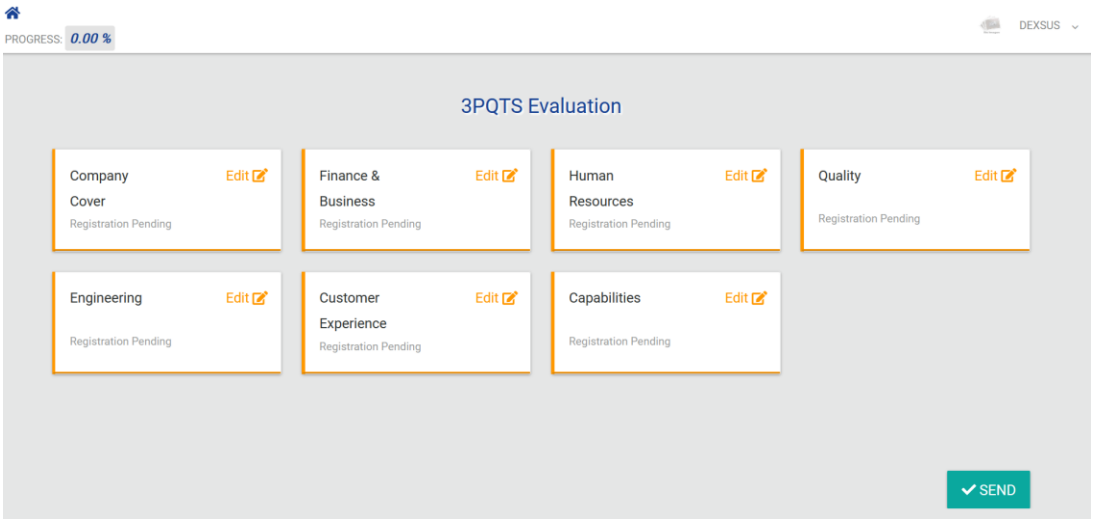


Figure 5. Dashboard showing the seven assessment sections.

5 Recovering a forgotten password

1. Go to Welcome ASCEND at https://usmfs.org/ascend/assessment and click **Recovery password**.
2. In the Forgot Your Password? window, enter the email address associated with your account in “User”.

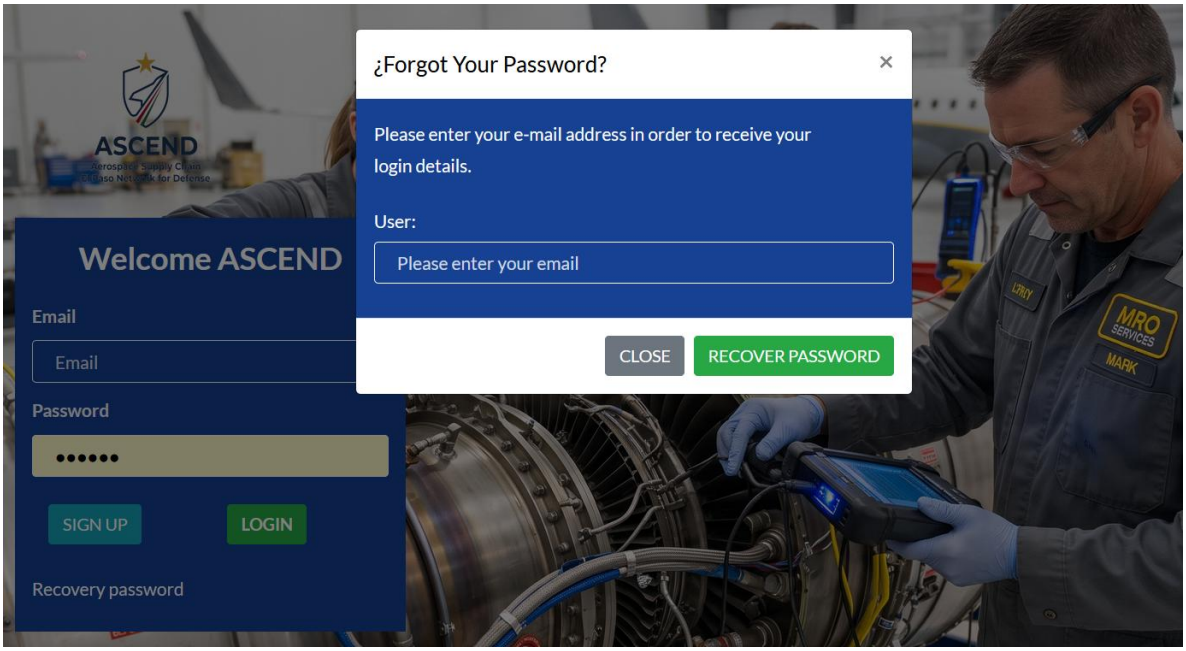


Figure 6. Password recovery window.

3. Click “**RECOVER PASSWORD**” to submit your request. Review the messages on screen. You will receive an email with instructions for recovering your password. If the email does not arrive promptly, check your spam or junk folder and follow the instructions provided by the system.
4. Return to Welcome ASCEND and use “**Log in**” once you have your sign-in details. To close the window without requesting password recovery, click **CLOSE**.

6 Using the assessment platform

The section dashboard

After you sign in, the assessment dashboard displays the seven sections. Your progress appears in the upper-left corner and your company name in the upper-right corner. This screen also contains the “**SEND**” button for submitting the completed assessment.

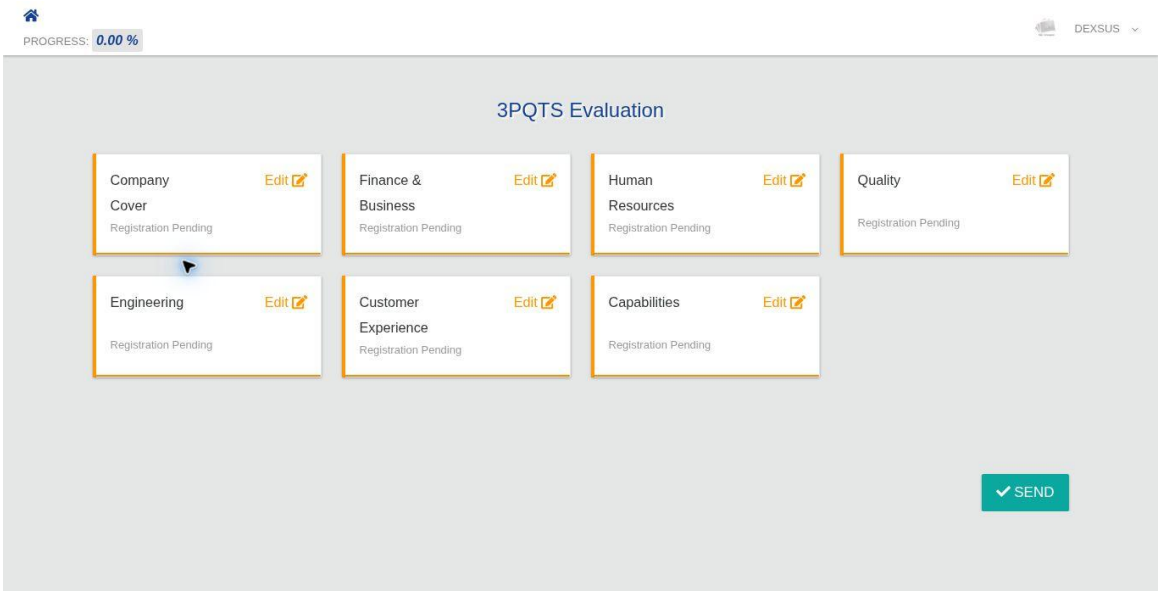


Figure 7. Assessment dashboard with seven sections.

Section	Main information
Company Cover	Company details, contacts, products, and activities.
Finance & Business	Financial information, customers, trade shows, and markets.
Human Resources	Employees and development programs.
Quality	Certifications, evidence, FAI, and processes.
Engineering	Technology, engineering, design, and Industry 4.0.
Customer Experience	Customer service, planning, and quotations.
Capabilities	Production capabilities and process details.

Click the name of the section you want to complete. Wait for the fields and save responses before you continue.

Moving between tabs

The first six sections organize their questions into numbered tabs. Click a tab name or number to open its questions.

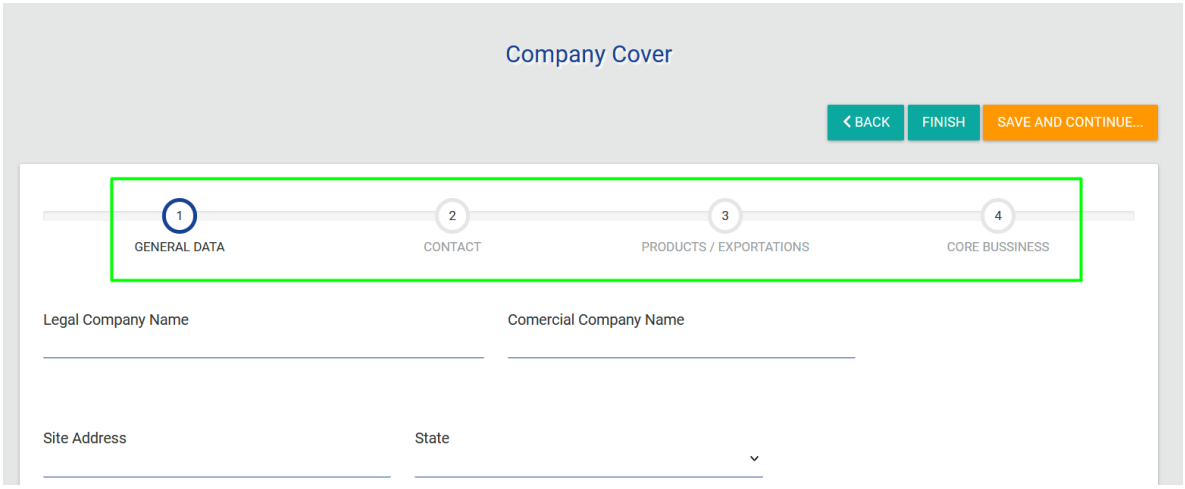


Figure 8. Tabs in the Company Cover section.

Complete the text fields and select responses from the menus. If a response reveals additional fields, complete those details as well. Follow the units specified, such as percentages, years, or ft².

Saving and continuing

1. Click **SAVE AND CONTINUE...** to save the responses you have entered.
2. Click **OK** to close the confirmation. To continue answering, select the next tab.
3. To return to the dashboard, use **BACK** after saving. To resume a section, open its tab again.
4. Save before changing sections or leaving the platform. Switching tabs and saving are separate actions.

Finishing a section and checking progress

1. Review all tabs or categories in the section, save your information, and click **FINISH**.
2. Read the "**Finish [section name]**" diagnostic message. The warning *"**If you finish it now, you can't edit again**"* means you should review your responses before confirming.
3. Click **Accept** to confirm or **Cancel** if you need to continue reviewing. If an incomplete information message appears, return to the specified area, complete the responses, and save before trying to finish again.
4. Wait for confirmation that the section has been completed. For sections organized into tabs, close the success message with **OK** and use **BACK** to return to the dashboard. In Capabilities, use **RETURN** to go back to the dashboard once the section has been completed.

Check that the section shows Finished / Complete and review PROGRESS in the top bar. The percentage increases when sections are completed. Saving responses preserves your information but does not finish a section. Registration Pending means that the section still needs to be completed.



Figure 9. Section dashboard and assessment progress indicators.

Completing Capabilities

Capabilities use a selector of production categories rather than tabs. Select only the capabilities that apply to your company.

1. Click the icon next to a category to open its details.
2. Enter the responses for each process or technology and click **SAVE AND CONTINUE**. Wait for confirmation, then click **OK**.
3. Click **RETURN AT OPTIONS CAPABILITIES** to return to the selector and continue with another category.
4. From the selector, **RETURN** takes you back to the main assessment dashboard.

Deselecting a category opens a warning that its data will be deleted. Use **CANCEL** to keep the data. Click **CONFIRM** only if you want to remove that capability and its information.

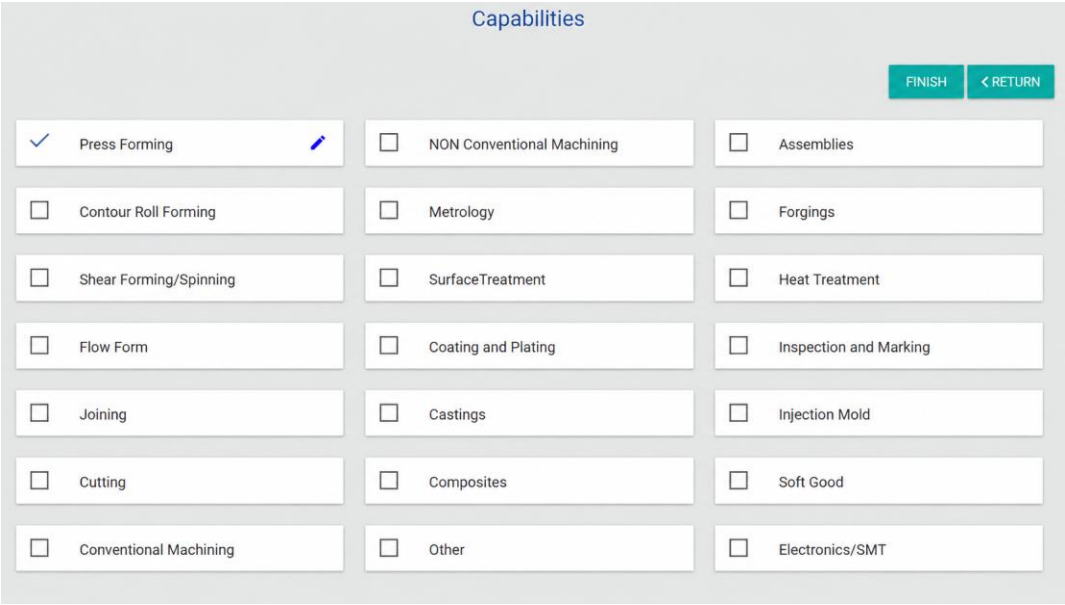


Figure 10. Capabilities section with one capability selected.

Attaching evidence in Quality

1. Open the Quality section and select CERTIFICATIONS.

2. Select the appropriate response for each certification. When Attach evidence appears, click **SELECT FILE**.

3. In your computer's file selection window, choose the evidence document for that certification.

4. Review the selected file and follow any upload or validation messages. Repeat the process for certifications that require evidence.

5. Complete any additional fields and click **SAVE AND CONTINUE...**. Wait for the save confirmation, then click **OK**.

6. Continue with the First Article Inspection (FAI) PROFILE and PROCESS. Save your responses before finishing the Quality section.

Evidence controls appear, where applicable, for A9100 (AS9100), NADCAP, OSHAS 18001, ISO 9001, and ITAR. Attach documents supporting the selected response. If the system rejects a file, address the requirement shown on screen before continuing.

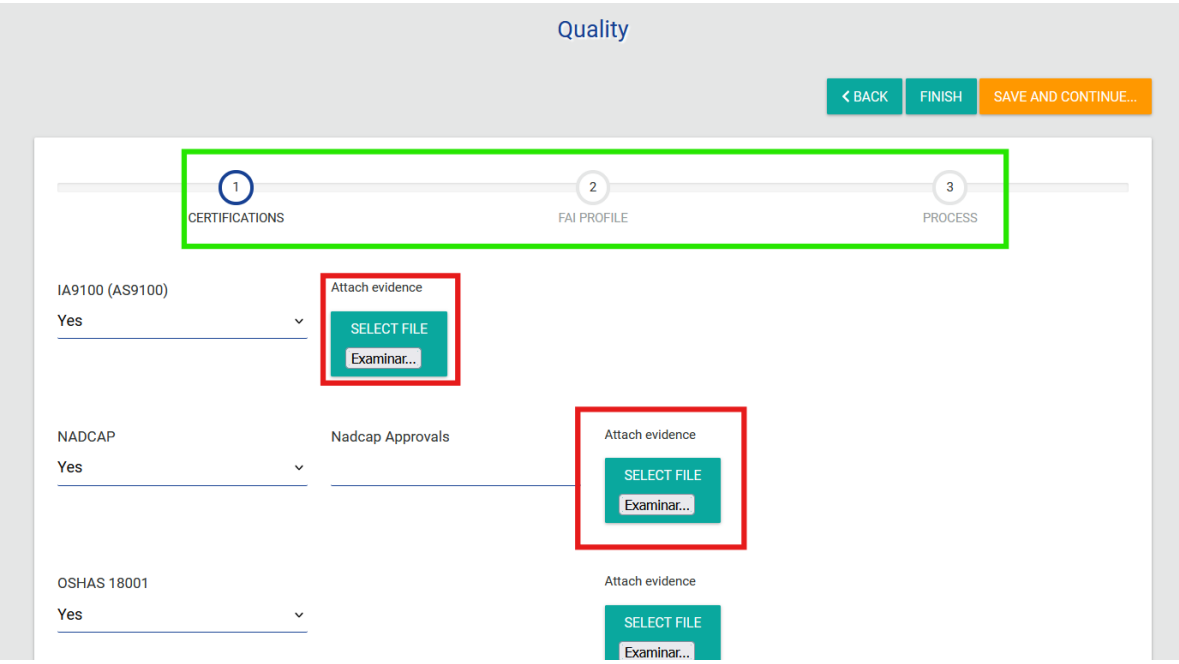


Figure 11. Section dashboard and assessment progress indicators.

Submitting the completed assessment

1. Complete, save, and finish all seven sections, including Capabilities.

2. In the main dashboard, check the status of all sections and the PROGRESS percentage. Make sure no sections remain pending.

3. Locate and click **SEND** on the main dashboard to submit the completed assessment.

4. Follow the validation messages and any confirmation prompts. If you are asked to correct information, address the issue before submitting again.

5. Wait for an explicit message confirming successful submission. Keep any confirmation or receipt provided by the platform.

FINISH completes an individual section. **SEND** submits the entire assessment. The progress indicator alone does not confirm that the assessment has been submitted.

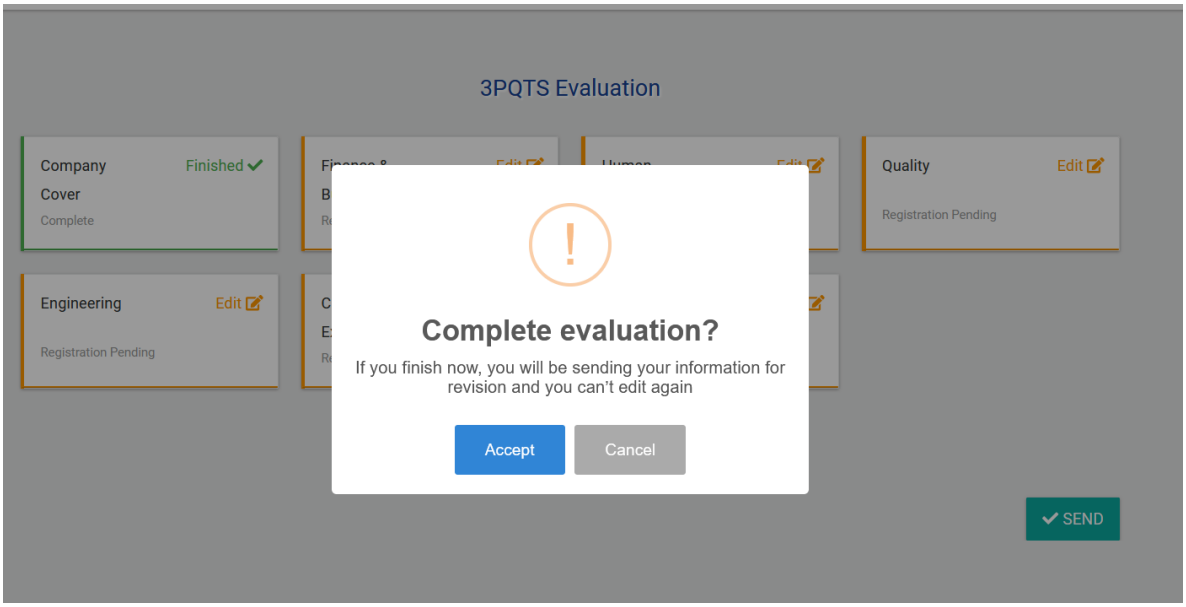


Figure 12. Section dashboard showing validation before completing the assessment.

ASCEND
Aerospace Supply Chain
El Paso Network for Defense