

ISTQB - Foundation Level Exam Structure and Rules

Version 1.2

International Software Testing Qualifications Board



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The following persons participated in the reviewing and commenting of this version of the guidelines: Mette Bruhn-Pedersen

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1. General**1.1. Validity**

All examinations run after 1st April 2012 shall comply with the structure and rules described in this document regardless of language and media.

1.2. Purpose

This document contains structure and rules for the setup of an examination related to the ISTQB Foundation Level syllabus.

This document replaces the current ISTQB - Foundation Level Exam Structure & Rules [EXAM_2010].

1.3. Scope

This document covers:

- a) the number of questions per examination;
- b) the length of the examination;
- c) the distribution of questions per topic (chapter); and
- d) the distribution of questions per cognitive level.

1.4. References

[EXAM_2010] ISTQB - Foundation Level Exam Structure & Rules v1.0

[QWRR_2011] ISTQB - Question Writing Rules & Recommendations Version 2011-1

[CTFL_2011] ISTQB Foundation Level Syllabus, Version 2011

1.5. Document Responsibility

General responsibility for this document is under the ISTQB Examination Working Group.

1.6. Revision History

Date	Version	Name	Comment
9-Jan-2010	0.1	Thomas Müller	Created as we need an replace of the document EXAM2005 for the release of CTFL Syllabus 2010 Changes against EXAM2005: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pick-N-Ri Item Type allowed - K4 for Learning Objectives considered in Distribution - Format of Exam Guide changed: Item Type Guide and CTFL Examination Guide separated
11-Jan-2010	0.2	Thomas Müller	Considering review comments from Meile, Horst, Hans, and Erik Changes against version 0.1: Chapter allowed item types changed
11-Jan-2010	0.3	Thomas Müller	Template change as requested by Horst, sent to Vipul
14-Jan-2010	1.0	Thomas Müller	For GA
XXXXXXX	1.1	Stuart Reid	For GA – Update to make consistent with new Examination Recommendations and Rules.
12-Apr-2013	1.2	Minna Aalto	Modified front matter to release the document as a public version (per Toronto GA motion)

2. Definitions

- CTFL: Acronym for Certified Tester Foundation Level.
- LEARNING OBJECTIVE: Learning objectives describe the gain on cognitive competence to be achieved in relation to given content.
- MC: Multiple-Choice is a form of assessment in which respondents are asked to select the best possible answer (or answers) from the options in a list.

3. Foundation Level Exam Rules

3.1. The Foundation Level examination

- 3.1.1. The Foundation Level examinations shall be based on the Foundation Level syllabus [CTFL_2011]. Answers to examination questions may require the use of material from more than one section of this syllabus.
- 3.1.2. All learning objectives (on cognitive level K1 to K4) in the syllabus are examinable.

3.2. General Foundation Level Exam Structure

- 3.2.1. The examination shall comprise 40 multiple-choice questions.
- 3.2.2. The number of points available in an examination is 40.
- 3.2.3. Each correctly answered question is worth one point.
- 3.2.4. The time allowed for the examination is 60 minutes, if given in the candidate's native language. If the candidate's native language is not the examination language, the time allowed is 75 minutes.

3.3. Passing Score

- 3.3.1. A score of at least 65% (26 or more points) is required to pass.

3.4. Specific Rules

- 3.4.1. Each exam, if produced manually, will be live for a maximum of 6 months.
- 3.4.2. Exam questions, while still 'live' in the question bank, can be reused as required by exam setters.
- 3.4.3. For the rules and recommendations for writing multiple-choice questions see the ISTQB - Question Writing Rules & Recommendations [QWRR_2011].

3.5. Question Distribution

- 3.5.1. Distribution per cognitive level:
- 50% of each exam will be K1 level questions;
 - 30% of each exam will be K2 level questions; and
 - 20% of each exam will be K3/K4 level questions

K-levels are described in the syllabus [CTFL_2011]

Cognitive Level	LO distribution related to cognitive levels in [CTFL_2011]	Distribution of questions per cognitive level (%)	Distribution of questions
K1	33.75%	50%	20
K2	58.75%	30%	12
K3	6.25%	20%	8
K4	1.25%		
Total	100%	100%	40

3.5.2. Distribution per chapter:

- The exam questions will be distributed 'roughly' in line with the Syllabus timings

	<i>Time (min)</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Number of Questions</i>	<i>Range</i>	<i>K1 (+/- 1)</i>	<i>K2 (+/- 1)</i>	<i>K3/K4 (+/- 1)</i>
Chapter 1	155	18%	7.17	7 to 8	4	3	
Chapter 2	115	13%	5.32	5 to 6	4	2	
Chapter 3	60	7%	2.77	2 to 3	2	1	
Chapter 4	285	33%	13.18	12 to 15	4	2	6
Chapter 5	170	20%	7.86	7 to 8	3	3	2
Chapter 6	80	9%	3.70	3 to 4	3	1	
Total	865	100%	40	40	20	12	8