ISTQB - Certified Tester Foundation Level V. 2018
Exam Structure and Rules

Released Version 2018

International Software Testing Qualifications Board

The authors wish to thank the members of the Exam Working Group and the Foundation Level Working Group for their comments and suggestions.

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1. General

1.1. Validity

This document pertains only to the Certified Tester Foundation Level Syllabus Version 2018.
All ISTQB Foundation Level Version 2018 examinations run after 4 June, 2019 (if running English exams) or 4 December, 2019 (if exams run in a language other than English) 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 examinations related to the ISTQB Certified Tester Foundation Level Syllabus Version 2018.

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 learning objective.

1.4. References

[QWRR_2017]   ISTQB - Question Writing Rules & Recommendations Version 2017

[CTFL_2018]   ISTQB Certified Tester Foundation Level Syllabus Version 2018

1.5. Document Responsibility

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

1.6. Revision History

Date	Version	Name	Comment
2017/04/06	V 1.0 ALPHA	D. Friedenberg	Initial draft for the Alpha Foundation Level syllabus
2017/08/15	V 0.9 BETA	D. Friedenberg	Updated the template with the first draft question mix
2017/08/17	V 0.10 BETA	Ingvar Nordstrom	Question distribution modified. Ready for EWG review
2017/09/29	V 0.11 BETA	Ingvar Nordstrom	Updated after EWG review
2017/01/11	V 2.0 BETA	D. Friedenberg	Updated after Brussels EWG meeting
2017/11/21	V2.1 BETA	D. Friedenberg	Updated after further discussions with the FLWG and EWG
2018/01/02	V2.2 BETA	D. Friedenberg	Updated after EWG review
2018/01/11	V2.3 BETA	D. Friedenberg	Minor updates based on comments from pre-Beta review
2018/01/12	V2.4 BETA	Rex Black	Removed LO 4.2.6 as agreed for timing.
2018/01/19	V3.0	Rex Black	Technical edit for cross-review
2018/02/11	Beta Package	Rex Black	Version for beta package
2018/04/10	GA Package	Tauhida Parveen	Update after Beta review
2018/04/19	GA Package	Rex Black	Additional edits
2018/06/04	Released v 2018	Klaus Olsen	Approved by GA

2. Definitions

- CTFL: Acronym for Certified Tester Foundation Level.
- LEARNING OBJECTIVE (LO): 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) according to the relevant syllabus from the options in a list.

3. Certified Tester Foundation Level Exam Rules

3.1. The Certified Tester Foundation Level Examinations

3.1.1. The Certified Tester Foundation Level examinations shall be based on the Certified Tester Foundation Level syllabus [CTFL_2018]. Answers to examination questions may require the use of material from more than one section of the syllabus.

3.1.2. All learning objectives (on cognitive levels K1 to K3) in the syllabus are examinable.

3.1.3 All keywords in the syllabus are examinable for their definition (K1).

3.2. General Foundation Level Exam Structure

3.2.1. Each Certified Tester Foundation Level examination shall comprise a set of multiple-choice questions based on the Learning Objectives for that specific syllabus. The level of coverage and distribution of questions has been based on the Learning Objectives, their K-levels, and their level of importance as evaluated by the ISTQB. Details on the structure for each examination module are provided in section 4 below.

3.2.2. In general, K1 and K2 questions are expected to take no more than 1 minute to read and answer, K3 questions are expected to take 3 minutes. The exam author should keep in mind that this is only a guideline for an average time, and that it is likely that some questions will take longer and others will take less time for examinees to complete.

3.2.3. The exam shall comprise 40 multiple-choice questions. Each correct answer has a value of one point. The maximum possible score for each examination is 40 points.

3.2.4. The time allowed for each examination is exactly 60 minutes. If the candidate's native language is not the examination language, the candidate is allowed an additional 25% time.

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

Module	Number of questions	Number of possible points	Passing score (65%)	Exam Length (in minutes)	Exam Length + 25% (in minutes)
Certified Tester Foundation Level	40	40	26	60	75

3.2.6. Overall question breakdown by K-Level is as follows:

K-Level	Number of Questions	Question Timing	Total Time by K Level (Approximate)
K1	8	1	8
K2	24	1	24
K3	8	3	24
TOTALS	40		56

3.3. Specific Rules

3.3.1. For the rules and recommendations for writing multiple-choice questions see the ISTQB - Question Writing Rules & Recommendations [QWRR_2017].

3.3.2. All questions shall assess at least one Learning Objective from the Certified Tester Foundation Level Syllabus under examination or test for recall of Glossary terms. Questions may use terms and concepts that exist in K1 level sections as the candidates are expected to

be familiar with these. Where questions address more than one LO, they should primarily address the highest K-Level LO.

3.4. Question Distribution

3.4.1. The exam structure for the Certified Tester Foundation Level examination is provided in the following table. Each of the exams requires mandatory questions targeted to specific Learning Objectives as well as a specified number of questions based on "selectable" Learning Objectives.

4. Certified Tester Foundation Level Exam Structure

Certified Tester Foundation Level question distribution

Chapter 1 Question Distribution	K-Level	Number of Questions per LO	Suggested Points per question	
Keywords	K1	Exactly ONE question based on the definition of a keyword from Chapter 1	1	
FL-1.1.1 FL-1.5.1	K1	Exactly ONE question based on either of these LOs is required.	1	**There is a total of 8 questions required for Chapter 1.** K1 = 2 K2 = 6 K3 = 0
FL-1.1.2 FL-1.2.1 FL-1.2.2 FL-1.2.3 FL-1.2.4 FL-1.3.1 FL-1.4.1 FL-1.4.2 FL-1.4.3 FL-1.4.4 FL-1.5.2	K2	Exactly SIX questions based on this set of 11 LOs are required. Each question must cover a DIFFERENT LO.	1	**Number of points for this chapter = 8**

Chapter 2 Question Distribution	K-Level	Number of Questions per LO	Suggested Points per question	
FL-2.1.2 FL-2.3.2	K1	Exactly ONE question based on either of these LOs is required.	1	**There is a total of 5 questions required for Chapter 2.** K1 = 1 K2 = 4 K3 = 0
FL-2.1.1 FL-2.2.1 FL-2.3.1 FL-2.3.3 FL-2.4.1 FL-2.4.2	K2	Exactly FOUR questions based on this set of 6 LOs are required. Each question must cover a DIFFERENT LO.	1	**Number of points for this chapter = 5**

Chapter 3 Question Distribution	K-Level	Number of Questions per LO	Suggested Points per question	
FL-3.1.1 FL-3.2.2	K1	Exactly ONE question based on either of these LOs is required.	1	**There is a total of 5 questions required for Chapter 3.** K1 = 1 K2 = 3 K3 = 1
FL-3.1.2 FL-3.1.3 FL-3.2.1 FL-3.2.3	K2	Exactly THREE questions based on this set of 5 LOs are required.	1	

FL-3.2.5		Each question must cover a DIFFERENT LO.		**Number of points for this chapter = 5**
FL-3.2.4	K3	Exactly ONE question based on this LO is required.	**1**	

Chapter 4 Question Distribution	K-Level	Number of Questions per LO	Suggested Points per question	
Keywords	K1	Exactly ONE question based on the definition of a keyword from Chapter 4	**1**	
FL-4.1.1 FL-4.2.5 FL-4.3.1 FL-4.3.2 FL-4.3.3 FL-4.4.1 FL-4.4.2 FL-4.4.3	K2	Exactly FIVE questions based on this set of 8 LOs are required. Each question must cover a DIFFERENT LO. NOTE: Including ONE question for FL-4.2.5 is optional but encouraged.	**1**	**There is a total of 11 questions required for Chapter 4.** **K1 = 1** **K2 = 5** **K3 = 5** **Number of points for this chapter = 11**
FL-4.2.1 FL-4.2.2 FL-4.2.3 FL-4.2.4	K3	Exactly FIVE questions based on this set of 4 LOs are required. There shall be ONE question based on EACH of these LOs. (i.e., each question must cover a DIFFERENT LO.) The fifth question shall be based on EITHER FL-4.2.1 OR FL-4.2.2	**1**	

Chapter 5 Question Distribution	K-Level	Number of Questions per LO	Suggested Points per question	
FL-5.1.2 FL-5.2.5 FL-5.3.1 FL=5.5.1	K1	Exactly TWO questions based on this set of 4 LOs are required. Each question must cover a DIFFERENT LO.	**1**	**There is a total of 9 questions required for Chapter 5.** **K1 = 2** **K2 = 5** **K3 = 2** **Number of points for this chapter = 9**
FL-5.1.1 FL-5.2.1 FL-5.2.2 FL-5.2.3 FL-5.2.6 FL-5.3.2	K2	Exactly FIVE questions based on this set of 9 LOs are required. Each question must cover a DIFFERENT LO.	**1**	

		Number of Questions per LO	Suggested Points per question	
FL-5.4.1 FL-5.5.2 FL-5.5.3				
FL-5.2.4 FL-5.6.1	K3	Exactly TWO questions based on this set of two LOs is required. Each question must cover a DIFFERENT LO.	1	
Chapter 6 Question Distribution	**K-Level**	**Number of Questions per LO**	**Suggested Points per question**	
FL-6.1.2 FL-6.1.3 FL-6.2.1 FL-6.2.2 FL-6.2.3	K1	Exactly ONE questions based on this set of 5 LOs is required.	1	**There is a total of 2 questions required for Chapter 6.** **K1 = 1** **K2 = 1** **K3 = 0** **Number of points for this chapter = 2**
FL-6.1.1	K2	Exactly ONE question based on this LO is required.	1	
Certified Tester Foundation Level TOTALS		**60 minutes**	**40 questions TOTAL**	