Security Test Analyst v1.0
Accreditation Guidelines

Version 1.0

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Document Control

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1 Introduction

Accreditation is a key part of the work that ISTQB® and the individual Member Boards perform for both Training Providers and students.

As a student, studying for your ISTQB® qualifications with an Accredited Training Provider, it will give you assurance that they have been independently assessed and accredited as a suitable organization to carry the ISTQB® Training Provider logo for the course that you are studying with. Therefore, you can study in the knowledge that the company who you select to do your training with will be able to provide you the right level and scope of information to help you prepare for the ISTQB® certification exam.

As a Training Provider, having your course accredited will mean your company name is published on the ISTQB® website and in some cases the individual Member Board that accredited you as an Accredited Trainer Provider. This will provide Training Providers with focused marketing and include additional benefits shown below.

This document provides a high-level overview of the guidelines a Training Provider or a Training Material Owner has to meet if they wish to be accredited as a provider of any ISTQB® courses.

Accreditation is undertaken by an ISTQB® member board. This guideline includes information regarding how to apply, what input to provide and describes the accreditation process.

2 Objectives

The objectives of the accreditation process are:

1. To define in general terms what Training Providers have to produce in order to have their course considered for accreditation.
2. To ensure that any course submitted for accreditation meets the requirements of the relevant ISTQB® syllabus through independent assessment.
3. To provide students with the confidence that any Accredited Training Provider they choose will have been assessed by qualified reviewers and that any Training Materials meet the individual syllabus requirements.
4. To provide ongoing governance to ensure that Training Providers continually meet the requirements of a syllabus and their exam pass rates are of an acceptable standard.

3 ISTQB® Accreditation Options

The ISTQB® accreditation process includes the following accreditation options:

- Accreditation as a Training Provider
    - As a Training Provider you will be providing training of one or more accredited courses. You may have developed the Training Material yourself or are licensing courses from another Training Provider or Training Material Owner.
- Accreditation as a Training Material Owner

- A Training Material Owner is a supplier, who owns and develops accredited Training Material, but don't necessarily train the materials.

- Trainers
  - There are some member boards who as part of their accreditation also accredit the individual Trainers. Please approach your local Member Board for their accreditation process.

4 ISTQB® Accreditation Process

To ensure consistency of accreditation all ISTQB® Member Boards are required to follow a defined minimum accreditation process that has been developed and released by ISTQB®. As each country is unique there may be local initiatives or legislation that require slightly modified approaches in some aspects. Any Member Board shall be able to provide details of their specific accreditation process on request.

4.1 Fees

Each Member Board will provide details of their accreditation fees on request.

4.2 Application

- Each Member Board shall provide on request their application form that details all information required to enable Training Providers to apply for accreditation. This will include but may not be limited to:
  - Copies of all the proposed training slides
  - The detailed training timetable showing the trainings times compared to the syllabus including time proposed for exercises, practice exams, any homework and breaks.
  - Lecturer notes that show the information that lecturers are expected to teach for each slide.
  - Student notes (or copies of books if they are to be used in place of your own written notes)
  - Detailed exercises with the expected outcomes relating to all the course learning objectives.
  - Practice exams with answers
  - Details of the trainers including their training testing experience. Trainers will need to hold the certification they are planning to teach.
- The board will acknowledge receipt of the application and advise the latest date that a response will be received.

- For the specific list of requirements for any country, please contact the relevant ISTQB® Member Board.

4.3 Review of the application

Each Member Board has a panel of reviewers from which resource will be selected to assess each submission. Their role is to ensure the Training Material submitted is of suitable quality and to meet the requirements of the relevant syllabus. The Accreditation panel may not use sampling methods (i.e., evaluating some sections instead of the full Training Material). All Training Material provided shall be evaluated.

If the application is from a Training Provider who license Training Material that is already accredited, the reviewers only need to assess the suitability of the training provider and tutor(s) given the Training Materials are already accredited.

If a Training Provider is accredited in one country location, their accreditation is automatically valid with all ISTQB® Member Boards. If a Training Provider wishes to deliver training in a different country to the one they are accredited in, they should seek guidance of any local issues from the local Member Board of the country they intend to train in and see what their requirements are for running exams.

Once the accreditation application has been reviewed, the response from the Member Board will fall into the following categories:

- **Approved** – approved with few or no changes required. If a few changes are required, confirmation from the Training Provider may be required once they have been completed. Details will be provided in the Member Board response.
- **Deferred** – additional information or changes to the submission may be required before being able to approve accreditation. Progression of the application will be "on hold" until all the requirements are met.
- **Decline** – the submission does not meet the accreditation requirements. If an application is declined the applicant may re-apply again at any time in the future and pay the appropriate accreditation fee.

Once the application is approved, for the duration stated by the Member Board, the Training Provider will be issued with the appropriate ISTQB® logos that can be used on marketing collateral. Details of the Training Provider and the course that has been accredited will appear on the ISTQB® website. Member Boards may also publish the Accredited Training Providers on their website.

4.4 Re-accreditation

At the end of the accreditation period a re-submission is normally required to ensure the course still meets the syllabus objectives. Each Member Board will be able to provide Training Providers with details required for re-accreditation. This may be a full set of materials as per the initial accreditation or a letter confirming that no changes have been introduced since accreditation was granted.

4.5 Surveillance

It is the duty of each Member Board to perform due diligence and ensure that courses are being taught to the correct accredited version of the materials. During the accreditation period Training

Providers may be visited by a reviewer to monitor a short part of the training course. A report will be provided back to the Training Provider along with any recommendations if required.

Member Boards will as a matter of course monitor the ongoing exam results for each Training Provider and if pass rates fall lower than expected within that country, they will be contacted to offer guidance and support as required to improve the results.

5 What do we evaluate?

5.1 Syllabus and Learning Objectives

The Training Material should cover the entire syllabus and all the learning objectives defined in it. A straight copy of the syllabus words onto training slides is not sufficient. It is expected that Training Material will expand on the syllabus words to ensure understanding.

The training material shall provide the student with the knowledge and skills of each chapter and section as outlined in the syllabus and body of knowledge (if it exists for the given syllabus), in line with the defined K-level for the given Learning Objective. (see K-level definitions in the Syllabus Appendix section).

The Training Material to be accredited shall demonstrate coverage of all applicable learning objectives. Applications for accreditation shall include a traceability matrix showing coverage of the learning objectives in terms of presentation and supporting materials.

The amount of training including hours or days should meet the requirements of the syllabus being taught. For each module, all chapters shall be covered with at least as much time as required in the syllabus. Applications for accreditation shall include a timing matrix showing the time allocated per chapter.

All Learning Objectives shall have lectures, examples, and exercises according to their K-level, as defined in this document or in the Accreditation Guidelines for the certification module. All exercises shall include an expected/sample solution to help students understand the exercise.

5.2 Glossary

For any Glossary term defined in the syllabus, the Training Material must be consistent with the definition of that term in the latest released version of the ISTQB® Glossary.

> Note: although ISTQB® makes its best to align between the glossary and the syllabus, deviations may occur. In case of difference between the syllabus and the glossary, the glossary prevails.

5.3 Evaluation of Examples

Every K2, K3, K4, K5 and K6 Learning Objective (LO) must contain at least one example.

Examples shall be:

- Appropriate for the material being taught,

- Drawn upon realistic software, system, or project; i.e., trainers should not use toy or non-computer-related examples. Ideally, examples should be substantial and be drawn from real life occurrences.

5.4 Evaluation of Exercises and Answers

Every K3, K4, K5 and K6 Learning Objective (LO), or Hands-on Objectives (HO) shall have at least one exercise.

Exercises shall be:

- Appropriate for the material, complexity and K-level of the LO, or HO-level taught,
- Drawn upon realistic software or systems projects, i.e. Trainers should not use toy or non-computer-related exercises. Ideally, exercises should be substantial and be drawn from real life occurrences.
- Each exercise shall include solutions.

For live classes, all exercises must be solved by the students in class (i.e., not as optional or required homework) and a solution reviewed in class by the instructor. For e-learning or correspondence classes, an exercise solution must be provided in the course material.

5.5 Evaluation of Trainer Notes

If the slides are not self-explanatory, notes about what tutors are expected to say on each section should be available. These trainer notes can be presenter notes in the slides or a separate document.

5.6 Practice Exams

Details of the types of exam questions are available for each syllabus. It is expected that for Training Providers to prepare students for the exam, sufficient practice exams of the type expected in the final exam will be provided with solutions. Reviewers will evaluate the quality of these exams relative to the real ones that will be used.

5.7 Evaluation of Additional Material

If trainers reference additional material (such as books or articles not referenced in the syllabus), they shall provide that material to the Accreditation authority and ensure that this material is not in conflict with the syllabi being Accredited or other ISTQB® syllabi.

5.8 Hands-On Objectives (HOs)

Like K3 and above Learning Objectives (LOs), Hands-on Objectives (HOs) focus on practical skills and competencies. However, HOs are not examined by the multiple-choice exam questions. It is

therefore important that HOs are well covered by the Training Material as instructed by the Syllabus Accreditation Guideline document.

5.9 Evaluation of Trainers

The knowledge and experience of the Trainers will be looked at to ensure they hold the necessary skills to deliver training.

Trainers must hold at least the certification that they are teaching. In case a trainer has a Certified Tester Advanced Level Test Management Certificate older than v.3.0, he also must have the Agile Tester Foundation Level or Certified Tester Foundation Level v4.0 Certificate. Accreditation authorities may select additional criteria to accredit trainers (e.g., consulting experience, etc.).

If such is the case, the additional criteria will be made public before the accreditation request is sent. Accreditation authorities are reminded that training experience and (practical) testing experience are required, and that presenting at conferences does not cover the same skills as lecturing in a training course.

If evidence can be found that a trainer not holding the Certified Tester Advanced Level Test Management Certificate is running an accredited Certified Tester Advanced Level Test Management v3.0 training, the accreditation must be revoked by the member board.

6 Benefits of Accreditation

In addition to being listed on websites and use of ISTQB® logos, Accredited Training Providers will have access to ISTQB® initiatives as they are public available, such as Beta versions of new certifications, new revisions of existing syllabi, as well as other specific benefits that may be available from time to time.

Any questions about the accreditation process can be directed to the Member Board of your country or via email to info@ISTQB.org.