ISTQB - Advanced Level Test Automation Engineer Exam Structure and Rules

Version 1.0 GA RELEASE

International Software Testing Qualifications Board

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1. General

1.1. Validity

All ISTQB Advanced Level – Test Automation Engineer examinations run after nn/nn/nnnn 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 Advanced Level – Test Automation Engineer syllabus.

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

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

[CTAL_2012] ISTQB 2012 Advanced Syllabi

[CTAL_TAE] ISTQB Advanced Level – Test Automation Engineer syllabus (v1)

1.5. Document Responsibility

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

1.6. Revision History

Date	Version	Name	Comment
2016/10/21	V1.0 GA RELEASE	D. Friedenberg	Submission with final syllabus motion

2. Definitions

- CTAL: Acronym for Certified Tester Advanced 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) from the options in a list.

3. Advanced Level Exam Rules

3.1. The Advanced Level – Test Automation Engineer Examinations

3.1.1. The Advanced Level – Test Automation Engineer examinations shall be based on the Advanced Level – Test Automation Engineer syllabus [CTAL_TAE]. 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 K4) in the syllabus are examinable.

3.2. General Advanced Level Exam Structure

3.2.1. Each Advanced Level examination module (i.e. Test Manager, Test Analyst, Technical Test Analyst, Security Tester and Test Automation Engineer) 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 3.5 below.

3.2.2. The points available for a question should reflect the difficulty of the question. A K2 question is to be allocated 1 point. In general, a K3 question should be allocated 2 points and a K4 question should be allocated 3 points. However, K3 questions may be set at 1, 2, or 3 points, and K4 questions may be set at 2 or 3 points at the discretion of the question author.

A more difficult question may require the examinee to have a deeper or more nuanced understanding of the material. A less difficult question may be one where the answer is more straightforward.

3.2.3. In general, K2 questions are expected to take 1 minute to read and answer, K3 questions are expected to take 3 minutes and K4 questions are expected to take 4 minutes. The exam setter 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.

3.2.4. The time allowed for each examination is based on the number and K-level of questions required for that module. If the candidate's native language is not the examination language, the candidate is allowed an additional 25%.

Module	Number of questions	Number of possible points	Passing score (65%)	Exam Length (in minutes)	Exam Length + 25% (in minutes)
Advanced Level – Test Automation Engineer	40	75	49	90	113

Passing Score

3.2.5. A score of at least 65% is required to pass.

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_2011].

3.3.2. All questions shall assess at least one Learning Objective from the Advanced Syllabus under examination. Questions may include supporting material at the K1 level from the rest of the syllabus, incorporate concepts from Foundation syllabus LOs and/or include other Foundation syllabus material at the K1 level. Where questions address more than one LO, then the question should primarily address the highest K-Level LO.

3.4. Question Distribution

3.4.1. The exam structure for the Advanced Level Test Automation – Engineer 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. Advanced Level – Test Automation Engineer Exam Structure

4.1.1. General Structure

Overview

Module	Number of questions	Number of possible points	Passing score (65%)	Exam Length (in minutes)	Exam Length + 25% (in minutes)
Advanced Level – Test Automation Engineer	40	75	49	90	113

4.1.2. Question and point distribution

Advanced Level – Test Automation Engineer question distribution

Chapter 1 Question Distribution	K-Level	Number of Questions per LO	Suggested Points per question	
AL-TAE-1.1.1	K2	1	1	**There are a total of 2 questions required for Chapter 1. K1 = 0 K2 = 2 K3 = 0 K4 = 0 Suggested number of points for this chapter = 2**
AL-TAE-1.2.1	K2	1	1	

Chapter 2 Question Distribution	K-Level	Number of Questions per LO	Suggested Points per question	
AL-TAE-2.1.1	K4	2	3	**There are a total of 5 questions required for Chapter 2. K1 = 0 K2 = 2 K3 = 0 K4 = 3 Suggested number of points for this chapter = 11**
AL-TAE-2.2.1	K4	1	3	
AL-TAE-2.3.1	K2	2	1	
Chapter 3 Question Distribution	**K-Level**	**Number of Questions per LO**	**Suggested Points per question**	
AL-TAE-3.1.1	K2	1	1	**There are a total of 10 questions required for Chapter 3. K1 = 0 K2 = 5 K3 = 2 K4 = 3 Suggested number of points for this chapter = 18**
AL-TAE-3.2.1	K4	1	3	
AL-TAE-3.2.2	K2	1	1	
AL-TAE-3.2.3	K2	2	1	
AL–TAE-3.2.4	K4	2	3	
AL-TAE-3.3.1	K3	2	2	
AL-TAE-3.3.2	K2	1	1	
Chapter 4 Question Distribution	**K-Level**	**Number of Questions per LO**	**Suggested Points per question**	
AL-TAE-4.1.1	K3	2	2	**There are a total of 5 questions required for Chapter 4. K1 – 0 K2 = 1 K3 = 2 K4 = 2**
AL-TAE-4.2.1	K4	2	3	

AL-TAE-4.3.1	K2	1	1	**Suggested number of points for this chapter = 11**
Chapter 5 Question Distribution	**K-Level**	**Number of Questions per LO**	**Suggested Points per question**	
AL-TAE-5.1.1	K2	2	1	**There are a total of 6 questions required for Chapter 5. K1 – 0 K2 = 3 K3 = 2 K4 = 1 Suggested number of points for this chapter = 10**
AL-TAE-5.2.1	K3	2	2	
AL-TAE-5.3.1	K4	1	3	
AL-TAE-5.4.1	K2	1	1	
Chapter 6 Question Distribution	**K-Level**	**Number of Questions per LO**	**Suggested Points per question**	
AL-TAE-6.1.1	K3	1	2	**There are a total of 5 questions required for Chapter 6. K1 – 0 K2 = 4 K3 = 1 K4 = 0 Suggested number of points for this chapter = 6**
AL-TAE-6.1.2	K2	1	1	
AL-TAE-6.2.1	K2	1	1	
AL-TAE-6.3.1	K2	1	1	
AL-TAE-6.4.1	K2	1	1	
Chapter 7 Question Distribution	**K-Level**	**Number of Questions per LO**	**Suggested Points per question**	
AL-TAE-7.1.1	K3	2	2	**There are a total of 4 questions required for Chapter 7. K1 – 0 K2 = 0**

AL-TAE-7.2.1	K3	2	2	**K3 = 4** **K4 = 0** **Suggested number of points for this chapter = 8**
Chapter 8 Question Distribution	**K-Level**	**Number of Questions per LO**	**Suggested Points per question**	
AL-TAE-8.1.1	K4	2	3	**There are a total of 3 questions required for Chapter 8.** **K1 – 0** **K2 = 0** **K3 = 0** **K4 = 3** **Suggested number of points for this chapter = 9**
AL-TAE-8.2.1	K4	1	3	
Advanced Level Test Automation – Engineer TOTALS			**EXACTLY 75 points total**	**90 minutes** / **EXACTLY 40 questions total**