



SABSA Institute
Certification Programme
Frequently Asked Questions

Table of Contents

ABOUT THE SABSA CERTIFICATION PROGRAMME	3
WHAT IS SABSA CERTIFICATION?	3
WHY SHOULD I ATTAIN SABSA CERTIFICATION WHEN SO MANY OTHER INFORMATION SECURITY-RELATED CERTIFICATES ARE AVAILABLE?	3
ABOUT THE TESTS	4
WHAT IS THE SABSA INSTITUTE TESTING METHOD?	4
<i>Foundation Level (SCF) Tests</i>	4
<i>Practitioner Level (SCP) Tests</i>	4
<i>Master Level (SCM) Tests</i>	4
HOW OFTEN DOES THE SABSA INSTITUTE HOLD EXAMS?	4
HOW DO I REGISTER FOR A SABSA EXAM?	4
WHO SETS THE EXAMINATION?	5
HOW CAN I BE SURE THAT EXAMINATIONS ARE CONSISTENT AND FAIR?	5
HOW ARE THE EXAM QUESTIONS SELECTED?	5
HOW MANY QUESTIONS ARE CONTAINED IN EACH EXAM MODULE?	5
<i>Multiple Choice Examination Modules</i>	5
<i>Written Examination Modules</i>	5
WHAT IS THE TIME LIMIT FOR ANSWERING EACH EXAM MODULE?.....	5
HOW DOES THE INSTITUTE DEAL WITH CANDIDATES WITH A FIRST LANGUAGE OTHER THAN ENGLISH?.....	5
IN WHAT FORMAT ARE THE QUESTIONS PRESENTED?	5
<i>Multiple Choice Examination Modules</i>	5
<i>Written Examination Modules</i>	5
HOW MANY OF THE QUESTIONS COUNT TOWARDS MY SCORE?	6
WHAT SCORE MUST I ATTAIN TO ACHIEVE A PASS?	6
<i>Foundation Level Multiple Choice Examination Modules</i>	6
<i>Practitioner & Master Level Examination Modules</i>	6
HOW MANY TEST MODULES MUST I PASS TO GAIN MY CERTIFICATE?	6
<i>Foundation Level (SCF)</i>	6
<i>Practitioner Level (SCP)</i>	6
<i>Master Level (SCF)</i>	6
PREPARING FOR THE TESTS	7
DOES SABSA INSTITUTE RECOMMEND STUDY MATERIALS THAT MAY ASSIST WITH PREPARATION FOR THE EXAMS?	7
DOES SABSA INSTITUTE PROVIDE TRAINING OR STUDY PROGRAMMES?	7
THE TESTING PROCESS	8
WHO SUPERVISES SABSA EXAMS?	8
WHAT SHOULD I KNOW ABOUT THE ON-SITE REGISTRATION PROCESS?	8
UNDER WHAT RULES ARE SABSA EXAMINATIONS RUN?	8
<i>Multiple-Choice Examination Modules</i>	8
<i>Written Examination Modules</i>	8
AFTER THE TESTS	9
WHO MARKS THE SABSA EXAM?	9
HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE TO GET THE RESULTS?	9
OTHER THAN PASS/FAIL, IS ANY OTHER INFORMATION PROVIDED WITH THE RESULTS?	9
CAN I APPEAL MY SCORE OR REQUEST THAT MY PAPER IS CHECKED AND RE-MARKED?	9
CAN I RE-SIT A FAILED EXAM MODULE AT A LATER DATE?	9
IF I PASS ONE OF THE TWO FOUNDATION LEVEL MODULES BUT FAIL THE OTHER, DO I HAVE TO RE-SIT BOTH PAPERS?.....	9
CAN I PURSUE CERTIFICATION IN MORE THAN ONE AREA OF SPECIALISM?.....	9

About The SABSA Certification Programme

What is SABSA Certification?

The SABSA Certification Framework is a comprehensive, competencies-based testing programme that provides employers and peers with assurance and confidence that employees, job candidates, service providers and contractors have the professional capability to meet the needs of your organisation to design, deliver and manage enterprise security architectures. It tests professional proficiency in all aspects of enterprise security as delivered by the SABSA method.

The framework is based upon world-leading educational best practices and consists of:

- A comprehensive Body of Knowledge;
- A detailed multi-layer Competency Map constructed using the leading skills development framework *Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Levels*;
- Career Roadmaps that recognise the range of specialisms increasingly required as a career develops, and define clear paths for career progression;
- Three certification levels that indicate stages of proficiency from knowledge and understanding of the subject up to demonstration of the advanced competencies required of a master of the profession.

Full details are available on the The SABSA Institute website <http://www.sabsa-institute.org>

Why should I attain SABSA Certification when so many other information security-related certificates are available?

The competencies framework and its associated training programme go much further than other certification efforts, which are largely knowledge-based and which tend to have a 'one size fits all' approach. The SABSA programme is designed using leading educational practice to develop and enhance professional capabilities in a measurable way whilst focusing on the specialist areas of the candidate's chosen career path.

Your SABSA Certificate will elevate the recognition of your status, trust, and professionalism as an Enterprise Security Architect.

SABSA Certification will also enable you follow a specific career roadmap to plan the advancement of your career in the specialist areas most suited to your needs, and to demonstrate your increasing competency by progressing from Foundation level through Practitioner level to a Master Certificate.

About The Tests

What is the SABSA Institute Testing Method?

SABSA Certification is available in three levels:

- Foundation Level (SCF)
- Practitioner Level (SCP)
- Master Level (SCM)

Foundation Level (SCF) Tests

Foundation Level testing consists of two one-hour examination modules each comprised of 40 multiple-choice questions.

Practitioner Level (SCP) Tests

A Practitioner candidate is tested in their choice of any one of the five different Advanced Modules offered by the SABSA Institute. Practitioner Level testing in the selected Module consists of a two-hour examination:

- One open-book written test comprised of 2 questions. .

Master Level (SCM) Tests

A Masters candidate is tested in their choice of any one of the five different Advanced Modules offered by the SABSA Institute after completing Practitioner-level Certification. Masters Level testing in the selected Module consists of a two-hour examination:

- One open-book written test comprised of 2 questions.

In addition, Master candidates must submit a 10,000 word SABSA thesis for evaluation by the Institute Testing Board.

How often does The SABSA Institute hold exams?

Examination are held at the end of all official education module events run by SABSA-accredited education partners (AEPs).

The frequency with which each training and exam module is offered varies according to schedules determined locally by the accredited education partners. Education partners design their schedules to meet local demand. Date and venue information is listed on partner web sites.

How do I register for a SABSA exam?

SABSA examinations are hosted by SABSA-accredited education partners. A candidate registers for an exam by paying the relevant exam fee to the examination host and submitting a registration form completed with:

- Name
- Date of Birth
- Full Postal Address
- Job Title
- Email, Phone and Facsimile Contact Information
- Signature

Who sets the examination?

All SABSA tests are set and marked by the SABSA Institute Testing Board. The local SABSA-accredited education partner administers the sitting of the test by local candidates.

How can I be sure that examinations are consistent and fair?

The questions are developed and tested for consistency and quality using the best practice methods widely in use in educational establishments around the world.

How are the exam questions selected?

The SABSA Institute maintains a database of approved questions for each domain of the SABSA Body of Knowledge and at each of the six cognitive levels of the SABSA Competency Framework.

Questions are randomly selected from the database for each exam module to ensure the set of questions used at each exam is unique. The questions are spread evenly across all knowledge domains relevant to the certification module being tested.

The cognitive level (according to Bloom's Taxonomy) of the questions increases with certification levels in order to test the competencies appropriate to that level:

- Foundation Certificate questions test competency levels 1 and 2 (knowledge and comprehension);
- Practitioner & Master Certificate questions test competency levels 3 (application), 4 (analysis), 5 (synthesis) and 6 (evaluation).

How many questions are contained in each exam module?

Multiple Choice Examination Modules

Each SABSA multiple-choice examination module consists of forty-eight questions.

Written Examination Modules

Each SABSA written examination module consists of two written questions.

What is the time limit for answering each exam module?

Each multiple choice exam module has a time limit of 60 minutes while written examinations have a time limit of 2 hours.

How does the Institute deal with candidates with a first language other than English?

On application, the Institute examination rules allow for a contingency allowance of 25% (15 minutes per paper) additional time for candidates whose first language is not English.

In what format are the questions presented?

Multiple Choice Examination Modules

The candidate is provided with a separate answer sheet pre-printed with a grid of alternative answers (A, B, C or D) for 48 questions. The candidate must select the correct answer for each question by circling the letter in pencil.

Written Examination Modules

Written examination questions are answered by submission of an electronic word document on a USB memory stick supplied in the examination centre.

How many of the questions count towards my score?

All questions in a SABSA exam count towards a candidate's score.

What score must I attain to achieve a pass?

Foundation Level Multiple Choice Examination Modules

A candidate passes the exam module:

If:

- A total score of no less than 75% (36 correct answers out of 48 questions) is recorded;

And

- The score recorded for four out of the six knowledge domains is no less than 60% of the maximum score available in that domain.

Practitioner & Master Level Examination Modules

A candidate passes the exam module:

If a total score of no less than 75% is recorded for the written paper.

How many test modules must I pass to gain my certificate?

The number of passes required depends on the certification level being sought:

Foundation Level (SCF)

The Foundation Certificate requires passes in each of two mandatory exam modules.

Practitioner Level (SCP)

The Practitioner Certificate requires a pass in one written examination for any one of five SABSA Advanced modules in addition to Foundation Certification as a pre-requisite.

Master Level (SCF)

The Master Certificate requires a pass in one written examination for any one of five SABSA Advanced modules plus a 10,000 word SABSA thesis in addition to Practitioner Certification as a pre-requisite.

Preparing For the Tests

Does SABSA Institute recommend study materials that may assist with preparation for the exams?

The principal reference text is the comprehensive SABSA textbook *Enterprise Security Architecture: A Business-Driven Approach* (ISBN 1-57820-318-X). The book is available from the publisher, Elsevier / CMP Books, on-line suppliers such as Amazon, leading high street book stores, and professional bodies including ISACA.

Additional SABSA white papers, texts and recommended references, together with listings of recommended events, are published regularly on the SABSA web site <http://www.sabsa.org> and on the SABSA Member Forum <http://www.sabsa-institute.com/members>

Does SABSA Institute provide training or study programmes?

SABSA provides comprehensive programme of competency development and training courses – one for each examination module plus a series of shorter Master Classes for specialisms such as Service Management, Auditing, Risk, and Integrating SABSA with other Architectural frameworks and standards such as TOGAF and Zachman. The content is specifically designed to cover the exam module curriculum and to develop appropriate levels of candidate competency. To guarantee consistency and quality for candidates, all official SABSA education programmes are delivered by SABSA-accredited education partners. Each partner must meet stringent criteria for quality and experience. Course facilitators must:

- Hold current SABSA Master Certificates in each of the education modules they present;
- Have attended SABSA's *Train the Trainer* coaching modules;
- Have passed the *Authorised SABSA Trainer* examination module.

The SABSA training schedule is listed on the SABSA web site and on the web sites of each of the accredited education partners internationally.

The Testing Process

Who supervises SABSA exams?

All examination modules are supervised by an authorised invigilator appointed by the SABSA Institute and monitored by an authorised proctor appointed by the AEP.

What should I know about the on-site registration process?

Candidates are required to sign in at the exam venue at least thirty minutes before the commencement of the exam. You will be required to provide photographic proof of identity such as a driving license, passport, or national identity card.

Under what rules are SABSA examinations run?

Multiple-Choice Examination Modules

SABSA utilises a closed book exam format. Text books, course materials, and reference materials of any kind are not permitted in the exam room during the exam.

Electronic equipment including laptop computers, mobile phones, PDAs, Blackberries etc. are not to be used inside the examination room. Where a candidate has electronic equipment with them during the training course that precedes the exam module, the equipment must be switched off and 'put away' in a bag or briefcase etc. and all bags to be removed to a place designated by the exam supervisor.

No candidate is permitted to return to the exam room after leaving during the test, except when escorted by an exam supervisor.

Where two or more exam modules are run contiguously at the same venue, a short break will be scheduled between modules.

Written Examination Modules

SABSA utilises an open-book format for written tests. A candidate may use any reference work, text book, or even the internet when answering a written test question.

Written tests are answered in electronic format using common office software and submitted to the examiner on a USB storage device.

After The Tests

Who marks the SABSA exam?

Exam papers are marked by the SABSA Institute Testing Board.

How long will it take to get the results?

Normally, results will be sent to candidates within six weeks of the test date. Results are issued by SABSA to the AEP conducting the examination session and are sent to the candidate by the AEP.

Other than pass/fail, is any other information provided with the results?

Yes, the SABSA Institute provides an analysis report to all candidates. It contains:

- A pass or fail indicator;
- The overall score attained;
- The score attained in each test domain (for Foundation Level examinations);

Can I appeal my score or request that my paper is checked and re-marked?

Yes. If on receipt of the results and analysis report, a candidate believes that a paper has been marked incorrectly, an appeal can be made to the SABSA Institute which will ensure that the original paper is checked and re-marked by a different examiner on the SABSA Institute Testing Board. A fee of GBP30 must be lodged with each appeal, although the Institute will at its discretion credit this amount to the member's account if the appeal results in a significant revision of the exam result. This appeal process can be invoked only once per sitting of an exam.

Can I re-sit a failed exam module at a later date?

Yes, a candidate can re-sit each exam module as often as desired. Registration for a test module that was previously failed incurs the standard examination re-sit fee set by the Accredited Education Partner providing the examination facilities.

If I pass one of the two Foundation Level modules but fail the other, do I have to re-sit both papers?

No, a candidate can re-sit only the failed examination module and the module passed remains permanently on record. Currently single passes do not expire and there is no time limit for attaining a pass on the second Foundation module required.

Can I pursue certification in more than one area of specialism?

Yes, Institute Members may attain Practitioner or Master certificates by accumulating education credits in any combination of Advanced Modules or Master Classes, on condition that passes are attained in the relevant examination modules.