



BCS Foundation Certificate in Business Analysis Syllabus

Version 4.0

October 2020

This profession certification is not regulated by the following United Kingdom Regulators - Ofqual, Qualification in Wales, CCEA or SQA

Change History

Any changes made to the syllabus shall be clearly documented with a change history log. This shall include the latest version number, date of the amendment and changes made. The purpose is to identify quickly what changes have been made.

| Version Number | Changes Made |
|---------------------|--|
| V4.0 Sept 2020 | Refresh of syllabus to take into account V4 of the BA Foundation textbook. Revisions to topic weightings and content. Level of knowledge reduced to K2. Introduction of list of optional additional reading. |
| V3.9 December 2016 | Strapline regarding regulated statement has been added |
| V3.8 July 2016 | Rewording section 6.3 |
| V3.7 December 2015 | Removed reference to on-line delivery organisations |
| V3.6 March 2015 | Merger of previous Sections 6 & 7. Added new Sections 8 & 14. Section 13 moved to Section 9. Standardised the trainer requirements |
| V3.5 August 2014 | Updated to reflect the changes to the Business Analysis Book (3 rd Edition) |
| V3.4 November 2013 | Updated trainer requirements with new pass mark. Document control sheet updated to reflect staff changes. |
| V3.3 November 2012 | Mistakenly added reading time to last update, this has now been removed |
| V3.2 September 2012 | Updated details for foreign language candidates Removed definition of terminology. Updated a section to cover excerpts from BCS books |
| V3.1 July 2012 | Added in details of extra time for foreign language candidates |

BCS Foundation Certificate in Business Analysis

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Introduction

This certificate covers the range of concepts, approaches and techniques that are applicable to business analysis.

This certification provides a foundation for the range of specialist BCS modular certificates in the areas of Business Analysis and Business Change. The certification can also be used as the knowledge-based specialist module for the Diploma in Business Analysis.

The syllabus is based on the BCS publication *Business Analysis, 4th edition*, and it is recommended that this text is studied by those preparing to take this examination. The headings listed in the syllabus relate to the relevant chapter headings, section headings and text included in this publication.

Target Audience

The certificate is relevant to anyone requiring an understanding of business analysis including Business Analysts, Product Owners, Change Managers, IT delivery project roles, business managers and their staff and those looking to move into a BA role.

Levels of Knowledge / SFIA Levels

This syllabus will provide candidates with the levels of difficulty / knowledge highlighted within the following table, enabling them to develop the skills to operate at the levels of responsibility indicated. The levels of knowledge and SFIA levels are further explained on the website www.bcs.org/levels.

| Level | Levels of Knowledge |
|-------|---------------------|
| K6 | Evaluate |
| K5 | Synthesise |
| K4 | Analyse |
| K3 | Apply |
| K2 | Understand |
| K1 | Remember |

| Level | Levels of Skill and Responsibility (SFIA) |
|-------|---|
| 7 | Set strategy, inspire and mobilise |
| 6 | Initiate and influence |
| 5 | Ensure and advise |
| 4 | Enable |
| 3 | Apply |
| 2 | Assist |
| 1 | Follow |

Learning Outcomes

Candidates will be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of business analysis concepts, principles and techniques in the following areas:

1. What is business analysis
2. The competencies of a business analyst
3. The strategic context for business analysis
4. The business analysis service framework
5. Investigating the business situation
6. Analysing and managing stakeholders
7. Improving business services and processes
8. Defining the solution
9. Making the business case
10. Establishing the requirements
11. Documenting and modelling requirements
12. Validating and managing requirements
13. Delivering the requirements
14. Delivering the business solution

Study Format and Duration

Candidates can study for this certificate in two ways:

- Attending an accredited training course. This will require a minimum of 18 hours of study over a minimum of three days.
- Self-study. See Recommended Reading.

Eligibility for the Examination

There are no specific pre-requisites for entry to the examination, however candidates should possess the appropriate level of knowledge to fulfil the learning outcomes shown above. Attendance at an accredited training course is strongly recommended.

Duration and Format of the Examination

| | |
|------------|--|
| Type | 40 Multiple Choice questions |
| Duration | 60 minutes |
| Supervised | Yes |
| Open Book | No (no materials can be taken into the examination room) |
| Passmark | 26/40 (65%) |
| Delivery | Digital or paper based. |

Additional Time

For candidates requiring reasonable adjustments due to a disability

Please refer to the [reasonable adjustments policy](#) for detailed information on how and when to apply.

For candidates whose language is not the language of the examination

If the examination is taken in a language that is not the candidate's native/official language, then they are entitled to:

- 25% extra time.
- Use their own paper language dictionary (whose purpose is translation between the examination language and another national language) during the examination. Electronic versions of dictionaries will not be allowed into the examination room.

Guidelines for Accredited Training Organisations

Each major subject heading in this syllabus is assigned a percentage weighting. The purpose of this is:

- 1) Guidance on the proportion of content allocated to each topic area of an accredited course.
- 2) Guidance on the proportion of questions in the exam.

Courses do not have to follow the same order as the syllabus and additional exercises may be included if they add value to the training course.

Question Weighting

| Syllabus Area | Syllabus weighting | Target number of questions per exam |
|--|--------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. What is business analysis? | 5% | 2 |
| 2. The competencies of a business analyst | 2.5% | 1 |
| 3. The strategic context for business analysis | 7.5% | 3 |
| 4. The business analysis service framework | 2.5% | 1 |
| 5. Investigating the business situation | 12.5% | 5 |
| 6. Analysing and managing stakeholders | 10% | 4 |
| 7. Improving business services and processes | 12.5% | 5 |
| 8. Defining the solution | 7.5% | 3 |
| 9. Making the business case | 5% | 2 |
| 10. Establishing the requirements | 10% | 4 |
| 11. Documenting and modelling requirements | 10% | 4 |

| | | |
|--|-------------|---------------------|
| 12. Validating and managing requirements | 5% | 2 |
| 13. Delivering the requirements | 5% | 2 |
| 14. Delivering the business solution | 5% | 2 |
| Total | 100% | 40 Questions |

Trainer Criteria

| | |
|----------|--|
| Criteria | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold the BCS Foundation Certificate in Business Analysis • Have 10 days training experience or have a train the trainer qualification • Have a minimum of 3 years' practical experience in business analysis |
|----------|--|

Classroom Size

| | |
|----------------------------|------|
| Trainer to candidate ratio | 1:16 |
|----------------------------|------|

Excerpts from BCS Books

Accredited Training Organisations may include excerpts from BCS books in the course materials. If you wish to use excerpts from the books you will need a license from BCS to do this. If you are interested in taking out a licence to use BCS published material you should contact the Head of Publishing at BCS outlining the material you wish to copy and the use to which it will be put.

Syllabus

Learning Objectives

1. What is Business Analysis (5%)

Candidates will be able to:

- 1.1 Describe the business change lifecycle
- 1.2 List the following principles of business analysis
 - 1.2.1 Root causes not symptoms
 - 1.2.2 Business improvement not IT system change
 - 1.2.3 Options not solutions
 - 1.2.4 Feasible, contributing requirements, not meeting all requests
 - 1.2.5 Entire business change lifecycle, not just requirements definition
 - 1.2.6 Negotiation not avoidance
- 1.3 Describe the variants of the business analyst role

2. The Competencies of a Business Analyst (2.5%)

Candidates will be able to:

- 2.1 Explain the concept of the T-shaped Professional
- 2.2 Identify the three areas of business analysis competency

3. The Strategic Context for Business Analysis (7.5%)

Candidates will be able to:

- 3.1 Describe business analysis and the strategic context
- 3.2 Define the factors assessed using PESTLE to analyse an external environment
- 3.3 Identify the elements of the VMOST technique used to analyse an internal environment
- 3.4 Describe the following elements of performance measurement
 - 3.4.1 Critical success factors
 - 3.4.2 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
- 3.5 Describe the structure of a SWOT analysis
- 3.6 Describe the following techniques used in strategy execution
 - 3.6.1 The POPIT™ model
 - 3.6.2 The purpose of the business model canvas

4. The Business Analysis Service Framework (2.5%)

Candidates will be able to:

- 4.1** Identify the following services in the Business Analysis Service Framework (BASF)
 - 4.1.1 Situation investigation and problem analysis
 - 4.1.2 Feasibility assessment and business case development
 - 4.1.3 Business process improvement
 - 4.1.4 Requirements definition
 - 4.1.5 Business acceptance testing
 - 4.1.6 Business change deployment
 - 4.1.7 Stakeholder engagement

5. Investigating the Business Situation (12.5%)

Candidates will be able to:

- 5.1** Define workshops
 - 5.1.1 Advantages and disadvantages of workshops
 - 5.1.2 List techniques used for discovery workshops
 - 5.1.3 List techniques used for visualisation workshops
- 5.2** Define observation
 - 5.2.1 Advantages and disadvantages of observation
 - 5.2.2 Formal observation
 - 5.2.3 Shadowing
- 5.3** Define interviews
 - 5.3.1 Advantages and disadvantages of interviewing
- 5.4** Define scenarios
 - 5.4.1 Advantages and disadvantages of scenarios
- 5.5** Define prototyping
 - 5.5.1 Advantages and disadvantages of prototyping
- 5.6** Define user role analysis
 - 5.6.1 Advantages and disadvantages of user role analysis
 - 5.6.2 Personas
- 5.7** Define quantitative approaches
 - 5.7.1 Surveys or questionnaires
 - 5.7.2 Activity sampling
 - 5.7.3 Document analysis
- 5.8** Describe the following two diagrammatic techniques used to record a business situation
 - 5.8.1 Rich pictures
 - 5.8.2 Mind maps

6. Analysing and Managing Stakeholders (10%)

Candidates will be able to:

- 6.1** Identify stakeholder categories using the stakeholder wheel
- 6.2** Describe the Power/Interest grid technique to analyse stakeholders
 - 6.2.1 Resulting stakeholder management strategies
- 6.3** Describe stakeholder responsibilities using RACI

7. Improving Business Services and Processes (12.5%)

Candidates will be able to:

- 7.1** Explain the business process hierarchy
- 7.2** List the following techniques used to model the enterprise level processes
 - 7.2.1 SIPOC
 - 7.2.2 Value chain analysis
 - 7.2.3 Value propositions
- 7.3** Describe the following aspects of the event response level
 - 7.3.1 Business events
 - 7.3.2 Creating business process models
 - 7.3.3 UML activity models
- 7.4** Describe the following aspect of the actor-task level
 - 7.4.1 Analysis considerations at actor-task level
- 7.5** Describe analysis of the following aspects of the as-is process model
 - 7.5.1 Identifying problems
 - 7.5.2 Analysing the handoffs
 - 7.5.3 Analysing the tasks and procedures
- 7.6** Identify generic approaches to improving business processes
- 7.7** Define the purpose of customer journey maps

8. Defining the solution (7.5%)

Candidates will be able to:

- 8.1** Describe the gap analysis process
- 8.2** Explain the use of POPIT™ in gap analysis
- 8.3** Describe the process for developing options
 - 8.3.1 Types of options
- 8.4** Describe the purpose of design thinking
 - 8.4.1 Divergent and convergent thinking

9. Making the Business Case (5%)

Candidates will be able to:

- 9.1** Describe the lifecycle for a business case in business case development
- 9.2** Identify the areas of feasibility assessment
- 9.3** Define the structure and contents of a business case
 - 9.3.1 Categories of costs and benefits
 - 9.3.2 Impact assessment
 - 9.3.3 Risk assessment
- 9.4** List the key features relevant to the production of a business case within an Agile context
- 9.5** Identify the elements of a CARDI Log
- 9.6** Explain the purpose of the following investment appraisal techniques
 - 9.6.1 Payback
 - 9.6.2 Discounted cash flow and net present value
 - 9.6.3 Internal rate of return

10. Establishing the Requirements (10%)

Candidates will be able to:

- 10.1** Explain the requirements engineering framework
- 10.2** Identify the following actors in requirements engineering
 - 10.2.1 The business representatives
 - 10.2.2 The project team
- 10.3** Identify the types of requirement
- 10.4** Describe the hierarchy of requirements
- 10.5** Describe requirements elicitation techniques
 - 10.5.1 The term tacit knowledge
- 10.6** Identify the following elements of requirements analysis
 - 10.6.1 Requirements filters
 - 10.6.2 INVEST
 - 10.6.3 Prioritising requirements using MoSCoW
 - 10.6.4 Business rules

11. Documenting and Modelling Requirements (10%)

Candidates will be able to:

- 11.1** Identify the following documentation styles
 - 11.1.1 Text-based documentation style
 - 11.1.2 Diagrammatic
- 11.2** List elements of a requirements catalogue
- 11.3** Describe the format of user stories
- 11.4** Describe the elements of the use case diagram used to model functional requirements
- 11.5** Describe the elements of a class model used to model data
- 11.6** Describe the product backlog in modelling and documentation in an Agile environment
- 11.7** Define the structure of the business requirements document

12. Validating and Managing Requirements (5%)

Candidates will be able to:

12.1 Describe the following types of requirements validation

- 12.1.1 Formal requirements validation
- 12.1.2 The activities in the Agile requirements validation process

12.2 Describe the following aspects of requirements management

- 12.2.1 Traceability
- 12.2.2 Change control

13. Delivering the Requirements (5%)

Candidates will be able to:

13.1 Describe the following types of delivery lifecycle

- 13.1.1 The waterfall lifecycle
- 13.1.2 The “V” model
- 13.1.3 The incremental lifecycle
- 13.1.4 The stages of the iterative lifecycle (Agile)

13.2 Explain advantages and disadvantages of the lifecycles

14. Delivering the Business Solution (5%)

Candidates will be able to:

14.1 Explain the role of the business analyst in the business change lifecycle

14.2 Describe the role of the business analyst during the design, development and test stages

14.3 Describe the following approaches used in the implementation stage

- 14.3.1 SARAH model
- 14.3.2 The purpose of the business readiness assessment

14.4 Describe how the benefits plan is used in the realisation stage

Recommended Reading List

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Title | Business Analysis (4 th Edition) |
| Authors & contributors | Debra Paul, James Cadle, Malcolm Eva, Craig Rollason, Jonathan Hunsley |
| Publisher | BCS Learning & Development |
| Publication Date | 24 July 2020 |
| ISBN | Print: 13: 9781780175102 Ebook: 13: 9781780175126 |
| URL | http://shop.bcs.org |

Additional Reading List

For those wishing to expand their knowledge the following texts are also available.

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Title | Business Analysis Techniques - 99 essential tools for success |
| Author | James Cadle, Debra Paul, Paul Turner |
| Publisher | BCS Learning & Development |
| Publication Date | 23 Sep 2014 |
| ISBN | Print: 13: 9781780172736 Ebook: 13: 9781780172750 |
| URL | http://shop.bcs.org |

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Title | Agile and Business Analysis |
| Author | Lynda Girvan, Debra Paul |
| Publisher | BCS Learning & Development |
| Publication Date | 27 Feb 2017 |
| ISBN | Print: 13: 9781780173221 Ebook: 13: 9781780173245 |
| URL | http://shop.bcs.org |

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Title | Delivering Business Analysis |
| Author | Debra Paul, Christina Lovelock |
| Publisher | BCS Learning & Development |
| Publication Date | 16 Sep 2019 |
| ISBN | Print: 13: 9781780174686 Ebook: 13: 9781780174709 |
| URL | http://shop.bcs.org |

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|-------------------------|---|
| Title | Business Analyst |
| Author | Adrian Reed |
| Publisher | BCS Learning & Development |
| Publication Date | 31 Aug 2018 |
| ISBN | Print: 13: 9781780174280 Ebook: 13: 9781780174303 |
| URL | http://shop.bcs.org |