



Business Analysis Certification Demystified

How to choose the best certification for you

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Introduction

Business analysis and requirements engineering have increasingly gained recognition as distinct and valuable professions. However, certifications in these fields remain relatively new compared to those for project managers, test professionals, and software developers, which have been well-established for long.

As the business analysis profession evolves, both practitioners and employers acknowledge the importance of professional recognition. Being certified is considered a standard expectation, reflecting competence and credibility.

Certification programs in business analysis are widely available and continue to grow in popularity. Some of the most recognized certifications are offered by the following institutions and associations:

- British Computer Society (BCS),
- International Institute of Business Analysis (IIBA),
- International Requirements Engineering Board (IREB).

In addition to these major organizations, several smaller initiatives also offer business analysis certifications. Examples include:

- IQBBA Global Institute's Certified Associate Business Analyst (CABA),
- Project Management Institute's Professional in Business Analysis (PMI-PBA).

These certifications are playing an important role in the professionalization of business analysis and requirements engineering, helping to establish greater recognition and industry standards.

Objective of this paper

This paper provides an in-depth overview of the three most recognized certifications in business analysis. It covers background information on the certifying institutions, detailed descriptions of the certifications, and guidance on how to obtain them, including prerequisites and exam requirements.

Our goal is to support you in the decision-making process by helping you choose the certification that best aligns with your career and professional needs. We recognize that a

“one-size-fits-all” certification does not exist, and we encourage a thorough evaluation of your options to find the most suitable fit.

To simplify this process, we have compiled all the essential information into this concise overview, ensuring you have everything you need in one place.

Why pursue certification?

Many professionals ask themselves, “Should I pursue certification?” For employers, certifications serve as tangible proof of a candidate’s knowledge and expertise. While some argue that certifications are merely “pieces of paper” or that an exam reflects only a snapshot of knowledge, convincing a potential employer of your skills based solely on past project experience or verbal claims can be challenging. A certification provides concrete evidence of your professional qualifications. When combined with a proven track record, it becomes an even stronger differentiator.

Instead of asking, “Should I get certified?” the real question might be, “Can I afford not to?”

Professional certifications offer many benefits, including enhanced career prospects. Research consistently shows that certified professionals often earn higher salaries. For example, the International Institute of Business Analysis (IIBA) conducted a salary survey revealing that Business Analysts with CBAP certification earn 15% more on average than their peers without professional qualifications. Certifications also provide recognition from employers and colleagues, signaling your accomplishments and competence. Beyond external validation, achieving a recognized certification brings personal satisfaction, marking a significant milestone in your career as a Business Analyst.

Once you have decided to pursue certification, the next question arises: “Which certification program best fits my career goals?” This paper aims to help answer that question. Before exploring the details of specific certifications, we will first explain how these certifications relate to Bloom’s Taxonomy—a widely recognized cognitive learning model in education. We will outline the different levels of learning objectives in the taxonomy and identify the most effective assessment methods for verifying whether candidates have achieved the required level of knowledge.

The Bloom's taxonomy

Bloom's Taxonomy is a widely recognized framework in education used to define learning objectives and structure assessments. It helps educators and certification bodies ensure that candidates develop knowledge progressively, from basic recall to complex problem-solving. All the certification programs discussed in this whitepaper apply Bloom's Taxonomy to design their content and exams.

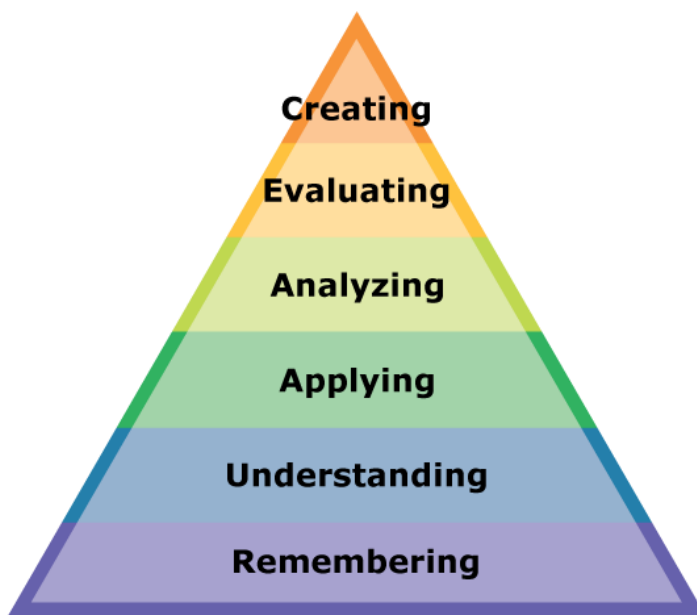


Figure 1 Bloom's taxonomy

Let's explain it in more detail. In the domain of cognitive learning, Bloom's Taxonomy categorizes knowledge into six hierarchical levels, each building upon the previous one:

- **Remembering** – The ability to recall facts, concepts, or procedures exactly as they were learned. At this level, candidates are tested on their memory, such as recognizing definitions, listing key terms, or recalling specific methodologies.
Example: "What are the key principles of business analysis?"
- **Understanding** – Demonstrating comprehension by explaining ideas in one's own words or interpreting information. This goes beyond memorization, requiring the ability to summarize, describe, or compare concepts.
Example: "Explain the difference between functional and non-functional requirements."
- **Applying** – Using knowledge in real-world situations. At this stage, candidates must take learned concepts and apply them to practical scenarios or problem-solving exercises.

Example: "Given a project case study, identify and categorize stakeholders."

- **Analyzing** – Breaking down information into parts to examine relationships, patterns, or underlying structures. This level requires critical thinking to dissect a situation and evaluate its components.

Example: "Analyze the impact of missing stakeholder input in a business analysis project."

- **Evaluating** – Making informed judgments by assessing information, arguments, or methodologies. This level involves reasoning, weighing alternatives, and justifying choices based on evidence.

Example: "Assess the effectiveness of Agile versus Waterfall methodologies in a given business context."

- **Creating** – Synthesizing knowledge to develop something new, such as a framework, strategy, or process. This level requires originality, innovation, and the ability to construct new solutions from existing knowledge.

Example: "Design a new approach for stakeholder engagement in a complex business transformation project."

Professional qualifications in Business Analysis (BA) incorporate Bloom's Taxonomy to structure their certification programs. Exam questions and assessment methods are carefully designed to test candidates at appropriate levels of cognitive difficulty. Basic certifications often focus on the lower levels (Remembering, Understanding, and Applying), while advanced certifications test higher-order thinking skills (Analyzing, Evaluating, and Creating).

By aligning with Bloom's Taxonomy, certification bodies ensure that assessments are rigorous, relevant, and reflect real-world competencies. This approach helps validate a candidate's ability not just to know business analysis concepts but also to apply, analyze, and create solutions, reinforcing the credibility of BA certifications in the industry.

Certifications programs for business analysts

As mentioned in the introduction, three major certification organizations offer programs for business analysts and requirements engineers:

1. British Computer Society (BCS) and EXIN
2. International Institute of Business Analysis (IIBA)
3. International Requirements Engineering Board (IREB)

When choosing a certification program, many practical questions arise, such as:

- What is the scope of the certification?
- Which certification is recognized in my industry?
- What kind of exam is required?
- How can I prepare for the exam? (Self-study, virtual or classroom sessions, e-learning, etc.)
- Is re-certification necessary?

The following chapters provide in-depth explanations of the major certifications, addressing these key questions to help candidates make informed decisions about the program that best suits their needs.

Option 1: British Computer Society (BCS)



The British Computer Society (BCS) is a chartered institute for IT professionals that offers a wide range of services, including certifications and education programs. Established in 1957, BCS has earned a strong reputation, partly due to its contributions to the development of recognized standards such as PRINCE2 and ISTQB. Currently, BCS has a membership base of approximately 75,000 individuals, with active groups in the UK and 15 other countries and regions. For more information about BCS business analysis certifications, visit their official webpage: [BCS Business Analysis Certifications](#).

Since 2016, EXIN has taken over many business analysis-related certifications and further extending the reach and accessibility of this certification path.

The British Computer Society (BCS) offers a structured, progressive development path for business analysts at different levels of expertise, covering both foundational and advanced skills. The certification path is structured into three levels:

1. **Hard BA Skills and Techniques:** Focuses on core business analysis skills and techniques, leading to the **BCS International Diploma in Business Analysis**.
2. **Advanced BA Skills and Techniques:** Designed for experienced professionals, this track develops advanced competencies and leads to the **BCS Advanced International Diploma in Business Analysis**.
3. **Expert BA Award:** Endorsed in partnership with the Chartered Management Institute (CMI) and the BA Manager Forum (BAMF), this award validates a candidate's ability to perform complex business analysis activities, engage effectively with senior stakeholders, and drive organizational improvements at a strategic level.

The BCS certification path provides business analysts with opportunities to advance their skills progressively, meeting the needs of both individuals and organizations striving for excellence in this field. Let us explore each certification level separately in more detail.

BCS International Diploma in Business Analysis

To obtain the BCS International Diploma in Business Analysis, candidates must pass four written examinations covering various topics from the selected areas of business analysis. These certificates can be earned in any order; however, it is recommended to start with the foundation-level certification. In addition to the written exams, candidates must pass an oral examination conducted by two BCS examiners, who assess the candidate's technical, business, and interpersonal competencies.

Diploma Structure

The diploma consists of four modules, divided as follows:

Mandatory Courses

Candidates must complete the following two core modules:

- Requirements Engineering
- Business Analysis Practice

Optional Specialisms

Candidates must select one module from each of the following categories:

Knowledge-Based Specialism:

- BCS EXIN Foundation in Business Analysis
- BCS EXIN Organizational Behavior
- BCS Digital Business Change
- BCS IS Project Management

Practitioner Specialism:

- BCS EXIN Modeling Business Processes
- BCS Benefits Management and Business Acceptance
- BCS Data Management Essentials

This flexibility allows candidates to tailor the certification to their specific career goals, making it a valuable and customizable program.

Examination

There are no entry requirements for BCS EXIN examinations. Exams can be taken as part of a training program or independently online. BCS and EXIN recommend working with accredited examination providers.

Written Examination

- Format: 60-minute, closed-book exam
- Structure: 40 multiple-choice questions
- Passing Score: 65% (26 correct answers)
- Exam Options: Taken as part of a course, online via EXIN Anywhere, or at an EXIN computer-based exam center

Oral Examination

- Duration: 50 minutes
- Format: A conversation between the candidate and two independent BCS examiners
- Focus: Practical skills, application of knowledge, and the ability to connect different areas of business analysis

The oral exam assesses the candidate's critical thinking and problem-solving abilities, ensuring they can apply their knowledge effectively in real-world business contexts.

Exam preparation

Candidates can access syllabi, sample papers, and reading lists on the [BCS](#) or [EXIN](#) website to support their exam preparation.

- The foundation-level examination can be obtained through self-study.
- For other courses, BCS and EXIN recommend following an accredited training, before attempting the exam.

BCS Advanced International Diploma in Business Analysis

To earn the BCS Advanced International Diploma in Business Analysis, candidates must complete four written examinations covering various business analysis topics. Similar to the International Diploma in Business Analysis, each module results in a certificate with standalone value. These modules can be completed in any order. To obtain the Advanced Diploma, candidates undergo an assessment by BCS to validate their skills and active engagement within the business analysis community.

The Advanced Diploma focuses on in-depth modules divided into three core specialisms:

Analytical skills	Business skills	People skills
BCS EXIN Agile Business Analysis BCS Business Architecture BCS Data Analysis BCS Advanced Requirements Engineering	BCS Benefits Planning and Realization BCS Business Finance	BCS EXIN Stakeholder Engagement BCS Team Leadership
One of above	One of above	One of above
Additional one from above two specialisms		

Table 1: Structure of the Advanced International Diploma in Business Analysis

This structure allows candidates to develop specialized expertise in critical areas of business analysis while demonstrating advanced competencies.

Assessment to obtain the advanced diploma

Candidates seeking the BCS Advanced International Diploma in Business Analysis must meet several eligibility criteria.

- hold the BCS International Diploma in Business Analysis,
- hold 4 certificates in Advanced BA modules spread through three categories (1 certification in Personal Skills and 3 certifications in Analytical Skills and Business Skills),
- have a minimum of 5 years of Business Analysis experience,
- demonstrate their contribution to the wider BA community, either through internal organizational initiatives or involvement in external BA groups,

- obtain at least one professional supporter who can verify the candidate's competencies and professional contributions.

Examination

There are no entry requirements for BCS EXIN examinations. Exams can be taken as a part of a training program or independently on-line via EXIN or Pearson Vue. BCS and EXIN recommend working with accredited examination providers.

Exam Format

Duration: 90 minutes

Format: Closed-book

Structure: 40 multiple-choice, scenario-based questions

Passing Score: 65% (26 correct answers)

Preparation & fees

Candidates can download the syllabus, sample papers, and reading lists from the BCS website to aid in exam preparation.

For current exam fees, visit the EXIN and BCS websites.

Expert BA Award

The Expert BA Award is designed to recognize senior business analysts who have demonstrated expertise through significant project contributions and professional engagement. The application process consists of the following steps:

Step 1: Self-Assessment

Candidates must conduct a self-assessment of their experience, skills, and certifications to ensure they meet the eligibility criteria.

Step 2: Application Form (if applicable)

Candidates who do not hold the Advanced Diploma in Business Analysis must complete an application form as part of the qualification process.

Step 3: Supporter Validation

Candidates must secure supporters who can validate their eligibility for the award. These supporters must confirm the validity of the candidate's Project Assignment and their professional capabilities.

Step 4: Project Assignment Submission

Candidates must submit a detailed written description of their business analysis work in a major project or across multiple smaller projects. This document, known as the Project Assignment, serves as evidence of the candidate's expertise.

Step 5: Assessment Interview

Candidates must participate in an assessment interview, where they present their Project Assignment to a panel of two BA Manager Forum members.

Format of the assessment interview:

- 15-minute presentation of the Project Assignment
- 45-minute Q&A and discussion with assessors

This structured process ensures that only candidates with demonstrated expertise, validated project experience, and strong analytical capabilities receive the Expert BA Award. This distinction is valid for two years.

For more detailed information on the Expert BA Award distinction, please refer to <http://certifications.bcs.org/category/17851>

Conclusions

The British Computer Society (BCS) provides a well-structured and progressive certification path for business analysts. Its certification program is mature and clearly defined and designed as a roadmap for professional development. To help candidates prepare for exams, BCS and EXIN provide a range of resources, including sample papers and a comprehensive reading list, enabling them to assess their readiness and deepen their knowledge.

The BCS Diplomas in Business Analysis are highly regarded, particularly in the UK, where they are widely recognized. In fact, some universities accept these diplomas as equivalent to a postgraduate qualification, further solidifying their reputation and value within the industry.

Option 2: International Institute of Business Analysis (IIBA)



The International Institute of Business Analysis (IIBA) was established in 2006 in Canada with the mission to “develop and maintain standards for the practice of

business analysis and the certification of its practitioners.” Initially focused on the North American region, IIBA has since expanded into a global community with chapters in numerous countries. Over the past five years, its membership has grown significantly, now exceeding 25,000 members worldwide. For more information about IIBA, visit their official website at www.iiba.com.

Business Analysis Body of Knowledge (BABOK)

IIBA develops and maintains the Business Analysis Body of Knowledge (BABOK), a comprehensive framework summarizing the knowledge, tools, and practices essential to the business analysis profession. BABOK reflects current, generally accepted practices and is continuously updated through contributions from a global network of practitioners and industry experts.

IIBA Certification Programs

IIBA offers four certification programs catering to different levels of experience and expertise in business analysis:

- ECBA (Entry Certificate in Business Analysis): Introduced in 2016, designed for beginners entering the field.
- CCBA (Certification of Competency in Business Analysis): Launched in 2011 for professionals with some experience and proven competency.
- CBAP (Certified Business Analysis Professional): Introduced in 2006, targeting experienced practitioners.
- CBATL (Certified Business Analysis Thought Leader): Added in 2016, aimed at senior professionals who lead and influence the field.

These certifications provide a structured pathway for career progression, reflecting IIBA’s commitment to advancing the practice and professionalism of business analysis globally. This being said, IIBA certifications are also competency-based with direct entry approach, meaning candidates can skip levels if they meet the eligibility requirements.

Preparation

Candidates can download certification handbooks from the IIBA website:
<https://www.iiba.org/business-analysis-certifications/certification-handbooks/>

The exam is entirely based on BABOK, so candidates should thoroughly study the guide. Additionally, they can:

- Use widely available study guides and e-learning programs from various providers.
- Join a study group organized by their local IIBA Chapter for collaborative learning.

Recertification

The CCBA and CBAP certificates are valid for 3 years. After this period, candidates must renew their certification by completing a standard re-certification application and passing the exam. ECBA does not require recertification.

The following chapters provide detailed insights into each certification.

1 ECBA: Entry Certificate in Business Analysis

Application Requirements ECBA:

There are no prerequisites to take the ECBA exam.

Exam:

The ECBA™ exam is 1 hour long and consists of 50 multiple-choice questions. It is competency-based assessment aligned to the BABOK Guide V3. Re-certification is not required.

Business Analysis Knowledge (30%)	
Business Analysis & the BA Professional	2.5%
Underlying Competencies	5%
Business Analysis Key Concepts	5%
Techniques	17.5%
BABOK® Guide Knowledge Areas (70%)	
Business Analysis Planning & Monitoring	5%
Elicitation & Collaboration	20%
Requirements Life Cycle Management	20%
Requirements Analysis and Design Definition	25%

Table 2: Blueprint of the ECBA Exam [5]

Exam Fees:

ECBA certification fee consists of application fee and exam fee. See the pricing table below:

	Application fee (non-refundable)		Exam fee	
	Member	Non-Member	Member	Non-Member
Exam fees	0	0	\$195	\$350

Table 3: Pricing ECBA Exam from 27/11/2024

For the latest pricing details, visit the IIBA website: <https://www.iiba.org/business-analysis-certifications/certification-fees/>

The exam can be taken online via PSI. IIBA doesn't officially disclose the pass mark for the exam; the TechCanvas provides information that the pass mark is to be around 60%-70% [7].

2 CCBA: Certification in Competency in Business Analysis

Application Requirements CCBA [3]:

To be eligible for the Certification of Competency in Business Analysis (CCBA®) exam, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Minimum 3750 hours of BA work experience aligned with the BABOK® Guide in the last seven years and includes:
 - A minimum of 900 hours in each of 2 Knowledge Areas, or
 - A minimum of 500 hours in each of 4 Knowledge Areas
- Minimum 21 hours of Professional Development in the past four years
- Two references from a career manager, client or CBAP®/CCBA recipient
- Signed IIBA Ethical Code of Conduct and Professional Standards

Exam:

Once the application is approved, the candidate must pass the CCBA exam, which consists of:

- 130 multiple-choice questions
- Duration: 3 hours
- Question Types: Based on Bloom's Taxonomy, covering different levels of cognitive difficulty
- Knowledge Area Coverage: See the table below

BABOK® Guide Knowledge Areas	
Business Analysis Planning & Monitoring	12%
Elicitation & Collaboration	20%
Requirements Life Cycle Management	18%
Strategy Analysis	12%
Requirements Analysis and Design Definition	32%
Solution Evaluation	6%

Table 4: Blueprint of the CCBA Exam

Exam Fees:

The CCBA certification fee consists of an application fee and an exam fee, as detailed below:

	Application fee (non-refundable)		Exam fee	
	Member	Non-Member	Member	Non-Member
Exam fees	\$145	\$145	\$250	\$405

Table 5: Pricing CCBA Exam from 27/11/2024

The exam can be taken online via PSI. IIBA doesn't officially disclose the pass mark for the exam; the TechCanvas provides information that the pass mark is to be around 70% [7].

3 CBAP: Certified Business Analysis Professional (2006)

Application Requirements CBAP:

To be eligible for the Certified Business Analysis Professional (CBAP®) exam, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Minimum 7500 hours (approximately 5 years) of BA work experience aligned with the BABOK® Guide in the last 10 years
 - A minimum of 900 hours completed in 4 of the 6 Knowledge Areas, for a total of at least 3,600 of the required 7,500 total.
- Minimum 35 hours of Professional Development in the past four years
- Two references from a career manager, client or CBAP® recipient
- Signed IIBA Ethical Code of Conduct and Professional Standards

Exam:

Once the application is approved, candidates must pass the CBAP exam, which consists of:

- 150 multiple-choice questions
- Duration: 3.5 hours
- Question Types: Based on Bloom’s Taxonomy, covering different levels of cognitive difficulty
- Knowledge Area Coverage: See the table below:

BABOK® Guide Knowledge Areas	
Business Analysis Planning & Monitoring	14%
Elicitation & Collaboration	12%
Requirements Life Cycle Management	15%
Strategy Analysis	15%
Requirements Analysis and Design Definition	30%
Solution Evaluation	14%

Table 6: Blueprint of the CCBA Exam

Exam Fees:

The CBAP certification fee consists of an application fee and an exam fee, as detailed below:

	Application fee (non-refundable)		Exam fee	
	Member	Non-Member	Member	Non-Member
Exam fees	\$145	\$145	\$295	\$450

Table 7: Pricing CBAP Exam from 27/11/2024

The exam can be taken online via PSI. IIBA doesn't officially disclose the pass mark for the exam; the TechCanvas provides information that the pass mark is to be around 70% [7].

Conclusions

IIBA certifications are a prestigious credential for experienced Business Analysts, demonstrating expertise, professionalism, and adherence to industry standards. With stringent application criteria and a challenging examination process, these certifications are accessible only to professionals who meet IIBA's high standards.

Business Analysts typically prepare for the IIBA certification exams through:

- Self-study of the BABOK® Guide.
- Study groups organized by local IIBA chapters.
- Online study kits available through training providers.

To support candidates, IIBA provides a syllabus and sample questions, offering valuable insights into the exam structure and expectations.

While highly regarded, IIBA certifications are, in our opinion, relatively costly. Additionally, recertification is required every three years, which involves:

- Continuous professional development (CPD).
- Participation in courses offered by IIBA Endorsed Education Providers.

Although this ongoing requirement adds to the overall cost, it ensures that certified professionals stay up to date with industry practices and maintain the high standards associated with IIBA certification.

Option 3: International Requirements Engineering Board (IREB)



Founded in Germany in 2006, the International Requirements Engineering Board (IREB) aims to develop and standardize a certification program in requirements engineering. Through this program, IREB seeks to enhance the quality and consistency

of requirements engineering practices. For more information, visit the official IREB website: www.ireb.org

The IREB offers the Certified Professional for Requirements Engineering (CPRE) qualification, which consists of four levels:

- **Level 1 Foundation:** At this level, candidates gain fundamental knowledge in Requirements Engineering (RE) and proven methods and techniques.
- **Level 2 Practitioner:** At this level, candidates deepen their knowledge and expand their skills in a specific area of Requirements Engineering.
 - **Elicitation:** Candidates deepen their knowledge in the area of requirements elicitation
 - **Management:** Candidates learn how to manage and control requirements throughout the project lifecycle.
 - **Modeling:** Candidates learn how to model requirements and thus present complex relationships in an understandable, visual way.
 - **RE@Agile:** Candidates learn how to use RE methods effectively in agile environments to ensure clear and feasible requirements, despite high dynamics.
- **Level 3 Specialist:** Candidates can demonstrate their expertise in Elicitation, Management, Modelling, and RE@Agile through a written assignment in their own project context.
- **Level 4 Expert:** The highest level, requiring a skills assessment and oral examination.

Examinations

IREB uses different examination formats depending on the certification level:

- Levels 1 and 2 – Multiple-choice exams.
- Level 3 – Written assignment.
- Level 4 – Skills assessment and oral examination.

Level 1 Foundation examination

The Foundation exam lasts 75 minutes and a candidate must answer 45 multiple-choice questions. Questions vary in difficulty on a scale of 1 to 3. The pass mark for multiple-choice exam is 70%. This is a closed-book exam, although language dictionaries are permitted.

The exam can also be taken at Pearson Vue computer-based exam centers.

The rules for the examination are detailed in

https://cockpit.ireb.org/media/pages/downloads/cpre-foundation-level-and-agile-primer-examination-regulations/71a898b451-1730296650/cpre_fl_and_primer_examination_regulations_en_v5.6.2.pdf

Level 2 Practitioner examination

The Level 2 Practitioner exam takes 75 minutes to complete. The number of questions varies depending on the sub-module.

- Elicitation, Management, and RE@Agile exams contain approximately 45 questions,
- Modeling exam contains approximately 20 questions.

Questions have different levels of difficulty and are scored on a scale of 1 to 3. The pass mark for multiple-choice exams is 70%. This is a closed book exam, although dictionaries are permitted. The exam can also be taken at Pearson Vue computer-based exam centers.

Level 3 Specialist examination

The Level 3 Specialist exam consists of a written assignment on a selected topic from the relevant module. The candidate may choose the topic. The score required to pass the exam is 60% of the total score.

The scope of the written assignment depends on the sub-module.

- Elicitation, Management, and RE@Agile assignments should be between 10 and 20 pages,
- The Modeling assignment should be between 15 and 25 pages.

The results will be posted within 6 weeks.

Level 4 Expert examination

The Expert level exam includes an assessment and oral exam. Professionals who wish to earn the Expert designation must meet the following eligibility requirements.

- Candidates must hold at least two CPRE Specialist or Advanced Level certificates. One of the certificates can alternatively be replaced by another recognized RE qualification or a publication.
- Candidates must have at least three years (full-time equivalent) as a Requirements Engineer in various functions and projects.

These requirements must be documented and assessed by an IREB certification body of their choice. After a positive assessment, an oral exam can be taken.

The oral examination consists of four parts:

1. Elaboration of a case study
2. Questions about the elaborated case study
3. Questions about your project experience
4. General questions about Requirements Engineering

The oral examination lasts for 210 minutes. Part of this time is allotted for the preparation and elaboration of the case study. A period of 30 minutes is allowed for answering the questions on points 2 to 4 (above).

Preparation

Candidates can prepare for the exam by attending training with the IREB-endorsed training provider. It is also possible to do self-study using IREB's published syllabi, handbooks, and sample exams as well as a reading list for further study.

Recertification

Recertification is not required for CPRE certifications.

Exam fees

For CPRE, the following fees apply:

Level	Fees
Level 1 Foundation	€260 ¹ + tax
Level 2 Practitioner	€260 ¹ + tax
Level 3 Specialist	€450 ¹ + tax
Level 4 Expert	Unknown (€3,000.00 based on the Swiss Association for Quality ² price list from)

¹ Source: <https://isqi.org/en/16-requirements-engineering>

² Source: <https://saq.ch/en/downloads/personenzertifizierung/informatik/zertifikate/cpre/preisliste-expert-level.pdf>

Table 8: Pricing IREB Exams from 27/11/2024

For the latest pricing details, visit the iSQI website: <https://isqi.org/en/16-requirements-engineering>.

Conclusions

IREB offers a well-structured and progressive certification path for Business Analysts and Requirements Engineers. Its examinations are designed to rigorously assess knowledge and skills, utilizing multiple-choice questions, written assignments, and oral evaluations, depending on the certification level. This diverse assessment approach allows candidates to demonstrate their expertise comprehensively.

Candidates can prepare through IREB-endorsed training providers or self-study, supported by resources like syllabi, handbooks, and sample exams available on the IREB website. Additionally, IREB certifications do not require recertification, making them a valuable and lasting credential for professionals in requirements engineering.

Overall, the IREB CPRE certification is a rigorous, flexible, and highly regarded program that equips professionals with the skills and recognition to excel in requirements engineering while contributing to the advancement of this critical field.

Mutual agreements among certification institutes

The certification institutes (BCS, IIBA and IREB) operate in the same field of practice, resulting in some overlap between program content and exams. To address this, two important formal agreements have been established to facilitate cross-recognition of certifications:

1. BCS and IREB Equivalence for Requirements Engineering

The BCS Certificate in Requirements Engineering and the IREB Certified Professional for Requirements Engineering (CPRE) Foundation Level are mutually recognized. This means:

- **BCS International Diploma Candidates:** Those who have completed the IREB CPRE Foundation Level are exempt from taking the BCS Certificate in Requirements Engineering to achieve their diploma. The CPRE Foundation Level certificate is considered equivalent and sufficient.
- **IREB Advanced Candidates:** Those who have completed the BCS Certificate in Requirements Engineering are exempt from taking the IREB CPRE Foundation Level to progress to the Advanced Level. The BCS Certificate in Requirements Engineering is considered equivalent and sufficient.

2. CBAP® Exemptions

Candidates with the Certified Business Analysis Professional (CBAP®) qualification are exempt from two specific modules:

- The Requirements Engineering module.
- The Knowledge-Based Specialist module.

These agreements streamline certification pathways, making it easier for candidates to progress within and across different certification programs while recognizing their prior achievements.

Choosing a certification program which suits you best

As mentioned in the introduction, there is no one certification program that fits all needs. Let's consider two scenarios.

- If you are a senior business analyst and don't want to start a certification path from scratch with many courses and exams, you may want to consider choosing IIBA CBAP as a way to recognize your knowledge and experience (keep in mind, however, that recertification will be required).
- If you are a junior BA starting out in your career, you may consider following an IREB or BCS development program and gradually building your "BA muscle". The choice between BCS and IREB will mostly be based on whether requirements engineering is your core activity (IREB) or an enabler to analyze business problems and provide appropriate solutions, justifying why the recommended solution is the best (BCS).

We created a decision tree to guide you through a certification selection process, you can access it via our website:

[https://bacoach.nl/Videos/CertificationDecisionTree/scenarios/What%20business%20analysts%20certification%20fits%20you%20best%20\(Published\)/index.html](https://bacoach.nl/Videos/CertificationDecisionTree/scenarios/What%20business%20analysts%20certification%20fits%20you%20best%20(Published)/index.html)

Choosing the right certification is an important decision. You should consider your current job and its scope, your work experience, the industry in which you work, preferences of your employer, and your career plans, including the direction in which you want to develop as a business analyst. All of this will influence your final decision.

Further assistance

If you need advice on what certification program fits your personal situation, do not hesitate to contact BA Coach for personal advice at +31 6 38 33 01 33.

References

[1] IIBA initiated Salary Survey among Business Analysts:

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