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Thinking of becoming a certified business analyst?

There are various ways of becoming certified, and various organisations that offer certification. This summarises the best options, and is intended to be an objective but brief look at certification options.

The International Institute for Business Analysis www.iiba.org. The IIBA offers four levels of certification: ECBA; CCBA; CBAP and CBATL.

ECBA Entry Certificate in Business Analysis bit.ly/2eMdZJJ.
- It requires no previous business analysis work experience
- You must have 21 hours of professional development in the last 4 years. Our course Mastering the Requirements Process provides the required 21 hours of professional development bit.ly/masterreqs You sit an exam
- The exam is an hour-long exam done on the web
- There are 50 multiple choice questions to test your competency and knowledge of BABOK Guide version 3
- BABOK is the Business Analysis Body of Knowledge and is available from the IIBA bit.ly/2eh0AWr
- BABOK is free to members of the IIBA www.iiba.org/

CCBA The second level certification is aimed at business analysts with 2–3 years' experience. bit.ly/2eS1cGk
- You need at least 3,750 hours of work experience in the last seven years.
- This experience must relate to BABOK Guide knowledge areas.
- 21 hours of professional development in the last four years.
- Our course Mastering the Requirements Process provides the required 21 hours of professional development bit.ly/masterreqs Also our courses: Mastering Business

Analysis and Mastering the Requirements Process Part 2 each provide 16 hours of Professional development.

- Two references from a career manager, client or CBAP® qualified analyst.
- Sit the CCBA® Exam.
- The exam takes three hours, and consists of 130 multiple choice questions. You need to do a little analysis to answer the questions.
- You need to study the BABOK 3.0. bit.ly/2eh0AWr

CBAP The third level of certification is aimed at business analysts with extensive experience. **Certified Business Analysis Professional** is the flagship certification from IIBA.

- You need at least 7,500 hours of work experience in the last 10 years
- Of this experience, you need 900 hours in four of the six BABOK® Guide knowledge areas
- A minimum of 35 hours of professional development in the last 4 years
- Our course Mastering the Requirements Process provides the required 21 hours of professional development bit.ly/masterreqs
- Two references from a career manager, client or CBAP® qualified analyst.
- Sit the CBAP exam
- The exam is 3.5 hours duration and consists of 120 multiple choice questions. Questions are based on a case study, with multiple questions about the case.
- The exam is aligned with BABOK Guide Version 3.

The BA Times has tips for tackling the CBAP exam bit.ly/2edyTk6. This gives some solid advice for anyone contemplating sitting the exam; we recommend reading it.

The IIBA site also has advice on sitting the CBAP exam.

CBATL Certified Business Analysis Thought Leader is the fourth level. It is aimed at business analysts with more than 10 years of experience, and can be considered as industry thought leaders. This level has not been finalised by the IIBA; we suggest that if you are someone whose expertise in the business analysis field is valued and listened to, then please check the IIBA site from time to time. bit.ly/2eBbfNF

IREB The International Requirements Engineering Board offer **CPRE Certified Professional for Requirements Engineering**. This is a certificate aimed at individuals working in requirements engineering, business analysis and testing. It comes in three levels, but only the first two are currently available.

Foundation Level. This covers the fundamentals of requirements engineering and its techniques.

- There are no prerequisites
- You can study yourself online or by reading books. There is a list of recommended books at bit.ly/2e3eydX
- There is a written, multiple choice exam
- This can be taken on paper, or done on a tablet
- Some training providers offer packages that include both the CPRE training course and the subsequent exam on-site
- After self-study, the exam can be taken at a test centre. You can find a list of these at bit.ly/2dOLnO8

Advanced Level bit.ly/2emZ87w for more experienced business analysts. You must have the CPRE Foundation Level certificate, or a certificate in Requirements Engineering from BCS (see below).

- You need to know the educational objectives as defined in the syllabus of the respective Advanced Level syllabus
- Classroom training is not essential but recommended
- The Atlantic Systems Guild is a recognised training provider for foundation and advanced level, and offers Mastering the Requirements Process (three days) and Mastering Business Analysis (two days)
- The exam is in two parts; the exam and an assignment
- The written exam is multiple choice and takes 75 minutes. It is available in English or German; non-native speakers may request a 15 minute extension.
- It may be offered immediately after completing a training course, or taken at a test centre.
- There is a list of test centres at bit.ly/2dOLnO8
- A Written Assignment must be submitted within one year of taking the examination. It must represent a realistic project situation from your working environment and demonstrate that you are capable of applying the acquired RE knowledge.
- More information and sample test questions at bit.ly/2emZ87w

BCS, formerly the British Computer Society, offers five certification levels, one of which was formerly known as ISEB.

Each of the five levels contains several modules. You can sit exams at test centres or as part of a training package. This becomes too complex to list here, so if you are interested in one of these qualifications, please visit the BCS page at bit.ly/2f8t8oC where the levels and modules are neatly summarised.

PMI, the Project Management Institute, offers a **PMI Professional in Business Analysis (PMI-PBA)** certification. It requires the following:

- Complete an exam of 200 multiple-choice questions in four hours
- Prerequisites are:
- High school diploma, associate's degree or 7,500 hours of business analysis experience OR
- a bachelor's degree or the global equivalent and 4,500 hours of business analysis experience AND
- 2,000 hours working on project teams
- 35 contact hours of education in business analysis

To maintain the PMI-PBA you must earn 60 professional development units (PDUs) in business analysis topics every three years. More at bit.ly/2enuxsQ

Software Certifications www.softwarecertifications.org offers Certified Software Business Analyst on two levels.

CABA Certified Associate Business Analyst bit.ly/2eKpC0W is the foundation level qualification. For this you need ONE of the following:

- A 3-year degree or 4 year degree from an accredited college-level institution
- A 2-year degree from accredited college-level institution & 1 years' experience in the information services field
- Three years' experience in the information services field AND

- A good understanding of the CABA Common Body of Knowledge (CBOK) bit.ly/2f00Cq7
- Pass a 100 question multiple choice exam in 75 minutes
- Exams are taken at Pearson VUE Testing Centres and are computer-based bit.ly/2exFWGj

CSBA Certified Software Business Analyst bit.ly/2eBwIFU is the practitioner level qualification. For this you need ONE of the following four prerequisites:
- A four-year degree from accredited college-level institution & 2 years' experience in the information services field
- A three-year degree from accredited college-level institution & three years' experience in the information services field A two-year degree from accredited college-level institution & four years' experience in the information services field
- Six years' experience in the information services field AND
- You are working as a business analyst
- You also have to pass a test made up of two parts:
- Part 1 is 100 multiple choice questions. You are allowed 75 minutes.
- Part 2 is a short answer or essay test of 12 questions. Again, a 75 minute time limit.
- You are tested on your knowledge and practice of the skill areas defined in the CSBA CBOK bit.ly/2f00Cq7
- Tests are computer-based and are taken at Pearson Vue testing centres bit.ly/2exFWGj

There is no reliable information on whether certification will help you to get a job, but some ads are now appearing which ask for certification. We suggest that you should think of certification as part of your personal professional development.

You can download test questions etc. freely, but all bodies charge fees for sitting their examination. This of course should be considered when contemplating certification. You should also check if the certification expires – different bodies have different rules on expiry.

If you wish to go further with this, please check the appropriate organisation's web site carefully, as certifications and prerequisites change frequently.

Any of the above bodies will welcome your enquiry. If you are sitting one of the exams, we wish you the best of luck.