

COBIT®

5

AN ISACA® FRAMEWORK

COBIT® 5 ASSESSOR PRACTITIONER EXAM CANDIDATE GUIDANCE

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The objectives of the examination are to enable you to demonstrate your understanding of the COBIT 5 Assessor Exam and how to apply the guidance in an appropriate way to a given set of circumstances, as described in a scenario. The Practitioner examination uses objective test questions which require you to choose a response to a question from a set of choices for which the correct answer is pre-determined.
- 1.2 The following paragraphs explain the format of the question papers, and the different types of questions asked. Some suggestions on how to approach answering the various types of question are also included.

2 STRUCTURE OF THE PAPER

- The examination paper consists of three booklets.
- 2.1 The Scenario Booklet contains a scenario providing a description of performing a Process Capability Assessment using the COBIT 5 Process Assessment Model (PAM). The Scenario Booklet also includes additional information for one or more of the eight questions. Where additional information is to be used for a question, this is clearly stated in bold within the question header. **Additional information is only to be used for the question to which it relates.**
- 2.2 The Question Booklet contains eight questions, each covering a different syllabus area or combination of syllabus areas. The syllabus areas covered are identified at the beginning of each question. Each of the eight questions contains 10 question lines, each of which attracts 1 mark, giving a total of 80 marks. The pass mark is 40 (50%). Each of the eight questions will be sub-divided into parts. Each of these 'part-questions' will identify the portion of the 10 marks allocated to it.
- 2.3 You are expected to answer all questions and part-questions.
- 2.4 The Answer Booklet contains the answer sheets on which the answers must be given. Unless it is clearly stated otherwise, there is only **one answer** to each question-line. If more than one answer is given in the answer booklet the response line will be void.
- 2.5 For certain subject areas, where more than one answer could be valid, questions are asked using the format 'Which of the following is MOST...'. For these questions you are required to select the answer that is the best fit, given the scenario and the requirements of COBIT 5 Assessment guides. If you select more than one answer, the response line will be void and no mark is awarded for the question-line.

3 COBIT 5 ASSESSOR SYLLABUS AREAS ADDRESSED

- 3.1 The COBIT 5 Assessor Syllabus contains eight defined syllabus areas.
- 3.2 Within the Practitioner Examination, there will be eight questions, each testing one syllabus area. Each of the eight questions will test a minimum of two syllabus topics from within the syllabus area.

Syllabus Area
Question 1 – Roles, Responsibilities and Competences
Question 2 – Initiate an Assessment
Question 3 – Scope an Assessment
Question 4 – Plan an Assessment and Brief the teams and management
Question 5 – Data Collection
Question 6 – Data Validation
Question 7 – Analyse and rate the process attributes and capability levels
Question 8 – Prepare and produce assessment reports

- 3.3 The question header for each part-question identifies which syllabus area(s) is/are being examined.
- 3.4 The full COBIT 5 Assessor syllabus is available from APMG or from an Accredited Training Organization.

4 TYPES OF QUESTION

There are five different types of question used within the paper. (Note that additional information needed or additional information referenced in any example it has not been provided as the examples are only illustrative of the types of questions and are not expected to be answered).

- 4.1 **Classic Multiple Choice Questions** – ‘choose **one** from a list of possible options’. The correct response is to be selected from a list of 3 or 4 options. Note level 3 and 4 type questions require scenario input.

Answer the following question about the Assessment Initiation Checklist.	
1	Which important task is missing from the Checklist? A Agree the Assessment Class, whether Class One, Two or Three. B Identify the need for and approve confidentiality agreements C Confirm the business participant’s knowledge of the COBIT 5 PAM. D Define the resources and schedule for the assessment.

4.1.1 **Classic multi choice type question for level 4** only is different and will contain the following structure based on Yes and No answers.

Using the additional information provided for this question in the *Scenario Booklet*, and the COBIT 5 PAM, answer the following questions about the mapping of the COBIT 5 processes to the organisation's processes.

Decide whether the COBIT 5 processes mapped to the organisation's processes were appropriately selected and select the response that supports your decision.

1	<p>There is NO dedicated process to managing service levels; the Business Service Manager must coordinate with two departments; Procurement for the management of supplier contracts and IT operations for Service Level Agreements (SLAs) and Operating Level Agreements (OLAs), the Assessment team selected APO09 Manage Service Agreements. Is this an appropriate selection?</p> <p>A No, because APO09 requires the organisation to have a process for monitoring SLA's in contracts.</p> <p>B No, because the organisation manages SLAs as part of IT Operations and Business Services.</p> <p>C Yes, because APO09 covers the entire IT operations and Business process, including procurement.</p> <p>D Yes, because APO09 relates exclusively to the service-level agreement process.</p>
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4.2 **Multiple Response** – ‘choose two correct options from a list of 5 options’. This question follows exactly the same format as the ‘Classic style’, but more than one answer is required. It is the **only question type that requires more than one response to gain a mark**. Both responses must be correct to gain a mark. If more or fewer than 2 responses are given, then the answer will be void. Note level 3 and 4 type questions require scenario input.

Answer the following questions about Process Instances.
Remember to select 2 answers to each question.

1	<p>Select 2 processes which are impacted by the process instance “Access Privileges”?</p> <p>A APO10 Manage Suppliers</p> <p>B DSS05 Manage Security Services</p> <p>C DSS06 Business Process Controls</p> <p>D BAI06 Manage Changes</p> <p>E DSS03 Manage Problems</p>
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- 4.3 **Matching** – ‘link items in one list to items in a second list’. There is **only one correct response** to each question, but options from the second list may be used once, more than once or not at all. Note level 3 and 4 type questions require scenario input.

Using the COBIT 5 PAM Guide to verify your selection, answer the following question about the initial mapping of the organisation’s processes to the COBIT PRM.

Column 1 shows a list of issues experienced by the Health Insurance company. Column 2 contains a selection of COBIT 5 processes from the COBIT PRM. For each issue in Column 1, select the process in Column 2 that it would map to. Each selection from Column 2 can be used once, more than once or not at all.

	Column 1	Column 2
1	Issue 1 - Incidents have increased by 40% in the last year, especially in the time it takes to resolve the incidents and recover the IT services. The number of service requests has also increased, overloading the help desk and incident management team.	A APO10 – Manage Suppliers B DSS05 – Manage Security Services C DSS02 – Manage Service Request & Incidents
2	Issue 2 - Audit has concerns about third party access to sensitive data, especially on specific SLAs and OLAs (Service Level and Operating Level Agreements) for security access requirements.	D APO08 - Manage Relationships E BAI06 – Manage Changes F APO09 – Manage Service Level Agreements
3	Issue 3 – Third Party costs have been rising, especially around contracts and service delivery, with more compliance reviews on contracts being necessary.	
4	Issue 4 - Access control issues have increased, especially around sensitive enterprise documents as reported in the security events log.	
5	Issue 5 – Audit has concerns about compliance with statutory requirements on security and privacy rules, especially meeting HIPAA security access requirements. (HIPAA states only that an organisation must demonstrate sufficient controls around security access controls and protect sensitive information for privacy requirements, it does not say specifically what, and i.e. it is not prescriptive).	

4.4 **Assertion/Reason** – ‘evaluate two statements (an assertion and a reason), to determine if either, both or neither is true and, if both are true, whether the reason explains why the assertion is true’.

If either statement is false, select the answer from options C, D or E. If both statements are true, a third step is required. You must then determine whether or not the reason is a correct explanation for the assertion. If the reason explains why the assertion is true, the answer is A. If it does not, the answer is B. This type of question is used only for Level 4 type questions.

There is **only one correct response** to each question-line, but options can be used once, more than once or not at all.

Using the Organizational Structure given in the Scenario and the additional information provided for this question in the Scenario Booklet; answer the following question about the assessment team.

Lines 1 to 2 in the table below consist of an assertion statement and a reason statement. For each line identify the appropriate option, from options A to E, that applies. Each option can be used once, more than once or not at all.

Option	Assertion	Reason	
A	True	True	AND the reason explains the assertion
B	True	True	BUT the reason does not explain the assertion
C	True	False	
D	False	True	
E	False	False	

	Assertion		Reason
1	The CEO should verify that the Lead assessor is a competent assessor.	BECAUSE	The Lead assessor should have undertaken at least two assessments as part of a team.
2	The IS/IT Internal Auditor would be better suited in an Assessor role on the assessment team.	BECAUSE	An Assessor should have an understanding of the processes to be assessed.

For example question 1 the assertion is ‘false’; it is the role of the Sponsor to verify that the Lead assessor is a competent assessor. The CEO is not the Sponsor. Ref: Assessor Guide Section 3.3 Fig 13. For question 1 reason; this is ‘true’; The Lead assessor should have undertaken at least two assessments as part of a team. Ref: Assessor Guide Section 3.5

For question 2 the assertion is ‘true’; the IS/IT Internal Auditor would be better as an assessor as he has knowledge of the PAM, the processes to be assessed and he and has no interaction with the outsourcing organizations which a coordinator (his current appointment) would need. Ref: Scenario, Assessor Guide Section 3.5.

For question 2, the reason is also ‘true’; because an Assessor should have knowledge and experience of the activities being assessed. Ref: Assessor Guide Section 3.5. The answer is A because the IS/IT Internal Auditor does have knowledge of the processes to be assessed and therefore the reason explains why he should be appointed as an Assessor.

4.5 Sequence matching

This is similar to the Matching type question above but matches one column of information to another in a particular sequence. This type of question is used only for Level 2 and 3.

Answer the following question about planning the assessment.

Column 1 is a list of information used when planning the assessment. For each item of information in Column 1, indicate the order in which it should have been used. Note that NOT all information required for planning is given. Match your answers to the options provided in Column 2.

	Column 1	Column 2
1	As Sponsor, the Chief Information Officer has identified that both the Business Service Manager and the IT Operations Manager will need to approve the assessment plan.	A First B Second C Third
2	A risk has been identified that the third party service providers may be uncooperative. These providers believe that they do NOT have any significant deficiencies or material weaknesses following an earlier statutory SOC (Service Organisation Control report – SSAE16) control report.	
3	It is required that a separate report is produced covering only the recommendations for improvements to the security processes necessary to achieve conformance to the new Health Care Act (HIPPA). This is for sending to the affected the outsourced parties.	

5.1 Where you are required to refer back to details provided in the Scenario Booklet in order to answer a question, this is clearly stated in the question header.

5.2 If the question header says '**Using the Scenario ...**' you will need to refer to the scenario. Examples of the kind of information you may need to reference from a scenario include:

- the roles and responsibilities provided
- The organisational issues and processes

5.2 If the question header says '**Using the additional information provided for this question in the Scenario Booklet**', you are required to refer to additional information provided in the Scenario Booklet for the question. The additional information is provided for use with that question only.

5.3 Some questions may require reference to both the scenario and additional information. In this case the question header will say '**Using the Scenario and the additional information provided for this question in the Scenario Booklet**'.

5.3 If there is no reference to additional information or the Scenario within a question, then candidates should answer the question using only the information contained within the question. **In this case the Scenario provides the background and context to the process capability assessment but not the facts to support it.**

6 LEARNING LEVELS

- 6.1 Part-questions will vary in their level of difficulty depending on the learning objective of the test. The learning levels are:
1. Knowledge
 2. Comprehension
 3. Application
 4. Analysis

COBIT 5 Assessor Learning Outcomes Assessment Model			
1. Knowledge	2. Comprehension	3. Application	4. Analysis
To know the facts, terms, concepts, and principles, including tools, techniques, roles and responsibilities from the COBIT 5 Framework Guidance and the COBIT Process Assessment Model (PAM).	Understand the concepts, principles, processes, features, organizational factors and roles and can explain how these are applied to justify, design and implement the COBIT 5 framework and the COBIT Process Assessment model (PAM).	Be able to apply the PAM & Assessor Guide to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform a process capability assessment appropriately • Scope and tailor the organisational processes appropriately For a given project scenario.	Be able to identify, analyse and distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate use of the method applied to the assessment of process capability of an organisation for a given project scenario.

Within a question, the part-questions will be assembled in order of ascending learning level. The focus of the exam is on the application and analysis learning objectives.

7 REFERENCE MATERIAL

You may reference your own copy of the COBIT 5 PAM and Assessor Guide during the examination. If you have made hand-written annotations within any blank space in your guide, your guide can still be used. However **no additional support material** is permitted; this includes post it notes (except where used for tabulation of the sections of the manual) and stapled sheets.

Note that there is a correction to Figure 17 of the Assessor Guide which is given at Appendix A of this document.

8 TIME MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 The full Practitioner exam is 150 minutes in duration. You must manage your time in order to complete all questions. As a general guide, you may wish to spend the first 20 minutes reading the scenario information and getting familiar with the layout of the paper. If 15 minutes is then allocated for each of the 8 questions, this will allow 10 minutes tolerance for additional reading required for some questions. This suggested timing is for **guidance only**. It is expected that some questions will take longer to answer than others due to the style of the question and the question's difficulty.
- 8.2 You should be aware of the time constraint when using your guides. The time pressure of the examination means that you should use the guides with caution. You should be aware of the

time constraint upon you. Whilst the Assessor Guide is there for support, as in real life, the time pressure of the examination means that the questions **have not been designed** on the basis that you are required or even expected to use the Assessor Guide to answer questions. Its use is optional. As an indication, you might check the Assessor Guide once or twice in an examination for a specific point but any more than that is likely to be counter-productive and is not advised. Where you are **expected** to use the COBIT 5 PAM in conjunction with scenario material to answer the questions, the question header will say **'Using the COBIT 5 PAM'**.

9 EDITORIAL NOTES

9.1 Throughout the Scenario Booklet and Question Booklet, lower case has been used for all references to COBIT 5 processes, defined terms and proper nouns. The exceptions are:

- Processes, Process outcomes, Base Practices and Rating Levels (when referring to a part of the COBIT 5 PAM and Assessor Guide)
- Role names.

9.2 Uses of “should” and “is required to”

“**should**” is a specific term used in guidance standards to make recommendations e.g. ‘The service provider should create an SLA containing the following minimum contents’: It is used for something that is good or important or recommended. It is less strong than must and is used to test whether something should be done because it is consistent with the principles and recommended practices of COBIT 5.

“**is required to**” is used to express something definite about COBIT 5 requirements, e.g. to describe generic facts about the COBIT 5 approach, roles and processes (correctly or incorrectly). For example, ‘Which 2 competences are required for an Assessor?’

9.3 Use of ‘true statements’

When the expression ‘**true statements**’ is used in a question, **no evaluation of whether the statements are consistent with the scenario or additional information is required.**

Answer the following questions about completing an Assessment Report.

The Lead Assessor has been asked to prepare the Assessment Report. Each of the following 5 questions contain **true statements** about what is included in the report based on the assessment scenario.

Remember to select 2 answers to each question.

2	Which 2 statements should be recorded under the Scope of the Assessment heading?
	A The assessment used an approach that assigned specific conditions for Level 1 separately to Levels 2 to 5.
	B The processes which were assessed were BAI06, APO09, and DSS03.
	C The assessment has been given three weeks for evaluation, with the report due at the end of the financial year.
	D The process selection was based on the organisation’s issues and problems highlighted in the initiation and scoping phases.
	E DSS03 Manage Problems was the worst performing process, achieving an N - Not Achieved rating.

In example 9.2 there is no need in option B to check the scenario to see if the processes assessed really were the ones listed in option B. As it is known from the question header that the statement is true, the assessment required is whether, according to the COBIT 5 Assessment Guide, the processes assessed would be listed in the section on the Scope of the Assessment in the Assessment Report.

10 USING THE ANSWER BOOKLET

The Answer Booklets will be read electronically and the results generated by computer. It is therefore essential that you follow the instructions given and mark your answers accordingly. Failure to do so may lead to delay and, in some cases, answers being void.

All answers are given by the candidate filling in 'ovals' that relate to their chosen response, e.g.

	A	B	C	D	E
1	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
4	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

The oval must be filled in **IN PENCIL, NOT PEN**. If a pen is used, the answers will not be marked.

Acceptable ways to complete the answer sheets are either:

 completely filling in the oval or  drawing a line through the centre of the oval, ensuring that between 80-100% is filled.

Any other method, including ticks or crosses, is not acceptable and may not be marked.

If you wish to change your answer during the exam, the incorrect answer should be erased completely and the correct answer indicated. If you give more answers than required, the question will score zero.

Appendix A

CORRECTION TO FIGURE 17 – ASSESSOR GUIDE “Class Purpose, Overall Skills and Evidentiary Requirements”.

Figure 17-Class Purpose, Overall Skills and Evidential Requirements			
Topic	Class One Assessment	Class Two Assessment	Class Three Assessment
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide a level of confidence in the results of the assessment such that the results are well suited for comparisons across different organisations To enable assessment conclusions to be drawn as to the relative strengths and weaknesses of the organisations compared Examples include providing a sound and solid basis for process improvement and capability determination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide a level of confidence in the assessment results that may indicate the overall capability of the selected key processes in the organisation unit, which are suitable for comparisons of capability across an organisation or product line scope To enable assessment conclusions to be drawn about the opportunities for improvement To provide a basis for an initial assessment at the commencement of an improvement programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To generate capability assessment results that may indicate critical opportunities for improvement To be suitable for monitoring the on-going progress of an improvement programme or to identify key issues that would support a later class one or two assessment for the process in question
Assessor requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least two members, including the lead assessor. The certified assessor shall be independent of the organisation unit being assessed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least two members, ideally including a certified assessor. Can be performed internally or by an independent assessor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least one member. Can be performed internally or by an independent assessor.
Evidential requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A minimum of four process instances shall be identified for each process within the scope of the assessment. For each process attribute of each process in the scope of the assessment, across the set of process instances, objective evidence drawn both from evaluation of work products and from testimony of performers of the process shall be collected. For each process instance, objective evidence drawn both from evaluation of work products and from testimony of performers of the process shall be collected for each process within the scope of the assessment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A minimum of two process instances shall be identified for each process within the scope of the assessment. If there are fewer than the required number of process instances available in the organisation, all process instances shall be selected. For each process instance, objective evidence drawn both from evaluation of work products and from testimony of performers of the process shall be collected for each process within the scope of the assessment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no minimum of process instances stated. For each process instance, objective evidence drawn both from evaluation of work products and from testimony of performers of the process shall be collected for each process within the scope of the assessment.