



# **BCS Practitioner Certificate in Business Analysis Practice Syllabus**

**Version 4.1  
September 2018**

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

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## Change History

This log provides a single point of reference, where a summary of any changes is recorded, to include the date of the amendment and a summary of the changes made.

Version Number	Summary of Changes Made
Version 4.1 March 2020	Addition of Trainer Criteria and Classroom Size ratios. Additional wording of clarification to the passmark.
Version 4.0 September 2018	Amended to closed book. Pass mark details amended post Angoff Review. Required and recommended reading list confirmed.
Version 3.0 July 2017	Syllabus review and amendments. Change History introduction updated; Standardisation of use of capitals; full stops added to end of every bullet/paragraph; formatting updated to achieve uniformity across the portfolio. Refresh on syllabus content. Examination format changed to include multiple choice. All syllabus sections converted to learning objectives.
Version 2.4 March 2015	Updated language requirements for extra time and use of dictionary. Document checked so that it conforms to accessibility reading issues. Standardised the trainer requirements.
Version 2.3 May 2014	Added updated syllabus sections and related comment. Reading list updated. The extended Business Analysis Practice syllabus is designed to support the centralised Business Analysis Practice examination paper. A commentary has been added to aid candidates preparing for the centralised examination. There are numbers at the end of some bullet points which directly refer to points made in the commentary.
Version 2.2 September 2012	Updated the additional time requirements and removed definition of terminology. Included a section to cover excerpts from BCS books.
Version 2.1 July 2012	Added details of extra time for foreign language candidates.
Version 2.0 August 2011	Name has changed from the Business Analysis Essentials to Business Analysis Practice. Updated new BCS logo and strapline. Changed from ISEB to BCS. Added table of contents, levels of knowledge, levels of skill and responsibility, format of the examination, change history and definition of terminology. Technical Content Changes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Assuring business case removed from syllabus and objectives.</li> <li>▪ Lifecycle for business change expanded.</li> <li>▪ Role of the BA, and other roles, added.</li> <li>▪ Minor restructuring of stakeholder analysis.</li> <li>▪ Clarification of types of business events and business rules.</li> <li>▪ Changed Section 1 from 15% to 10%.</li> <li>▪ Clarification in Section 2.4 Critical Success Factors, Key Performance Indicators and Performance Targets.</li> </ul>

## Introduction

This certificate covers the range of concepts, approaches and techniques that are applicable to the Practitioner Certificate in Business Analysis Practice and is relevant to anyone requiring a broad understanding of the subject.

The certificate's focus is on using a holistic approach to the investigation and improvement of business situations, with a view to developing effective, feasible business solutions.

## Levels of Knowledge / SFIA Levels

This syllabus will provide candidates with the levels of difficulty highlighted within the following table, enabling them to develop the skills to operate at the highlighted level of responsibility (as defined within the SFIA framework) within their workplace. The levels of knowledge and SFIA levels are further explained on the website [www.bcs.org/levels](http://www.bcs.org/levels).

Level	Levels of Knowledge	Levels of Skill and Responsibility (SFIA)
7		Set strategy, inspire and mobilise
6	Evaluate	Initiate and influence
5	Synthesise	Ensure and advise
4	Analyse	Enable
3	Apply	Apply
2	Understand	Assist
1	Remember	Follow

## Learning Outcomes

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge, understanding and application of Business Analysis Practice principles and techniques in the following areas:

1. The breadth of the role of a Business Analyst (BA), the value of the role to organisations and the skills required of a BA to support successful business change.
2. The processes and techniques of strategy analysis.
3. Investigation of an organisation's business systems in order to uncover the problems and issues occurring within them.
4. The importance of, and techniques used within, stakeholder management and the need for analysing perspectives.
5. Conceptual modelling through the use of business activity models.
6. Recommendations for business improvements and how they may be identified through gap analysis between desired and current business models.
7. The role of a business case within the business change lifecycle, including the contents of a business case for the development and implementation of business changes.

## Course Format and Duration

Candidates can choose to study for this certificate from one of two ways: by either attending a training course provided by a BCS Accredited Training Organisation, or by self-study.

BCS recommends that for full coverage of the syllabus to be achieved, training courses leading to the certificate should normally run for a minimum of 18 hours over 3 days.

## Eligibility for the Examination

There are no pre-requisites for entry to the examination, although accredited training is strongly recommended.

## Examination Format and Duration

Type	Multiple choice*
Duration	60 minutes*
Supervised	Yes
Open Book	No
Pass Mark	26/40**
Calculators	Calculators cannot be used during this examination.
Delivery	Digital or Paper based, depending on exam provider.

\*If you are sitting an exam through a BCS Accredited Training Provider (ATO), please confirm with them the format of their exam and the amount of questions, which may differ.

\*\*Please check the format of the exam with your provider as the pass mark may vary.

## Additional Time

### For Candidates Requiring Reasonable Adjustments Due to a Disability

Please refer to the [reasonable adjustments policy](#) for 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 an allocated percentage of study time.

The purpose of this is:

- 1) Guidance on the proportion of time allocated to each section 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.

## Trainer Criteria

Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hold the BCS Practitioner Certificate in Business Analysis Practice (BAP)</li><li>• Have a minimum of 2 years' training experience or 1 year with a recognised qualification</li><li>• Have a minimum of 3 years' practical experience in the relevant subject area</li></ul>
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## Classroom Size

Trainer to candidate ratio	1:16
Candidate to exam invigilator ratio	1:25

## Excerpts from BCS Books

Accredited Training Organisations may include excerpts from BCS books in course materials. To use excerpts from the books, a license from BCS is required, which can be obtained by contacting the Head of Publishing at BCS.

# Syllabus

## Learning Objectives

### 1. Rationale for Business Analysis 5%

Candidates will be able to:

- 1.1 Explain the role of the BA throughout the stages of the business change lifecycle.
- 1.2 Understand the scope of the BA role within the context of the range of analysis activities: strategic analysis and definition; business analysis; IT systems analysis.
- 1.3 Identify that there are three areas of competency for a BA: personal qualities, business knowledge and professional techniques.

### 2. Understanding the Strategic Context 15%

Candidates will be able to:

- 2.1 Apply the MOST technique to analyse the internal environment of an organisation.
- 2.2 Apply the resource audit technique to analyse the internal environment of an organisation.
- 2.3 Apply the PESTLE technique to analyse the external environment of an organisation.
- 2.4 Apply Porter's Five Forces technique to analyse the external environment of an organisation.
- 2.5 Explain the purpose of a SWOT analysis.
- 2.6 Identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for a given scenario.
- 2.7 Define and explain the relationship between the following terms:
  - 2.7.1 Critical Success Factor.
  - 2.7.2 Key Performance Indicator.
  - 2.7.3 Performance Target.
- 2.8 Define the elements of the balanced business scorecard and describe how it may be used to identify critical success factors and key performance indicators.

### **3. Understanding the Current Situation 15%**

Candidates will be able to:

- 3.1** Identify the generic stakeholder categories defined in the stakeholder wheel.
- 3.2** Identify relevant investigation techniques for a given scenario, including:
  - 3.2.1 Interviews.
  - 3.2.2 Workshops.
  - 3.2.3 Observation.
  - 3.2.4 Document analysis.
  - 3.2.5 Scenario analysis.
  - 3.2.6 Surveys or questionnaires.
- 3.3** Explain the rationale for taking a holistic view when investigating a business situation.
- 3.4** Interpret the business situation represented in: rich pictures; mind maps and fishbone diagrams.

### **4. Stakeholder Analysis and Management 20%**

Candidates will be able to:

- 4.1** In a given scenario, describe stakeholders in terms of their power/influence and level of interest.
- 4.2** Select an appropriate stakeholder management strategy based on the position on the Power/Interest Grid.
- 4.3** Apply the CATWOE technique to explore stakeholder business perspectives.
- 4.4** Explain different stakeholder business perspectives based on elements of CATWOE to identify similarities and differences in their worldviews.

### **5. Analysing and Modelling Business Activities 25%**

Candidates will be able to:

- 5.1** Explain the rationale for building conceptual models of a business situation.
- 5.2** Understand how to construct a conceptual business activity model, based on a given scenario.
- 5.3** Show understanding of how the five types of high level activity within a business activity model (and the dependencies between them) represent a stakeholder's business perspective.



- 5.4** Explain the role of the planning activities in determining performance targets for a business system represented in the business activity model.
- 5.5** Explain the role of the enabling activities, in acquiring and replenishing resources for a business system represented in the business activity model.
- 5.6** Explain the role of the doing activities in conducting the work of the transformation, as defined in the stakeholder's CATWOE.
- 5.7** Explain the role of monitoring and control activities, in regulating a business system represented in the business activity model.
- 5.8** Explain the three types of business events:
  - 5.8.1 External.
  - 5.8.2 Internal.
  - 5.8.3 Time based.
- 5.9** In a given business activity model, identify the business events that will be handled by a particular business activity.
- 5.10** Explain the rationale for the consensus business activity model.

## **6. Identifying Potential Solutions 10%**

Candidates will be able to:

- 6.1** In a given business scenario, distinguish between the different categories of business rule:
  - 6.1.1 External constraints.
  - 6.1.2 Internal policies.
  - 6.1.3 Internal procedures.
- 6.2** Describe the process for carrying out gap analysis, through comparison of the conceptual business activity model and existing business situation.
- 6.3** Define the components of a new business model:
  - 6.3.1 Process.
  - 6.3.2 Organisation.
  - 6.3.3 People.
  - 6.3.4 Information.
  - 6.3.5 Technology.

## **7. Building the Business Case 10%**

Candidates will be able to:

- 7.1** Explain the rationale for the development of a business case.
- 7.2** Describe the contents of a business case, including:
  - 7.2.1 Background description.
  - 7.2.2 Options and their descriptions.
  - 7.2.3 Costs, including:
    - 7.2.3.1 Areas of cost.
    - 7.2.3.2 Tangible and intangible costs.
    - 7.2.3.3 Quantifying costs.
  - 7.2.4 Benefits, including:
    - 7.2.4.1 Areas of business benefit.
    - 7.2.4.2 Tangible and intangible benefits.
    - 7.2.4.3 Quantifying benefits.
  - 7.2.5 Cost/benefit analysis using investment appraisal techniques.
  - 7.2.6 Risks, including:
    - 7.2.6.1 Areas of risk.
    - 7.2.6.2 Types of risk.
    - 7.2.6.3 Risk analysis.
  - 7.2.7 Impacts.
  - 7.2.8 Recommendations – the preferred option.
- 7.3** Interpret a scenario in order to identify the following:
  - 7.3.1 Tangible and intangible costs.
  - 7.3.2 Tangible and intangible benefits.
  - 7.3.3 Risks.
  - 7.3.4 Impacts.
- 7.4** Understand the rationale for the development of the financial case and the following appraisal techniques:
  - 7.4.1 Payback.
  - 7.4.2 Discounted cash flow.
  - 7.4.3 Internal rate of return.
- 7.5** Explain where a business case sits within the business change lifecycle and the rationale for reviewing it at each stage.

## Required Reading List

**Title** Business Analysis (3<sup>rd</sup> edition)

**Author** Debra Paul, James Cadle and Donald Yeates

**Publisher** BCS

**Publication Date** September 2014

**ISBN** 978-1-78017-278-1

## Recommended Reading List

**Title** Business Analysis Techniques (2<sup>nd</sup> edition)

**Author** Debra Paul, James Cadle and Paul Turner

**Publisher** BCS

**Publication Date** September 2014

**ISBN** 978-1-780172-73-6