IT SERVICE MANAGEMENT FOUNDATION PRACTICE QUESTIONS
For ITIL®V3 Foundation Exam Candidates
Steve Mann (Editor), Tony Gannon, Nigel Mear

The most authoritative guide to preparing for the ITIL Foundation Certificate in IT Service Management. It includes an extensive range of practice questions complete with explanations and key learning points and will greatly assist anyone sitting or intending to sit the V3 ITIL Service Management Foundation Certificate. It provides a wealth of background knowledge and sample questions using different styles with detailed explanations that are intended to build on existing study or learning. This guide utilises the experience of three established independent service management consultants who are members of the ISEB examination panel and are experienced Service Management Trainers.

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- The official BCS and ISEB sponsored exam preparation guide
- Contains a wealth of background knowledge and sample questions
- Written by three members of the ISEB examination panel

ABOUT THE AUTHORS
Steve Mann has spent over 30 years in IT Service Management and is now a consultant, trainer and coach. He is chair of the ISEB ITIL Foundation Question Examination Board. Tony Gannon has been active in the ITSM industry for 25 years and is renowned for his pragmatic approach to interpreting ITIL guidance into workable solutions. Nigel Mear has been involved in Service Management for nearly 25 years and has worked for organisations including the BBC, IBM, BT and C&W.

Well written, concise, practical advice for students on how to approach multiple choice examination questions. Puts into words what the experienced tutor has been saying for years. Well done.

Dave Jones - Pink Elephant

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Steve Mann has spent over 30 years in IT Service Management following a number of roles in IT Operations. He worked for ICL as Operations Manager at the European Union in Luxembourg from 1979 to 1982, then as Operations and Production Manager for the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) in the UAE before returning to the UK to work for BREL (British Rail Engineering Limited), where he project-managed mainframe installations, Leeds & Holbeck Building Society, where he first met and introduced ITIL®, followed by training and consultancy roles with SYSOP in Rochdale. In 2001, Steve created his own company, SM2 Ltd, and offers Service Management training, consultancy and coaching using both ITIL and ISO 20000 as a basis. SM2 works very closely with a Belgian society, OPSYS and together as ‘Opsys-sm2’ offer accredited ITIL and ISO 20000 training in various locations around the world.

Tony Gannon began his IT career in 1985 on leaving HM Forces and has been active in the ITSM industry since then. Tony has previously contributed to ITSM publications, is a regular at Service Management events and was previously itsMF Northern Regional Chair. He has helped organisations to implement, better understand, or improve their ITSM capability for over 15 years. Tony understands fully the sometimes painful process of dealing with the hype and the reality when implementing a professional ITSM practice. He adopts a ‘lean’ and pragmatic approach to interpreting ITIL guidance into workable solutions.

Nigel Mear has been involved in Service Management for nearly 25 years and has worked for organisations including the BBC, IBM, BT, and C&W. Early in his career he took an interest in performance, learning and development and is now an accomplished consultant, trainer and professionally accredited business coach, working with teams and individuals at all levels. He is director of Solid Air Consultancy Ltd, providing specialist training and coaching services to Service Management teams and organisations. He is an active member of BCS, Institute of IT Service Management, European Mentoring & Coaching Council, itsMF and Association for Coaching.

ITIL® – ‘ITIL® is a Registered Trade Mark of the Office of Government Commerce in the United Kingdom and other countries.”
The purpose of this book is to help students understand how to address multiple-choice examination questions related to IT Service Management at Foundation level.

The book covers examination question types, hints and tips for success, and examples of typical questions in each of the Service Management Lifecycle phases.

It is assumed that the reader will have either attended a Foundation course, followed a self-study approach and/or have relevant Service Management experience. This book is neither a mini-guide to Service Management nor a 'short course'.

The book presents Service Management questions as they would be encountered in an ITIL Service Management Foundation Examination. It is an excellent way of revising before an examination because it covers the learning areas needed to be understood and presents them as they will be seen in an examination.

For ease of use, this book is structured around the Service Lifecycle.

A companion book, *IT Service Management – A Guide for ITIL® v3 Foundation Exam Candidates*, which provides students with a study guide covering the key topics relevant to these questions, is available from BCS.

Throughout the book, the portions of text indicated by the use of quotation marks and a † symbol have been taken directly from the OGC ITIL Framework publications:

- Service Strategy. ISBN: 9780113310456
- Service Design. ISBN: 9780113310470
- Service Transition. ISBN: 9780113310487
- Service Operation. ISBN: 9780113310463
- Continual Service Improvement. ISBN: 9780113310494

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SECTION 1:
EXAMINATION AND QUESTION TYPES
It is highly recommended that students attend an accredited training course before attempting the ITIL Foundation Examination. Training providers will make arrangements for students to sit the examination, typically at the end of the three-day course. Attending a course is the best way for you to be prepared for your examination, and to gain a fuller comprehension of Service Management.

The Official Accréditor has the responsibility of setting the syllabus for the ITIL Foundation Examination. The syllabus is liable to updates from time to time, so students should ensure they are aware of the current version. The Official Accréditor is appointed by the Office of Government Commerce (OGC), who is responsible for ITIL v3. At the time of writing the Official Accréditor is the APMGroup.

Examinations are provided by accredited Examination Institutes (EIs), such as the Information Systems Examination Board (ISEB), which is part of the British Computer Society (BCS).

THE BASICS OF THE EXAMINATION

- An ITIL Service Management examination consists of 40 multiple-choice questions.
- English-speaking students have 60 minutes to complete the paper.
- The pass mark is 65% (26/40).
- There are always four ‘response alternatives’: A, B, C, D.
- Only one answer is correct per question.
- No marks are deducted if a wrong answer is given (i.e. there is no ‘negative marking’).

The examination papers are designed to cover the whole topic of Service Management in proportion to the prescribed weightings in the official syllabus. This ensures there will be a wide spread of questions on each paper and that the papers will be well balanced.

The official ITIL Foundation syllabus can be found on the BCS/ISEB website.
2  MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

We will now look at the question anatomy and the different types of question in the ITIL Service Management Examination.

ANATOMY OF A MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTION

A multiple-choice question comprises two main parts: the ‘stem’ and the ‘response alternatives’.

The stem is ‘the question’ and the ‘response alternatives’ are the potential answers. Incorrect responses are known as ‘distracters’. A set of good distracters makes a question harder than one with poor distracters.

HINT

Read the question and all the response alternatives at least twice before deciding on your answer.

Here are some examples. The answers to the questions used as examples can be found at the end of this chapter on page 10.

EXAMPLE 1

Stem

How many phases are there in the Service Lifecycle?

Response alternatives

A  6
B  5
C  4
D  3

Simply pick the right answer!
Some questions will not follow the simple approach of Example 1. An alternative style, very common in Service Management examinations, is to list ‘statements’, and then offer a selection of response alternatives.

**EXAMPLE 2**

**Stem**
Which of the following are reasons for investing in Service Management?

**Statements**
1. Increased customer satisfaction
2. Increased levels of availability
3. Reduction in the number of Incidents
4. Increased number of SLA breaches

**Response alternatives**
A 1, 2 and 3 only  
B 1, 2 and 4 only  
C 1, 3 and 4 only  
D 2, 3 and 4 only

In questions like Example 2, you need to look at each statement and decide if it meets the criteria in the ‘stem’. In the example, does the statement give a good reason for investing in Service Management? If you feel it does, include the statement, if not exclude it.

**HINT**
There are two ways of approaching the ‘list’ type of question.

One way is to look at the statements to see which are ‘positive’ (i.e. those that meet the requirement of the question) and select the appropriate response.

An alternative way is to identify which statement is ‘negative’ and select the response that does not include that statement.

Combining these approaches provides a ‘quality check’ of your answer.

**TYPES OF MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTION**
There are many different types of multiple-choice question. Here are a few examples of the different types of question you may encounter.
Standard
The ‘standard’ question is a simple ‘stem’ with four ‘response alternatives’. A typical examination paper will have more ‘standard’ questions than other types. Standard questions are considered less confusing to answer than the other types of question, and they are (usually) shorter.

**EXAMPLE 3**

How many main functional areas are described in the Service Operation lifecycle phase?

- **A** 6
- **B** 5
- **C** 4
- **D** 3

As we have already seen, simply choose the correct answer.

Standard negative
The ‘standard’ question above could be referred to as ‘standard positive’. Another type of question is known as ‘standard negative’. This is where the ‘stem’ contains a negative word such as NOT or LEAST.

In ‘standard negative’ questions, the negative word is usually printed in CAPITALS.

**EXAMPLE 4**

Which of the following pieces of data is LEAST useful when diagnosing an Incident?

- **A** The identity of the user who called the Service Desk to report the Incident
- **B** The cost of the CI that is affected by the Incident
- **C** The unique identity of the affected CI
- **D** The time and date the Incident was reported

Again, simply pick the correct answer.

**HINT**
A common mistake is to miss the negative word in the stem. If you read through the paper too quickly you potentially risk losing marks.
Standard definition or matching
A variation of the standard question is where the subject is a definition and you have to 'match' the definition to the correct description. This is often referred to as a 'standard definition' or 'matching' question.

EXAMPLE 5
Which of the following is the best definition of an Incident?

A A warning that a threshold has been reached, something has changed, or a failure has occurred
B The addition, modification or removal of anything that could have an effect on IT Services
C An unplanned interruption to an IT Service, reduction in the quality of an IT Service or the failure of a Configuration Item that has not yet affected Service
D The unknown cause of one or more Incidents

HINT
A definition question is a 'gift' – providing you know the definition! All four response alternatives in Example 5 are Service Management ITIL definitions. In some questions the distracters (the incorrect responses) may not be real Service Management definitions.

List
A 'list' question is where a list of statements is given and you are required to select those that satisfy the criteria proposed in the 'stem'.

EXAMPLE 6
Which of the following actions are included in the Event Management process?

1 Generation
2 Detection
3 Filtered
4 Correction
5 Closure

A 1, 2, 3 and 4 only
B 2, 3, 4 and 5 only
C 1, 2, 3 and 5 only
D 1, 3, 4 and 5 only
The question in Example 6 uses the Event Management process. One of the actions is incorrect (see the answer on page 10 for which one). There are two ways of arriving at the right answer (for each one, you need to know the process!):

- If you can identify the incorrect action, choose the option where that action is not included.
- Alternatively work through the options until you find the answer with the four correct actions.

Matching columns
A ‘matching columns’ question presents you with two lists. You have to ‘match’ an item in column B with a statement in column A. Here’s an example to illustrate how it works.

**EXAMPLE 7**

Match the lifecycle process in column B with the correct lifecycle phase in column A.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column A</th>
<th>Column B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Service Strategy</td>
<td>Capacity Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Design</td>
<td>Demand Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Transition</td>
<td>Event Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Operation</td>
<td>Knowledge Management</td>
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A 1 w 2 y 3 x 4 z  
B 1 x 2 w 3 z 4 y  
C 1 z 2 x 3 y 4 w  
D 1 y 2 z 3 w 4 x  

This is a simplified example as the items in both columns appear only once in each ‘response alternative’. Also, because each possible ‘matching’ appears only once within the response alternatives, as soon as you have identified one correct matching pair you have the correct answer.

For example if you think Service Operation (‘4’ in column A) is where you would find Event Management (‘y’ in column B) you would choose option ‘B’ because it is the only one which includes ‘4 y’. Again, there are two ways of arriving at the correct answer: you can identify the correct pairings as above, or you can identify incorrect pairings to eliminate false options.

A further note on ‘distracters’
The following will help you understand and prepare to deal with distracters (i.e. the wrong ‘response alternatives’). Sometimes a distracter will be completely incorrect, however, there will be times when a distracter will contain some elements of truth.
Some questions will require you to make a judgement to determine which response alternative is the ‘best’ response to the question posed in the stem. Variations on this style of question can require you to select the ‘least’, ‘most’, ‘main’, response etc.

It is good practice to highlight the words ‘best’, ‘least’ etc. in the stem and then, for this style of question, carefully read all the response alternatives and use your judgement to select the most appropriate option based on the relative strength of the proposition in relation to ITIL guidance, and the specific question being asked.

Here’s an example.

**EXAMPLE 8**

Which of the following best describes ‘ITIL’ Service Management?

A  A set of books
B  Five books together with some complementary ‘guidance’
C  A Service Management publication
D  Service Management guidance based on ‘best practice’

All the response alternatives are ‘true’, however, one is best (i.e. it is more complete, more accurate, more appropriate etc.). Which is it?

**Summary**

The question types above are the main types of question you should encounter in an ITIL Service Management Foundation Examination.

You may notice as you work through the questions that different styles of writing have been used in creating the questions. This is deliberate. Foundation Examination paper questions are written by a group of authors over a period of time, and we have reflected this in this publication. Consequently, there will be variations in the style of language and phrasing used.

And now for the answers to the example questions.
ANSWERS TO EXAMPLES IN CHAPTER 2

Anatomy of a multiple-choice question

Example 1
B There are five phases within the ITIL v3 lifecycle: Service Strategy, Service Design, Service Transition, Service Operation and Continual Service Improvement.

Example 2
A Increasing the number of SLA breaches is not a reason (a benefit) to invest in Service Management. The other statements are all good reasons to invest in Service Management.

Types of multiple-choice question

Example 3 (standard)
C There are four main functional areas described within Service Operations: Service Desk, Technical Management, Application Management and IT Operations Management.

Example 4 (standard negative)
B The cost of a CI is least relevant when resolving an Incident as the cost does not impact on the performance of a CI. The other data is essential in managing the Incident effectively and restoring service as soon as possible.

Example 5 (standard definition)
C This is the correct definition of an Incident. The other options are ITIL definitions of an Alert (A), a Change (B) and a Problem (D).

Example 6 (list)
C The action ‘Correction’ is incorrect – it should be ‘Correlation’.

Example 7 (matching columns)
B The correct combinations are SS–Demand Management, SD–Capacity Management, ST–Knowledge Management and SO–Event Management.

Example 8 (distracters)
D This is the most complete, most accurate and most appropriate option.
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