

# **Foundation Certificate in Business Analysis Syllabus**

**Version 2.0**

**October 2010**

## Change History

Version 2.0 October 2010	Revised to correspond with 2 <sup>nd</sup> edition of Business Analysis.
Version 1.9 January 2010	Re-branded and re-formatted. Added in a contents page, change history and the examination format on final page.

# Foundation Certificate in Business Analysis

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## Background

This certificate covers the range of concepts, approaches and techniques that are applicable to Business Analysis. Candidates are required to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of these aspects of Business Analysis.

The certificate is relevant to anyone requiring an understanding of Business Analysis including business analysts, business managers and their staff, business change managers and project managers.

## Objectives

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of business analysis principles and techniques. Key areas are:

- the role and competencies of a business analyst
- strategy analysis
- business system and business process modelling
- stakeholder analysis
- investigation and modelling techniques
- requirements engineering
- business case development
- management of business change

This qualification provides a foundation for the range of specialist ISEB modular certificates in the areas of Business Analysis, IS Consultancy and Business Change. The qualification can also be used as the knowledge-based specialist module for the Diploma in Business Analysis. In addition, the qualification provides foundation-level Business Analysis knowledge for specialists in other disciplines, particularly Project Managers and System Developers.

The syllabus is based on the BCS publication *Business Analysis, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition*, and it is recommended that this text is studied by those preparing to take this examination. The headings listed in the syllabus relate to the relevant chapter headings, section headings and text included in this publication.

## Eligibility for the Examination

There are no specific pre-requisites for entry to the examination; however candidates should possess the appropriate level of knowledge to fulfil the objective shown above.

## Format of the Examination

The format for the examination is a one hour multiple-choice examination consisting of 40 questions. The examination is closed book (no materials can be taken into the examination room). Candidates need to achieve a minimum of 26 marks out of 40 to pass the examination.

Candidates who are awarded a pass for the examination are awarded the ISEB Foundation Certificate in Business Analysis.

## **Accreditation Guidelines for Training Providers**

This qualification is subject to the accreditation guidelines applied to all ISEB foundation qualifications. It is required that all courses accredited for the Foundation Certificate in Business Analysis will provide a minimum of 18 study hours.

## Syllabus

### 1. What is Business Analysis (2.5%)

- 1.1 The origins of business analysis
- 1.2 The development of business analysis
  - The impact of outsourcing
  - Competitive advantage of using IT
  - Successful business change
  - The importance of the business analyst
  - The use of consultants
- 1.3 The scope of business analysis work
  - Strategic analysis and definition
  - IT systems analysis
- 1.4 Business analysis
- 1.5 Taking an holistic approach
- 1.6 The role and responsibilities of a business analyst
  - Definition of the business analyst role
  - The guiding principles for business analysis
  - Further aspects of the business analyst role

### 2. The Competencies of a Business Analyst (2.5%)

- 2.1 Behavioural skills and personal qualities
- 2.2 Business knowledge
- 2.3 Techniques
- 2.4 The development of competencies

### 3. Strategy Analysis (7.5%)

- 3.1 The context for strategy
- 3.2 The definition of strategy (Johnson and Scholes, 2001)
- 3.3 Strategy development
- 3.4 External environment analysis
  - PESTLE analysis
  - Porter's five forces model
- 3.5 Internal environment analysis
  - MOST analysis
  - Resource Audit
  - Boston Box
- 3.6 SWOT analysis
- 3.7 Implementing strategy
  - The McKinsey 7-S model
  - The Balanced Business Scorecard



## **4. The Business Analysis Process Model (5%)**

- 4.1 An approach to problem-solving
- 4.2 Stages of the business analysis process model
  - Investigating the situation
  - Considering the perspectives
  - Analysing the needs
  - Evaluating the options
  - Defining the requirements
- 4.3 Objectives of the process model stages
- 4.4 Procedure for each process model stage
- 4.5 Techniques used within each process model stage

## **5. Investigation techniques (15%)**

- 5.1 Interviews
  - Advantages and disadvantages of interviewing
  - Preparation for interviewing
  - Conducting the interview
  - Following up the interview
- 5.2 Observation
  - Advantages and disadvantages of observation
  - Formal observation
  - Protocol analysis
  - Shadowing
  - Ethnographic studies
- 5.3 Workshops
  - Advantages and disadvantages of workshops
  - Preparing for the workshop
  - Facilitating the workshop
  - Techniques
  - Following the workshop
- 5.4 Scenarios
  - Advantages and disadvantages of scenarios
  - Developing scenarios
  - Documenting scenarios
- 5.5 Prototyping
  - Advantages and disadvantages of prototyping
- 5.6 Quantitative approaches
  - Questionnaires
  - Special Purpose Records
  - Activity Sampling
  - Document Analysis
- 5.7 Documenting the current business situation
  - Rich Pictures
  - Mind Maps

## **6. Stakeholder Analysis and Management (5%)**

**6.1** Definition of a stakeholder

**6.2** Stakeholder categories and identification

- Customers
- Partners
- Suppliers
- Competitors
- Regulators
- Owners
- Employees
- Managers

**6.3** Analysing stakeholders

- The Power/Interest Grid

**6.4** Stakeholder management strategies

- No interest and no power/influence
- Some or high interest but no power/influence
- No, some or high interest but some power/influence
- No interest but high power/influence
- Some interest and high power/influence
- High interest and high power/influence

**6.5** Managing stakeholders

- Stakeholder plan/assessment

## **7. Modelling Business Systems (10%)**

**7.1** Soft systems methodology

**7.2** Business perspectives

- CATWOE

**7.3** Business activity models

- Principles of business activity models
- Types of activities – Plan, Enable, Do, Monitor, Control
- Dependencies
- Modelling notation
- Developing a business activity model
- Producing a consensus model

**7.4** Business events

- External business events
- Internal decision points
- Scheduled points in time

**7.5** Business rules

- Constraints
- Operational guidance

**7.6** Critical success factors and key performance indicators

**7.7** Use of the business activity model in gap analysis

## **8. Modelling Business Processes (10%)**

- 8.1** Organisational context
  - Functional view of an organisation
- 8.2** An alternative view of an organisation
- 8.3** The organisational view of business processes
- 8.4** Value propositions and value chain
- 8.5** Business process models
  - Developing the as-is business process model
- 8.6** Analysing the as-is business process model
- 8.7** Improving business processes (to-be business process)
  - Simplify the process
  - Remove bottlenecks
  - Change the sequence of tasks
  - Redesign the process
  - Redefine process boundaries

## **9. Gathering the Requirements (7.5%)**

- 9.1** The problems with requirements
- 9.2** A process for requirements engineering
- 9.3** Actors in requirements engineering
  - The business representatives
  - The project team
- 9.4** Requirements elicitation
  - Tacit and explicit knowledge
  - Requirements elicitation techniques
- 9.5** Building the requirements list
- 9.6** Requirements analysis
  - Requirements filters
  - SMART requirements
- 9.7** Validating requirements

## **10. Documenting and Managing Requirements (5%)**

- 10.1** The requirements document
  - Structure
  - Content of the requirements document
- 10.2** The requirements catalogue
  - Types of requirements; General, Technical, Functional, Non-functional
  - Hierarchy of requirements
  - Documenting a requirement
- 10.3** Managing requirements
  - Elements of requirements management

## **11. Modelling Requirements (10%)**

### **11.1 Modelling system functions**

- Use case diagrams
- The <<include>> and <<extend>> constructs

### **11.2 Modelling system data**

- Entity Relationship Diagrams
  - Entities, attributes and relationships
  - Types of relationships
- Class Models
  - Objects and classes
  - Attributes
  - Associations

## **12. Delivering the Requirements (5%)**

### **12.1 Delivering the solution**

### **12.2 Context for the delivery approach**

### **12.3 Delivery lifecycles**

- The waterfall lifecycle
- The 'V' model lifecycle
- Incremental delivery
- Iterative or evolutionary systems development lifecycle

## **13. Making a Business and Financial Case (10%)**

### **13.1 The business case in the project lifecycle**

### **13.2 Identifying options**

### **13.3 Assessing project feasibility**

- Business feasibility
- Technical feasibility
- Financial feasibility

### **13.4 Structure of a business case**

- Contents of a business case
- Categories of costs and benefits
- Impact assessment
- Risk assessment

### **13.5 Investment appraisal**

- Payback
- Discounted cash flow and Internal rate of return

### **13.6 Presentation of a business case**

### **13.7 Benefits realisation approach**

## **14. Implementing business change (5%)**

**14.1** Introducing a new business system

**14.2** The environment for change

- Emotions and the change process
- Business change lifecycle
- Concerns-based adoption model

### **Levels of Knowledge**

This course will provide candidates with the levels of difficulty / knowledge highlighted within the following table, enabling them to develop the skills to operate at the levels of responsibility indicated.

The levels of knowledge are explained in the following text. Note that each K level subsumes lower levels. For example, a K4 level topic is one for which a candidate must be able to analyse a situation and extract relevant information. A question on a K4 topic could be at any level up to and including K4. As an example, a scenario requiring a candidate to analyse a scenario and select the best risk identification method would be at K4, but questions could also be asked about this topic at K3 and a question at K3 for this topic might require a candidate to apply one of the risk identification methods to a situation.

#### **Level 1: Remember (K1)**

The candidate should be able to recognise, remember and recall a term or concept but not necessarily be able to use or explain. Typical questions would use: define, duplicate, list, memorise, recall, repeat, reproduce, state.

#### **Level 2: Understand (K2)**

The candidate should be able to explain a topic or classify information or make comparisons. The candidate should be able to explain ideas or concepts. Typical questions would use: classify, describe, discuss, explain, identify, locate, recognise, report, select, translate, paraphrase.

#### **Level 3: Apply (K3)**

The candidate should be able apply a topic in a practical setting. The candidate should be able to use the information in a new way. Typical questions would use: choose, demonstrate, employ, illustrate, interpret, operate, schedule, sketch, solve, use, write.

#### **Level 4: Analyse (K4)**

The candidate should be able to distinguish/separate information related to a concept or technique into its constituent parts for better understanding, and can distinguish between facts and inferences. Typical questions would use: appraise, compare, contrast, criticise, differentiate, discriminate, distinguish, examiner, question, test.

### **Level 5: Synthesise (K5)**

The candidate should be able to justify a decision and can identify and build patterns in facts and information related to a concept or technique, they can create new meaning or structure from parts of a concept. Typical questions would use: appraise, argue, defend, judge, select, support, value, evaluate.

### **Level 6: Evaluate (K6)**

The candidate should be able to provide a new point of view and can judge the value of information and decide on its applicability in a given situation. Typical questions would use: assemble, contract, create, design, develop, formulate, write.

## **Levels of Skill and Responsibility (SFIA Levels)**

The levels of knowledge above will enable candidates to develop the following levels of skill to be able to operate at the following levels of responsibility (as defined within the SFIA framework) within their workplace:

### **Level 1: Follow**

Work under close supervision to perform routine activities in a structured environment. They will require assistance in resolving unexpected problems, but will be able to demonstrate an organised approach to work and learn new skills and applies newly acquired knowledge.

### **Level 2: Assist**

Works under routine supervision and uses minor discretion in resolving problems or enquiries. Works without frequent reference to others and may have influence within their own domain. They are able to perform a range of varied work activities in a variety of structured environments and can identify and negotiate their own development opportunities. They can also monitor their own work within short time horizons and absorb technical information when it is presented systematically and apply it effectively.

### **Level 3: Apply**

Works under general supervision and uses discretion in identifying and resolving complex problems and assignments. They usually require specific instructions with their work being reviewed at frequent milestones, but can determine when issues should be escalated to a higher level. Interacts with and influences department/project team members. In a predictable and structured environment they may supervise others. They can perform a broad range of work, sometimes complex and non-routine, in a variety of environments. They understand and use appropriate methods, tools and applications and can demonstrate an analytical and systematic approach to problem solving. They can take the initiative in identifying and negotiating appropriate development opportunities and demonstrate effective communication skills, sometimes planning, scheduling and monitoring their own work. They can absorb and apply technical information, works to required standards and understand and uses appropriate methods, tools and applications.

#### **Level 4: Enable**

Works under general direction within clear framework of accountability and can exercise substantial personal responsibility and autonomy. They can plan their own work to meet given objectives and processes and can influence their team and specialist peers internally. They can have some responsibility for the work of others and for the allocation of resources. They can make decisions which influence the success of projects and team objectives and perform a broad range of complex technical or professional work activities, in a variety of contexts. They are capable of selecting appropriately from applicable standards, methods, tools and applications and demonstrate an analytical and systematic approach to problem solving, communicating fluently orally and in writing, and can present complex technical information to both technical and non-technical audiences. They plan, schedule and monitor their work to meet time and quality targets and in accordance with relevant legislation and procedures, rapidly absorbing new technical information and applying it effectively. They have a good appreciation of the wider field of information systems, their use in relevant employment areas and how they relate to the business activities of the employer or client.

#### **Level 5: Ensure and advise**

Works under broad direction, being fully accountable for their own technical work and/or project/supervisory responsibilities, receiving assignments in the form of objectives. Their work is often self-initiated and they can establish their own milestones, team objectives, and delegates responsibilities. They have significant responsibility for the work of others and for the allocation of resources, making decisions which impact on the success of assigned projects i.e. results, deadlines and budget. They can also develop business relationships with customers, perform a challenging range and variety of complex technical or professional work activities and undertake work which requires the application of fundamental principles in a wide and often unpredictable range of contexts. They can advise on the available standards, methods, tools and applications relevant to own specialism and can make correct choices from alternatives. They can also analyse, diagnose, design, plan, execute and evaluate work to time, cost and quality targets, communicating effectively, formally and informally, with colleagues, subordinates and customers. They can demonstrate leadership, mentor more junior colleagues and take the initiative in keeping their skills up to date. Takes customer requirements into account and demonstrates creativity and innovation in applying solutions for the benefit of the customer.

#### **Level 6: Initiate and influence**

Have a defined authority and responsibility for a significant area of work, including technical, financial and quality aspects. They can establish organisational objectives and delegates responsibilities, being accountable for actions and decisions taken by them self and their subordinates. They can influence policy formation within their own specialism to business objectives, influencing a significant part of their own organisation and customers/suppliers and the industry at senior management level. They make decisions which impact the work of employing organisations, achievement of organisational objectives and financial performance, developing high-level relationships with customers, suppliers and industry leaders. They can perform highly complex work activities covering technical, financial and quality aspects. They contribute to the formulation of IT strategy, creatively applying a wide range of technical and/or management principles. They absorb complex technical information and communicate effectively at all levels to both technical and non-technical audiences, assesses and evaluates risk and understand the implications of new

technologies. They demonstrate clear leadership and the ability to influence and persuade others, with a broad understanding of all aspects of IT and deep understanding of their own specialism(s). They take the initiative in keeping both their own and subordinates' skills up to date and to maintain an awareness of developments in the IT industry.

### **Level 7: Set strategy, inspire and mobilise**

Have the authority and responsibility for all aspects of a significant area of work, including policy formation and application. They are fully accountable for actions taken and decisions made, by both them self and their subordinates. They make decisions critical to organisational success and influence developments within the IT industry at the highest levels, advancing the knowledge and/or exploitation of IT within one or more organisations. They develop long-term strategic relationships with customers and industry leaders, leading on the formulation and application of strategy. They apply the highest level of management and leadership skills, having a deep understanding of the IT industry and the implications of emerging technologies for the wider business environment. They have a full range of strategic management and leadership skills and can understand, explain and present complex technical ideas to both technical and non-technical audiences at all levels up to the highest in a persuasive and convincing manner. They have a broad and deep IT knowledge coupled with equivalent knowledge of the activities of those businesses and other organisations that use and exploit IT. Communicates the potential impact of emerging technologies on organisations and individuals and analyses the risks of using or not using such technologies. They also assess the impact of legislation, and actively promote compliance.

<b>Level</b>	<b>Levels of knowledge</b>	<b>Levels of skill and responsibility (SFIA)</b>
<b>K7</b>		Set strategy, inspire and mobilise
<b>K6</b>	Evaluate	Initiate and influence
<b>K5</b>	Synthesise	Ensure and advise
<b>K4</b>	Analyse	Enable
<b>K3</b>	Apply	Apply
<b>K2</b>	Understand	Assist
<b>K1</b>	Remember	Follow



## Question Weighting

Syllabus Area	Target number of questions
What is business analysis?	1
The competencies of a Business Analyst	1
Strategy Analysis	3
The Business Analysis Process Model	2
Investigation Techniques	6
Stakeholder Analysis and Management	2
Modelling Business Systems	4
Modelling Business Processes	4
Gathering the Requirements	3
Documenting and Managing Requirements	2
Modelling Requirements	4
Delivering the Requirements	2
Making a business and financial case	4
Implementing business change	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>40 Questions</b>

## Format of the Examination

This syllabus has an accompanying examination at which the candidate must achieve a pass score to gain the ISEB Foundation Certificate in Business Analysis.

Type	40 Question Multiple Choice
Duration	1 Hour
Pre-requisites	Accredited training is strongly recommended but is not a pre-requisite
Supervised / Invigilated	Yes
Open Book	No
Pass Mark	26/40
Distinction Mark	None
Delivery	Paper based examination and on-line examination via <a href="#">Pearson Vue</a>

## Trainer Qualification Criteria

Criteria:	Trainers must hold the ISEB Foundation Certificate in Business Analysis
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## Class Room Size

Trainer to candidate ratio:	1:16
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## Recommended Reading List

Business Analysis, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, D. Paul, D. Yeates and J. Cadle (eds.) BCS 2010.

**ISBN:** 9781906124618

**URL:** <http://shop.bcs.org>

## Definition of Terminology

Term	Writing the Question
Describe	The word describe can be used on its own or qualified in many ways e.g. describe how, describe when etc.
Explain	Very similar to describe but the emphasis here is to elicit specific points raised.
Discuss	This usually requires a candidates to provide a balanced view of a topic. This may include, where appropriate, the benefits and drawbacks of a particular idea.
Compare	Need to describe those areas where the two processes are similar in objectives, techniques etc.
Compare and Contrast	Need to cover both similarities and differences – see the separate terms for examples of each.
Define	Here a precise definition is required. A full and descriptive definition which shows the marker that a candidate fully understands the term is necessary to be awarded full marks.
Contrast	Need to describe those areas where the two processes are different, i.e. in scale, impact and timescales
Justify	Candidates will need to set out the reasoning behind a particular view. This would normally include a description of benefits that may result, the likely scenario if the action is not taken and the positive financial implications.
List	A simple numbered or bullet point list is needed.
List and Describe	More is needed here than a simple list. Each point will need to be expanded upon to include details of exactly what will be achieved, how this will come about and any other relevant details.
Outline	Similar to 'describe' but in overview form. This term is also often used where the markers know that a very full answer could be given if there were no time constraints, but where a high level – broad answer is sought in the limited time available. It can be better to cover a wide area in less detail than just a very narrow point or two in great depth.
Identify the benefits	The positive outcomes of a particular activity. For example to an individual or an organisation.
Problems	Problems are best broken down into cause and effect. Care should be exercised to identify which problems are being sought. Problems for implementing a process differ from problems of creating a process.