



Release Notes “Certified Tester Advanced Level Test Analyst Syllabus Version v3.1.0”

On October 23, 2020, the ISTQB® General Assembly voted on and approved the development of a new version v3.1.0 of the Syllabus Certified Tester Advanced Level Test Analyst (CTAL-TA). The goal was to implement the change requests submitted by stakeholders shortly after the launch of the 2019 version of the Syllabus. The new version should be available as soon as possible to limit the impact of the changes. The ISTQB® task force for the CTAL-TA has developed the new version according to the ISTQB® development process and released it on March 3, 2021.

This version is a minor update, because it has less than or equal to 5% changes of Learning Objectives, as described in section 3.6.1 in ISTQB® Accreditation Process, version 2.00 document. Specifically, CTAL-TA has 30 learning objectives, so only one of them (TA-3.2.3) is impacted by this update. Change requests that would impact other learning objectives have been postponed to the next major update.

A minor update does not require re-accreditation of training providers, but the accreditation body must review the changed parts of their material and confirm that adjustments to the Syllabus changes have been properly done.

The new version v3.1.0 of the syllabus comes into effect on the launch date March 3rd, 2021

All ISTQB® Member Boards which currently provide the CTAL-TA Syllabus in English must:

- 1) retire the previous version 2019 of the CTAL-TA Syllabus in English
- 2) for the English language only use the current version v3.1.0 of the CTAL-TA Syllabus in their market no later than 6 months after the launch date.

All ISTQB® Member Boards which currently provide exams in the CTAL-TA Syllabus version 2019 in English must ensure that all exam questions are valid in relation to the CTAL-TA Syllabus version v3.1.0 no later than 6 months after the launch date.

All ISTQB® Member Boards which currently provide CTAL-TA Syllabus version 2019 in their local language must:

- 1) retire their old CTAL-TA Syllabus version 2019 translated to their local language
- 2) and either provide an updated / new translation of CTAL-TA Syllabus version v3.1.0 in their local language
- 3) or only use the English version of the CTAL-TA Syllabus version v3.1.0 in their market no later than 9 months after the launch date.

All ISTQB® Member Boards which currently provide exams for the CTAL-TA Syllabus version 2019 in their local language must ensure that all exam questions are valid in relation to the CTAL-TA Syllabus version v3.1.0 no later than 9 months after the launch date.

The effect of this rule is that there will be no further activity at any ISTQB® Member Board regarding the previous 2019 version of the Syllabus from 6 months after the launch date in English, and from 9 months after the launch date in non-English.

What has been released

1. An updated clean version of the CTAL-TA Syllabus Version v3.1.0
2. An updated version of the CTAL-TA Syllabus v3.1.0 with visible change tracking related to the 2019 version
3. An updated version v2.3 of the Sample Exam Questions and Answers Set A for the CTAL-TA Syllabus v3.1.0
4. Release Notes (this document).

Change log

Training Providers, Exam Providers, Member Boards and Students of the Syllabus should be aware of the changes listed below. Additional all changes including textual changes not listed below, can be viewed in the CTAL-TA Syllabus version with change tracking.

- Chapter 1:
 - Section 1.2 (Testing in the Software Development Lifecycle): Wording improvements.
 - Section 1.5 (Test Analysis): Activities in aligned with the current CTFL test process.
- Chapter 2:
 - List of keywords: “risk level” removed.
 - Section 2.3 (Risk Assessment): Last two paragraphs on risk scale and risk level rating rephrased.
- Chapter 3:
 - Various wording improvements;
 - Section 3.2.1 (Equivalence Partitioning):
 - Removed the discussion of continuous and discrete value ranges because it does not add much value.
 - Extended the discussion from one single parameter to multiple parameters, to better cover the learning objective.
 - Section 3.2.2 (Boundary Value Analysis): Examples improved.
 - Section 3.2.3 (Decision Table Testing): Section completely re-written.
 - Aligned with the standard OMG-DMN Chapter 8;
 - Emphasis on:
 - Limited-entry vs. extended-entry decision tables;
 - Differentiating between test conditions (the rules) and test cases;
 - Collapsed decision tables (as promised in CTFL);
 - Removed the coverage of individual condition outcomes which has been introduced in the 2019 version.
 - Section 3.2.4 (State Transition Testing):

- N-switch coverage explained more clearly;
- Defect type “Wrong guard conditions” added.
- Section 3.2.7 (Use Case Testing): Details aligned with the current OMG-UML standard (version 2.5.1)
- Chapter 4:
 - Various wording improvements;
 - Section 4.2.3 (Functional Completeness Testing): “high-level business cases” replaced with “high-level business processes”
 - Section 4.2.5 (Usability Evaluation): The definitions of the sub-characteristics of usability replaced with a reference to the Glossary.
- Chapter 5:
 - Section 5.2.1 (Requirement Reviews): List item “Priority of each requirement” added.
- Chapter 6:
 - Minor wording improvements.
- Chapter 7 References:
 - Standards [OMG-UML] and [OMG-DMN] added;
 - References to ISTQB® and IREB documents updated;
 - Original paper of Chow (1978) on N-Switch coverage added;
 - Recent textbook of Forgács and Kovács (2019) on test design added.
- General:
 - The following terms have been replaced with their correct Glossary equivalent or the preferred term in CTFL:
 - “Agile projects” and other agile-related expressions replaced with “Agile software development”;
 - “appropriateness” replaced with “functional appropriateness” wherever the quality characteristic is meant;
 - “correctness” replaced with “functional correctness” wherever the quality characteristic is meant;
 - “equivalence class” replaced with “equivalence partition”;
 - “functionality” replaced with “functional suitability” wherever the quality characteristic is meant;
 - “keyword-driven automation” replaced with “keyword-driven testing”
 - “levels of testing” replaced with “test levels”;
 - “test coverage” as well as “testing coverage” replaced with “coverage”;
 - “testing activities” replaced with “test activities”;
 - “testing effort” replaced with “test effort”;

March 3, 2021

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