



ISTQB Accreditation Guidelines to Evaluate Advanced Training

Objectives

This document provides guidelines for the evaluation of ISTQB® Advanced Level Trainings by Accreditation authorities (National Boards or ISTQB recognized Accreditation boards). It is considered important that the trainings for Advanced Level courses are of an enhanced quality.

Trainings are made up of two main parts: course material and trainer (also referred to as “tutor” or “instructor”).

Overall Rules

There are five basis areas for the accreditation of course material. These basis areas are listed in order of precedence. Should a conflict arise, the order of listing determines which prevails. To achieve accreditation, the course materials must adequately cover these basis areas:

1. Traceability and Completeness:

The course material to be accredited must demonstrably cover all applicable learning objectives. Accreditation applications shall include a traceability matrix showing coverage of the learning objectives in terms of presentation and supporting materials.

2. Learning Objectives:

All K3 and K4 learning objectives require both lecture and exercises (see additional rules below) Advanced course materials must be consistent with the Foundation, except where attempting to do so would create a conflict with basis areas one through five (see also below).

3. Timings:

For each module, all chapters and sections for which time is allocated must be covered with at least that much time. Accreditation applications shall include a timing matrix showing the time allocated per chapter and section.

4. Content:

The material discussed in each chapter and section of the Advanced Level syllabus, must be presented if required for a given module. Depending on the modules and specific learning objectives, not all material must be discussed. However, the presentation, exercises, exercise solutions and other course materials must be consistent with the material in the Advanced Level syllabus.

General Distribution: Approved by the General Assembly for external release.

Note: For any module (Test Manager, Test Analyst, Technical Test Analyst), course material may cover additional learning objectives and/or topics (whether part of the ISTQB Advanced Level syllabus for another module or not), and/or additional terms. Accreditation authorities shall not consider these as part of the accreditation process unless contradictory with or derogatory towards the ISTQB program.

5. **Glossary:**

For any term defined, the course material must be consistent with the definition of that term in the version of the ISTQB Glossary referenced by the Advanced Level syllabus, or a later version.

In addition, the following rules apply.

6. All K2 and above learning objectives must contain at least one example.
7. All K3 and above learning objectives must have at least one practical, non-trivial exercise drawn from a realistic, software or systems example. For live classes, all exercises must be solved by the students in class (i.e., not as optional or required homework) and a solution reviewed in class by the instructor. For e-learning or correspondence classes, an exercise solution must be provided in the course material.

Note: Depending on the module and the context, the solution to an exercise may be different. It may be useful to add to the correct solution the reasons why the solution is correct (or incorrect), in order to stimulate the thought process of the trainees.

8. If material is developed to be re-used across modules, for topics applicable to more than one module, the materials must contain examples and exercises related to all the applicable modules. That is, if a trainer intends to provide a separate course containing all the material common to all modules, this course must have exercises and examples suitable for all modules.

Additional Rules & Services

1. Some small changes (corrections or more current examples) may occur without re-accreditation. Training providers should, however, submit these changes to the Accreditation authority.
2. Accreditation authorities may use sampling methods (i.e., evaluating some sections instead of the full course). If the sections selected are not adequate, the full course should be evaluated. When an Accreditation authority selects this method, a statistical tracking of the results shall be enforced (see also Audit of Advanced Level training providers and Withdrawal of Accreditation).

Note: These rules ensure that the level of training remains a credit to the ISTQB.

Evaluation of Slides

Volume of slides is considered at an average of 3 minutes per slide with content (title slides are considered “without content”). When the content of the slides is

unclear, presenter notes are to be associated to the slides and must be provided, if available.

Note: This rule ensures that the message provided is the one defined in the Advanced Level syllabus, and that training providers add value to the Advanced Level syllabus.

Evaluation of Examples

Any K2 (or above) LO must contain at least one example.

Examples must be adapted to the module being taught and must be drawn upon realistic, full-size software projects or systems; i.e., trainers should not use “toy” projects or non-computer-related projects. Ideally, examples should be substantiated and be drawn from real life occurrences.

Note: These rules ensure that the complexity of the real world is correctly represented.

Evaluation of Exercises and Answers

Exercises must be appropriate for the module and K-Level taught, adapted to the module being taught and must be drawn upon realistic, full-size software projects or systems (i.e., trainers should not use “toy” projects or non-computer-related projects). Ideally, exercises should be substantiated and be drawn from real life occurrences.

For each exercise, should also be provided (suggested) correction sheets. These correction sheets should not only provide the correct answer, but also pointers to the syllabus/course where the relevant topic is explained, and/or a summary explanation for each correct and incorrect answer.

Note: This rule ensures that the complexity of the real world is correctly understood.

Evaluation of Trainer Notes

If the slides are not self-explanatory, or a direct copy of the syllabus without supporting text, notes about what tutors are expecting to say on each section should be available. These “trainer notes” can be “presenter notes” in the slides (see above “Evaluation of slides”), or a separate document.

Note: When evaluating applications, you may see slides but no idea what words are going to be mentioned around them, especially if the slide does not clearly show its purpose. This rule enables consistency of delivery from all tutors (persons who deliver the course).

Evaluation of Trainer (Primary or Secondary Tutor)

Trainers should hold at least the certification that they are teaching. Accreditation authorities may select additional criteria to accredit trainers (e.g., previous teaching or consulting experience, etc.). If such is the case, the additional criteria will be made public before the accreditation request is sent. Accreditation authorities are reminded that training and (practical) testing

experience are required, and that presenting at conferences does not cover the same skills as lecturing on a training course.

Note: This rule ensures that the tutors have the necessary level of knowledge for teaching Advanced materials.

Evaluation of Additional Material

If trainers reference additional material (such as books not referenced in Advanced Level Syllabus), they shall provide that material to the Accreditation authority and ensure that this material is not in conflict with the Advanced Level and other ISTQB® Syllabi.

Note: This rule ensures that the Accreditation authority can check these additional sources for compliance.

Audit of Advanced Level Training Providers

From time to time, accreditation authorities (such as National Boards) may require access to the student evaluation sheets and/or to audit trainers of Advanced Level courses. If such an audit is requested, this must be made public as part of the accreditation process.

Withdrawal of Accreditation

Accreditation may be withdrawn (or not prolonged) if the success rate of the trainees for the module(s) taught is consistently and significantly below average. For purposes of guidance, consistent and significantly below average means two or more standard deviations below average on three courses in a row or seven out of ten courses in a row.

Note: This rule must, however, be evaluated by the Accreditation authority in relation with local situation.

Accreditation shall be withdrawn (or not prolonged) if the course provided is different from the one submitted to the Accreditation authority; (e.g., different slides, supporting or additional material, tutor without the adequate certification, etc.