CISSP EXAM PREP CLINIC
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The following are questions posed by participants during the University of Fairfax CISSP Exam Prep Clinic Webinars. Since some questions were similar we combined them and included answers to encompass all questions.

1. Can this presentation be viewed again at a later time?

    Yes, this presentation is available at:

    https://www.ufairfax.edu/members/live/?w=20150326163895

2. Can I get a copy of this webinar?

    Copies are not available; however you may watch the webinars as many times as you wish within the University of Fairfax Members area of the website.

3. From a self-study perspective, where can I obtain the most up to date study materials for the exam?

    As your first step, we recommend the Candidate Information Bulletin (CIB). https://www.isc2.org/exam-outline/.   You can find more materials at the University of Fairfax Certification Center. https://www.ufairfax.edu/certifications/

4.   Where can I download a current version of the CBK?

    The CBK is not a downloadable document, but you can download the CIB from the (ISC)^2 website:

    https://www.isc2.org/exam-outline/

5. What is the best book to self-study for CISSP exam?

    One of the best books for self-study for the CISSP Exam

    is: The Official (ISC)² Guide to the CISSP CBK:

    https://www.isc2.org/official-isc2-textbooks.aspx

6. I have been studying out of the 2nd Edition of the textbook, is that the most current?

    Yes; it includes the updated domain names for the new test.

7. Is there much difference between the official (ISC)² guide published 4 years ago vs. the one published last year?

   Both textbooks cover the 8 domains. They have different authors, so they will have different perspectives. An earlier textbook would also be appropriate for preparing for the exam.

8. What is the minimum experience that a candidate must have?

   You must possess a minimum of five years of direct full-time security work experience in two or more of the 8 (ISC)² information security domains (CBK). One year may be waived for having either a four-year college degree, a Master's degree in Information Security, or for possessing one of a number of other certifications from other organizations.

9. Even though I don't have InfoSec experience, I still can sit for the exam, but will only receive an Associate CISSP after passing, correct?

   Correct, the Associate of (ISC)² for CISSP designation is valid for a maximum of six years from the date (ISC)² notifies the candidate of having passed the exam. During those six years a candidate will need to obtain the required experience and submit the required endorsement form for certification as a CISSP. Upon completion of the professional experience requirements the certification will be converted to CISSP status.

10. Is there a difference between the CISSP exam and the Associate CISSP exam?

    No, it's the same exam. (ISC)² will award Associate CISSP status until you have the required 5 years of experience.

11. What is the ideal prep time required to study for the exam? i.e how many hours per day and how many days?

    For a qualified security professional with 5 years of experience, we think 3-6 months, with an official CISSP review class, should be sufficient to pass the exam. The number of hours a day you study will depend on what works best for you. We would recommend a minimum of an hour a day of study and possibly more as the test draws near.

12. Would you recommend taking the CompTIA Security + test as a primer before taking the CISSP?

    Sure, the more practice and preparation you have before taking the CISSP exam the better!

13. Is attending Seminars a requirement for CISSP Certification?

    No, it is not required to attend seminars in order to be certified.

14. Where can candidates find sample questions?

   (ISC)² provides about 350 of them when you take their official CBK review seminar. _The Official (ISC)² Guide to the CISSP CBK_, contains hundreds of additional questions:

   https://www.isc2.org/official-isc2-textbooks.aspx

   In addition, there are online resources where you can find exam preparation

   questions such as StudySCope on the (ISC)² web site:

   https://www.expresscertifications.com/isc2/

15. Do you recommend any test engines?

   The StudySCope application on the (ISC)² website:

   https://www.expresscertifications.com/isc2/

   Also the University of Fairfax offers the CISSP Assessment Test

   (CAT). https://www.ufairfax.edu/members/

16. To apply for the exam, do you need a current CISSP to vouch for you?

   Yes, to be certified you must have your qualifications endorsed by another CISSP in good standing. The endorser attests that the candidate's assertions regarding professional experience are true to the best of their knowledge and that the candidate is in good standing within the information security industry.

17. Does (ISC)^2 permit anyone holding credentials other than a CISSP to vouch for a CISSP candidate?

   Anyone holding one of the seven (ISC)² credentials listed on the (ISC)^2 website can endorse your admission form for the CISSP exam.

18. How long is the Certification valid, (how many years)?
   Do we need to renew it by passing an updated test?

   Once you pass the test, you will hold your CISSP for life, as long as meet CISSP continuing education requirements and dues requirements every three years. If you do not meet these continuing requirements, your CISSP certification will expire after three years. To meet your CISSP continuing education requirements, you must post a minimum of **40 CPE credits** yearly every year for a total of the **120 CPE credits** required in the three-year certification cycle. In addition you must pay your **Annual Maintenance fees of US $85 (AMF)** every year no later than the annual anniversary date of when you first earned your CISSP. If you not fulfill these requirements, your certification will expire after three years. If it expires, to reactivate your CISSP you must retake and pass the CISSP exam.

19. Is it a requirement to achieve a minimum score in each domain?

   The requirement is to achieve an overall score of 700 of 1000 points.

20. What happens if you receive a score just below 700?
    Such as 695 or 699... Will that still be a fail?

    Unfortunately, yes.

21. Do you receive your examination score when you pass?

    You receive a letter congratulating you for passing the examination if you get 70% or more correct. No score is provided.

22. If I fail the examination, how soon can I try again?

    You may retake the examination as soon as you feel you are ready.

23. If you have taken the exam and didn't pass and it's longer than one year before you try again, are you still eligible to take it again?

    Yes

24. You mentioned that if a candidate retakes the exam, the passing score must be higher than 70%?
    Is that correct?

    No, it is still 70% to pass; however more than 70% of second time test takers pass the exam.

25. If I failed to pass the exam by the end of 2011 and I retake the exam in 2012, will it be much different due to the planned changes in the CISSP exam starting next year?

    No, the topics are essentially the same, but the questions certainly will be different.

26. How many times can you retake the exam without having to pay again?

    You have to pay every time you retake the exam, but there is no waiting period. You will see a new set of questions during the retake exam.

27. How many tries do you have if you fail?

    You can try as many times as you wish.

28. If we took the exam earlier this year, can we get our results again?
    If so how or who do we speak with?

    (ISC)² Americas
    311 Park Place Blvd
    Suite 400
    Clearwater, Florida 33759
    USA
    Ph: +1.866.331.ISC2(4722)
    +1.727.785.0189
    membersupport@isc2.org
    https://www.isc2.org/contactus/

29. What is the cost of registering for the CISSP?

   If you register early it is $549. For late registration it is $599.

30. When will the next exam be given?
    Does (ISC)^2 have specific days for the exam year round like the CISA?

   They have year-round testing. You can look on:

   https://www.isc2.org/certification-register-now.aspx and find

   a time and place that works best for you.

31. How far in advance do you need to reserve a seat for the exam?

   Exams fill up. We recommend making a reservation as early as possible.

32. Is the CISSP exam only available in paper form?

   Yes, the CISSP exam is only given in paper form. (ISC)² is experimenting with computer based testing with other exams, but not with the CISSP exam at this time.

33. What do the item writers use for source material when creating the examination questions?

   The Candidate Information Bulletin (CIB) contains a list of references which are used by the exam writers to create the examination items.

34. Are any questions "trick type" questions that may have multiple correct answers?

   Like most tests, there may be more than one answer that would work, but you're looking for the best answer.

35. Has (ISC)² recently added any new topics to the CISSP Common Body of Knowledge?

   Yes. Cloud computing, advanced persistent threats, personnel security and safety, and effectiveness of software security have all been enhanced in the latest version of the (ISC)² CISSP CBK Review Seminar materials.

36. Will any abbreviations be clarified in any questions on the CISSP exam – like FAR & FRR.
    Yes, all acronyms will be spelled out.

37. What are the changes in Domains covered for CISSP in 2012?
    Will this affect the CISSP exam in 2012?
    If yes, how?

   The domain names are changing, but that will have almost no effect on the content. A vast majority, 97-98%, will remain the same. Additions will be topics like cloud computing, advanced persistent threat and software assurance.

38. With the release of the new version of the CISSP exam in January 2012, how significant are the changes to the test and questions?

Typically very little material changes from year to year, usually about 3%.

39. Will the new material such as cloud computing and APT be on a test in November?

APT (advanced persistent threat) and cloud computing are new topics in the CBK Review seminar handbook. You should be prepared for these topics to be included in the examination.

40. Will the CISSP exam have any questions on wireless, handheld computing gadgets (smart phones, iPads etc), incorporating into the enterprise network?

Certainly, mobile computing is an important part of the (ISC)² CBK.

41. How can we find out the new topics that have been added for study purposes?

The CIB will give the list of the topics. If you would like to know more, we would recommend that you attend an official (ISC)² review seminar for more information on the topics.

42. Should we expect questions on the Orange Book and ITSEC on the exam?

Yes, both topics are currently in CISSP CBK (Common Body of Knowledge.)

43. Are any of the 8 domains more important than others on the examination?

All domains are equally weighted on the examination.

44. Are the domains broken down equally or are there some domains that (ISC)² focuses on more?

Roughly, they are broken down evenly. Of the 225 scored items, you should expect approximately 20-25 questions from each domain.

45. Are all the questions worth the same number of points?

All questions are worth approximately 4 points. There may be a variance of .2 of a point.

46. Do the wrong responses have a value of 0 points?
Does guessing have a negative effect?

There is no penalty for guessing. If you don't answer a question or if you answer it incorrectly, you will receive zero points for the question.

47. Are questions divided by domains?

No, all questions are mixed together.

48. Are the domains of each question identified?

No.

49. Who creates and defines the ISO standards?

   The international organization of participating nations develops these standards.

50. Do we need to memorize ISO standard numbering?

   There are a handful of ISO numbers that are part of the common criteria of being a security professional. We would recommend that you memorize these.

51. Regarding the law and regulation chapter, do we need to learn the regulations for each country?

   No, the CISSP exam is country and technology neutral. There is no need to know the specific laws of each country.

52. Is it true that there are questions that do not count and do not affect whether you pass or fail?

   Yes, 25 trial questions for future versions of the CISSP exam are added to each exam, bringing the total number of questions to 250.

53. Do they let you know which questions are the trial questions in the exam?

   No, so you have to answer all 250 questions as if they all count.

54. If my native language is French, am I able to take the exam in that language?

   The CISSP examination is currently available in English only. You are permitted to take a foreign-language dictionary into the exam with you. (ISC)^2 also recommends that non–English speaking candidates pass the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) exam prior to attempting the CISSP examination.

55. How long do I have to complete the examination?

   6 hours.

56. What is the average time needed for the test?
    Do most take the full time?

   The amount of time that it takes to complete the test varies greatly by individual. We recommend taking as much time as you need up to the six hour maximum to complete the test. Do not rush.

57. What should I do if I have not received my examination Admission Letter from (ISC)²?

   Contact (ISC)² immediately. You need both the admission letter and a government-issued identification to take the examination.

58. What other security training does University of Fairfax offer?

    a. For NSA certification please go to page 3 on:
http://www.ufairfax.net/wp-content/uploads/Curriculum-Overview_GraduateCerts.pdf
    b. For more certification training please go to the Certification Training Center at:
http://www.ufairfax.net/certification-training-center/
    c. For advanced cyber security graduate degrees (MS and Doctorate) please go to:
http://www.ufairfax.net/academics/academic-programs/

Many participants greatly appreciated Dow Williamson, our instructor, for his knowledgeable responses to the questions posed. Please email us your assessment of the webinar at: info@ufairfax.edu and let us know how you did on your CISSP Exam.