
# Preparation Guide

Edition 202211

# Content

# 1. Overview

EXIN Agile Scrum Product Owner (ASPO.EN)

### Scope

The EXIN Agile Scrum Product Owner certification validates a candidate's knowledge on:

- Agile Way of Thinking
- Product Owner Role
- Managing the Product Backlog
- Complex Projects
- Adding Value

### Summary

EXIN Agile Scrum Product Owner is a certification that looks to confirm both skills and knowledge of the Agile principles and Scrum framework, specifically with the Product Owner role in mind.

Agile Scrum is about working together to successfully reach a goal. Agile methodologies are popular approaches in software development and are increasingly being used in other areas. Scrum practices include establishing cross-functional and self-managing teams, producing a working deliverable at the end of each iteration or sprint. This certification focuses on adopting Agile or Scrum in the workplace and taking on the role of Product Owner.

An EXIN Agile Scrum Product Owner certificate ensures that a candidate can successfully lead Agile Scrum projects in the context of an overall service and product lifecycle, in a way that adds the most value possible for the customer.

The Product Owner provides direction, makes final decisions, and ensures that the team knows the product goals. The Product Owner is actively engaged with, communicates well with, and listens carefully to arguments from the team. Within the context of the larger organizational objectives, the Product Owner provides the vision, but also the boundaries within which this vision must be realized. This is achieved by creating, refining and ordering the business' value-driven product backlog. It is the Product Owner's responsibility to make sure the project creates the intended customer value and supports organizational objectives.

A good Product Owner understands the business and the market, is the voice of the customer (internal or external), manages the product or service lifecycle and balances the need for both functional and non-functional requirements.

## Context

The EXIN Agile Scrum Product Owner certification is part of the EXIN Agile Scrum qualification program.


## Target Group

In particular, the certification is suitable for professionals working in an Agile context and who have the ambition of assuming the role of Product Owner.

## Requirements for Certification

- Successful completion of the EXIN Agile Scrum Product Owner exam.
- Accredited EXIN Agile Scrum Product Owner training, including completion of the Practical Assignments.

Knowledge of Scrum terminology, for instance through the EXIN Agile Scrum Foundation exam, is strongly recommended.

### Examination Details

| | |
|---|---|
| Examination type: | Multiple-choice questions |
| Number of questions: | 40 |
| Pass mark: | 65% (26/40 questions) |
| Open book: | No |
| Notes: | No |
| Electronic equipment/aides permitted: | No |
| Exam duration: | 90 minutes |

The Rules and Regulations for EXIN's examinations apply to this exam.

### Bloom Level

The EXIN Agile Scrum Product Owner certification tests candidates at Bloom Levels 2, 3 and 4 according to Bloom's Revised Taxonomy:

- Bloom Level 2: Understanding – a step beyond remembering. Understanding shows that candidates comprehend what is presented and can evaluate how the learning material may be applied in their own environment. This type of questions aims to demonstrate that the candidate is able to organize, compare, interpret and choose the correct description of facts and ideas.
- Bloom Level 3: Application – shows that candidates have the ability to make use of information in a context different from the one in which it was learned. This type of questions aims to demonstrate that the candidate is able to solve problems in new situations by applying acquired knowledge, facts, techniques and rules in a different, or new way. These questions usually contains a short scenario.
- Bloom Level 4: Analysis – shows that candidates have the ability to break learned information into its parts to understand it. This Bloom level is mainly tested in the Practical Assignments. The Practical Assignments aim to demonstrate that the candidate is able to examine and break information into parts by identifying motives or causes, make inferences and find evidence to support generalizations.

## Training

### Contact Hours

The recommended number of contact hours for this training course is 14. This includes practical assignments, exam preparation and short breaks. This number of hours does not include lunch breaks, homework and the exam.

### Indication Study Effort

112 hours (4 ECTS), depending on existing knowledge.

### Training Organization

You can find a list of our Accredited Training Organizations at www.exin.com.

# 2. Exam Requirements

The exam requirements are specified in the exam specifications. The following table lists the topics of the module (exam requirements) and the subtopics (exam specifications).

| Exam Requirements | Exam Specifications | Weight |
|---|---|---|
| **1. Agile Way of Thinking** | | **10%** |
| | 1.1 Agile Concepts | 10% |
| **2. Product Owner Role** | | **17.5%** |
| | 2.1 Tasks and Responsibilities | 12.5% |
| | 2.2 Other roles (Scrum Master, Developers) | 5% |
| **3. Managing the Product Backlog** | | **40%** |
| | 3.1 From Vision to Product Backlog | 10% |
| | 3.2 User Stories (Including Epics, Non-Functional and Functional Requirements) | 10% |
| | 3.3 Creating Sprint Backlogs | 2.5% |
| | 3.4 Tracking and Communicating Progress | 10% |
| | 3.5 Staying in Control and Delivering Value | 7.5% |
| **4. Complex Projects** | | **20%** |
| | 4.1 Scaling Agile Projects | 7.5% |
| | 4.2 Suitability of Agile for Different Types of Projects | 5% |
| | 4.3 Managing Complex Product or Service Backlogs | 7.5% |
| **5. Adding Value** | | **12.5%** |
| | 5.1 Adding Business Value to the Project | 7.5% |
| | 5.2 Acting as the Voice of the Customer (VoC) | 5% |
| | **Total** | **100%** |

## Exam Specifications

**1 Agile Way of Thinking**

1.1 Agile Concepts

The candidate can…

1.1.1 explain the Agile way of thinking.

1.1.2 explain how Agile brings predictability and flexibility.

1.1.3 describe how to establish continuous improvement.

1.1.4 differentiate other Agile frameworks and methodologies: Crystal, Extreme Programming (XP), DSDM, LeSS, SAFe and Kanban.

**2 Product Owner Role**

2.1 Tasks and Responsibilities

The candidate can…

2.1.1 explain which tasks and responsibilities belong to the Product Owner role.

2.1.2 analyze a scenario for the best solution to a problem typical to Product Owners.

2.1.3 explain the role of the Product Owner in the different Scrum events.

2.2 Other roles (Scrum Master, Developers)

The candidate can…

2.2.1 explain all roles within the Scrum framework.

**3 Managing the Product Backlog**

3.1 From Vision to Product Backlog

The candidate can…

3.1.1 explain how to create the service or product goal.

3.1.2 explain how to create a product roadmap for either a service or a product.

3.1.3 explain why a good definition of done (DoD) is so important.

3.2 User Stories (Including Epics, Non-Functional and Functional Requirements)

The candidate can…

3.2.1 explain how to write good user stories for services or products.

3.2.2 analyze a product backlog to identify epic stories (large, unrefined items).

3.2.3 analyze a scenario for non-functional requirements of services and products.

3.2.4 explain how to manage non-functional requirements of services and products.

3.3 Creating Sprint Backlogs

The candidate can…

3.3.1 explain how to create a sprint backlog.

3.4 Tracking and Communicating Progress

The candidate can…

3.4.1 identify impediments, deviations, roadblocks and other obstacles that influence the progress.

3.4.2 explain how to create information radiators, how to interpret them and how to act on the results.

3.4.3 explain how to interpret commonly used tracking methods (burn-down chart, velocity, et cetera).

3.5 Staying in Control and Delivering Value

The candidate can…

3.5.1 explain how to manage issues and bugs and how to inform stakeholders.

3.5.2 explain how to establish continuous delivery.

## 4 Complex Projects

4.1 Scaling Agile Projects

The candidate can…

4.1.1 explain how to use the product backlog in a scaled environment.

4.1.2 explain how to scale Scrum using Nexus.

4.1.3 explain how to scale the Product Owner function.

4.2 Suitability of Agile for Different Types of Projects

The candidate can…

4.2.1 explain in which cases it is not possible to use Agile.

4.2.2 explain why having a small team is beneficial for any project.

4.3 Managing Complex Product or Service Backlogs

The candidate can…

4.3.1 explain different ways to manage complex product or service backlogs.

4.3.2 propose a way to manage a complex product or service backlog in a given scenario.

## 5 Adding Value

5.1 Adding Business Value to the Project

The candidate can…

5.1.1 explain what business value is.

5.1.2 explain the relationship between business value and product goal.

5.1.3 explain the relationship between business value and improved profitability.

5.2 Acting as the Voice of the Customer (VoC)

The candidate can…

5.2.1 explain how to work with customers, users and other stakeholders.

# 3. List of Basic Concepts

This chapter contains the terms and abbreviations with which candidates should be familiar.

Please note that knowledge of these terms alone does not suffice for the exam; the candidate must understand the concepts and be able to provide examples.

accountability[1]
ADAPT (awareness, desire, ability, promotion and transfer)
Agile estimation
Agile Manifesto
Agile planning
burn-down bar chart
burn-down chart
burn-up chart
business value
chief Product Owner
coach
coarse-grained user story
collocated team
commitment
continuous delivery
continuous improvement
continuous integration
customer/user needs
daily scrum
definition of done (DoD)
Developers
distributed team
epic user story
estimation
feedback
fine-grained user story
functional requirement
Gantt chart
ideal hours/ideal days
impediment
increment
information radiator
Kanban board
minimal marketable product (MMP)
minimal viable product (MVP)
MoSCoW
non-functional requirement
other Agile frameworks:
- Crystal
- Extreme Programming (XP)
- DSDM
- LeSS
- SAFe
- Kanban
- pair programming

planning poker
potentially shippable
product backlog
product backlog item
product goal
Product Owner
product roadmap
refinement (of the product backlog)
release planning
responsibility[2]
return on investment (RoI)
roadblock
scaling
scrum board
Scrum Master
Scrum team
servant leader
sprint
sprint backlog
sprint backlog item
sprint goal
story point
task board
test-driven development
timebox/timeboxing
user story
velocity (of the team)
voice of the customer (VoC)
Waterfall
work-in-progress (WiP)

[1] The Scrum Guide makes a distinction between accountability and responsibility. Accountability means 'making sure something happens'. A person who is accountable may delegate the task.
[2] The Scrum Guide makes a distinction between accountability and responsibility. Responsibility means 'doing a certain task'. A person who is responsible executes the task as part of their work.

# 4. Literature

## Exam Literature

The knowledge required for the exam is covered in the following literature:

**A.** Johann Botha
**The EXIN Handbook for Scrum Masters and Product Owners**
EXIN (2021)
ISBN: 9789076531007
Go to www.exin.com. Click on 'Professionals' and then on 'Certifications' to find the certification. The free download can be found under 'Required reading'.

## Additional Literature

**B.** Ken Schwaber & Jeff Sutherland
**The Scrum Guide**
(most recent version)

### Comment

Additional literature is for reference and depth of knowledge only.

## Literature Matrix

| Exam Requirements | Exam Specifications | Reference |
|---|---|---|
| **1. Agile Way of Thinking** | | |
| | 1.1 Agile Concepts | Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 10<br>Appendix A |
| **2. Product Owner Role** | | |
| | 2.1 Tasks and Responsibilities | Chapters 5, 6, 7, 10 |
| | 2.2 Other roles (Scrum Master, Developers) | Chapter 5 |
| **3. Managing the Product Backlog** | | |
| | 3.1 From Vision to Product Backlog | Chapters 5, 6 |
| | 3.2 User Stories (Including Epics, Non-Functional and Functional Requirements) | Chapters 6, 7 |
| | 3.3 Creating Sprint Backlogs | Chapters 5, 7 |
| | 3.4 Tracking and Communicating Progress | Chapters 5, 7, 10, 14 |
| | 3.5 Staying in Control and Delivering Value | Chapters 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13<br>Appendix B |
| **4. Complex Projects** | | |
| | 4.1 Scaling Agile Projects | Chapters 2, 6, 11, 12, 14 |
| | 4.2 Suitability of Agile for Different Types of Projects | Chapters 1, 2, 5, 13 |
| | 4.3 Managing Complex Product or Service Backlogs | Chapters 9, 11, 12 |
| **5. Adding Value** | | |
| | 5.1 Adding Business Value to the Project | Chapters 5, 6 |
| | 5.2 Acting as the Voice of the Customer (VoC) | Chapters 1, 5, 6 |
| | | |


## Contact EXIN

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