

Preparation Guide

Edition 202408

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Content

1. Overview 4
2. Exam requirements 7
3. Levels of Knowledge / SFIA Levels 17
4. e-CF mapping 18
5. Literature 19

1. Overview

EXIN BCS Business Analysis Practice (BAP.EN)

Scope

Upon successful completion of the certification, candidates will be able to demonstrate an understanding of:

- the strategic context for business analysis.
- how and when to select and apply a range of techniques and tools to analyze the current state of a business.
- how to establish the target state of a business.
- the value of ongoing stakeholder engagement and analysis.
- the purpose and content of the business case.

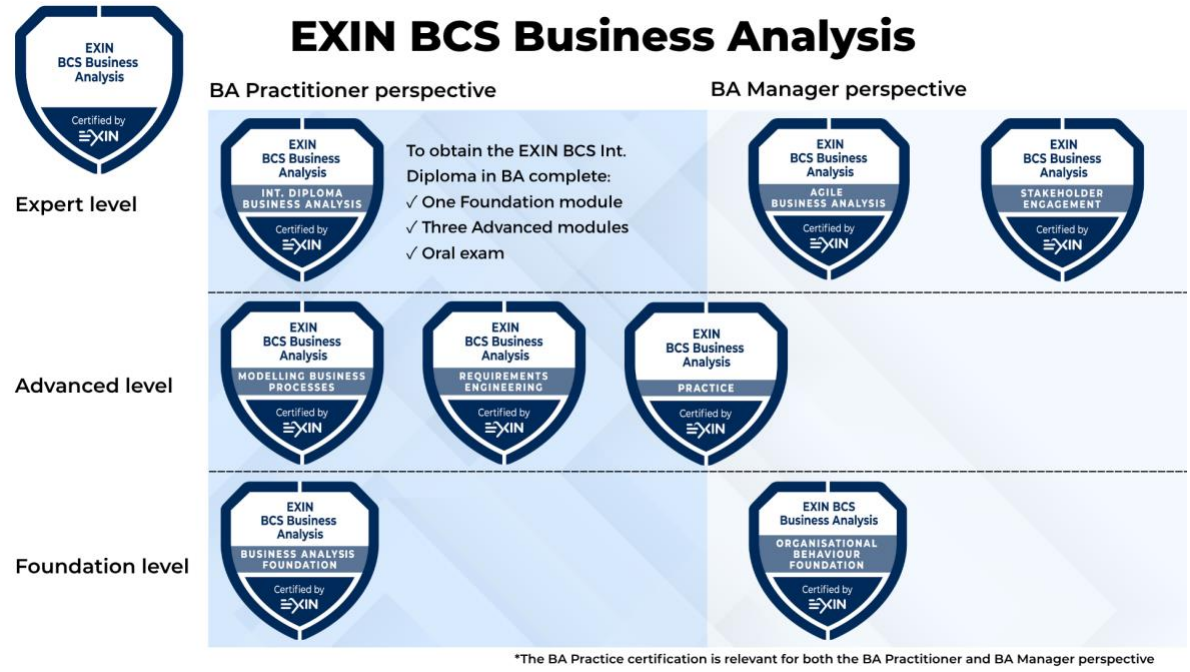
Summary

The EXIN BCS Business Analysis Practice is for candidates who want to develop or further their skills in the understanding and application of the skills required in pre-project work.

The learning in this certification is shaped to place emphasis on valuable business analysis skills and tools, rather than the business analyst role. Focusing on these skills should ensure alignment with business objectives, strategic business analysis and a fit-for-purpose solution.

Context

The EXIN BCS Business Analysis Practice certification is part of the EXIN BCS Business Analysis qualification program.



Target group

This certification has been designed to provide valuable learning for those in roles such as business analyst, business architect, business systems analyst, data analyst, enterprise analyst, management consultant, process analyst, product manager, product owner, project manager, and systems analyst. This certification provides value for candidates in entry-level, associate and management level roles.

Requirements for certification

- Successful completion of the EXIN BCS Business Analysis Practice exam.

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:	60 minutes

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

Bloom level

The EXIN BCS Business Analysis Practice certification tests candidates at Bloom level 3 and 4 according to Bloom's revised taxonomy:

- 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 contain 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

Candidates can choose to study for this exam from one of two ways: by either attending a training course provided by an EXIN accredited training organization, or by self-study. Accredited training is strongly recommended.

Contact hours

The recommended number of contact hours for this training course is 18. This includes group assignments, exam preparation and short breaks. This number of hours does not include lunch breaks, homework and the exam.

Indication study effort

84 hours (3 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. Strategic context for business analysis		**20%**
	1.1 Explain the purpose of an organization's vision	
	1.2 Apply a suitable technique to analyze the internal environment of an organization	
	1.3 Apply a suitable technique to analyze the external environment of an organization	
	1.4 Analyze a given scenario and apply a SWOT analysis	
	1.5 Apply tools to measure performance	
2. Analyzing and managing stakeholders		**20%**
	2.1 Explain the activities required to engage stakeholders	
	2.2 Analyze a given scenario and identify stakeholder categories using the stakeholder wheel	
	2.3 Apply CATWOE to analyze stakeholder perspectives and identify similarities and differences	
	2.4 Analyze a given scenario and map stakeholders using the power/interest grid	
	2.5 Analyze a given scenario and apply appropriate stakeholder management strategies	
3. Analyzing the current state		**15%**
	3.1 Analyze a given scenario and identify suitable methods to research the business situation	
	3.2 Analyze a given scenario and identify a suitable quantitative or qualitative investigation technique	
	3.3 Identify advantages and disadvantages of the different investigation techniques	
	3.4 Apply tools to represent the current business situation	
4. Establishing the target state		**15%**
	4.1 Analyze a given scenario and identify aspects of a business activity model (BAM)	
	4.2 Identify the five activities included in a BAM	
	4.3 Explain the need for a consensus BAM	
	4.4 Explain the three types of business events	
	4.5 Explain the use of a target operating model (TOM)	
5. Designing and defining the solution		**15%**
	5.1 Analyze a given scenario and identify the stages of design thinking	
	5.2 Describe the use of divergent and convergent thinking	
	5.3 Explain the process of gap analysis	
	5.4 Analyze a given scenario and identify the different areas of feasibility	

6. Developing a business case		**15%**
	6.1 Explain the rationale for the development of a business case	
	6.2 Analyze a given scenario and identify the contents of a business case	
	6.3 Identify tangible and intangible costs and benefits	
	6.4 Identify risks and their potential impact	
	6.5 Analyze a given scenario and explain the use of appraisal techniques.	
	6.6 Explain the relationship between the business case and business change lifecycle	
	Total	**100%**

Exam specifications

1 Strategic context for business analysis

The candidate can…

1.1 explain the purpose of an organization's vision.

Indicative content

a. Defines target state

b. Purpose and direction

Guidance

A vision is a statement that defines the ideal state for the organization. The organization's vision exists to provide clarity on their purpose and reason for existing, whereas the mission provides guidance on how the organization should run and can assist with current and future planning. Both should be used to inform project objectives and strategy.

1.2 apply a suitable technique to analyze the internal environment of an organization.

Indicative content

a. VMOST

b. Resource audit

Guidance

VMOST – vision, mission, objectives, strategy, and tactics. Resource audit can be applied by considering and analyzing resource types – physical, financial, human, know-how, and reputation. These techniques may be applied to analyze the strengths and weaknesses which exist internally in an organization.

1.3 apply a suitable technique to analyze the external environment of an organization.

Indicative content

a. Porter's Five Forces

b. PESTLE

Guidance

The Porter's Five Forces model and the PESTLE framework can be used to analyze the opportunities and threats for an organization. Porter's Five Forces – threat of new entrants, bargaining power or suppliers, bargaining powers of buyers, threat of substitute products and industry competitors. PESTLE – political, economic, sociocultural, technological, legal, and environmental factors.

1.4 analyze a given scenario and apply a SWOT analysis.

Indicative content

a. Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats

b. Internal and external

Guidance

A SWOT analysis is used to analyze the current state of both the internal and external organizational environment. Identifying the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats which exist in an organization helps the analyst to understand the strategic context around their activity.

Candidates should expect to prepare a SWOT analysis by identifying and allocating entries (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) into appropriate fields on a two-by-two matrix.

1.5 apply tools to measure performance.

Indicative content

a. Balanced scorecard (BSC)
b. Critical success factors (CSFs)
c. Key performance indicators (KPIs)
d. Targets

Guidance

Performance measurement tools are used to establish how an organization is performing in its current state, against the organization's objectives and strategy. Balanced scorecard (balanced business scorecard, BSC) is made up of four performance areas – financial, internal business process, learning and growth and customer.

2 Analyzing and managing stakeholders

The candidate can…

2.1 explain the activities required to engage stakeholders.

Indicative content

a. Identify stakeholders
b. Challenge and inform stakeholders
c. Negotiate stakeholder conflicts
d. Engage with stakeholders
e. Written and verbal communication
f. Support stakeholders and facilitate meetings and record outputs

Guidance

A business analyst can provide value by supporting business change through effective and sustainable stakeholder collaboration, communication, and effective stakeholder relationship management.

Stakeholder engagement also comprises of other key skills that are becoming increasingly important in modern workplaces and will continue to be a part of future ways of working. In particular, collaboration, emotional intelligence, and cultural awareness. These skills will offer an analyst an extra layer of understanding when understanding stakeholder needs and perspectives.

2.2 analyze a given scenario and identify stakeholder categories using the stakeholder wheel.

Indicative content

a. Partners
b. Suppliers
c. Regulators
d. Employees
e. Managers
f. Owners
g. Competitors
h. Customers

Guidance

Identifying stakeholders is a key first step in stakeholder management, and the stakeholder wheel can be used to appropriately categorize them. Candidates should be able to recognize descriptions of stakeholders and the relevant categories.

2.3 apply CATWOE to analyze stakeholder perspectives and identify similarities and differences.

Indicative content

a. Customers
b. Actors
c. Transformation
d. World view
e. Owner
f. Environment

Guidance

When implementing change within a business the business analyst may understand stakeholder differences by defining and analyzing each CATWOE element. Individual stakeholder perspectives on transformation, customers, actors, owners, and the environment may vary due to their world view. A CATWOE can be used to uncover areas of disagreement and encourage stakeholders to analyze their own differences in order to consider the future direction of a business.

2.4 analyze a given scenario and map stakeholders using the power/interest grid.

Indicative content

a. Power/interest grid

Guidance

The power/interest grid is a stakeholder analysis tool, used to map stakeholders according to their level of interest in a project and the amount of power or influence they have to support or block a project.

Each stakeholder should be plotted on the power/interest grid using one of nine possible combinations that combine a level of interest (low, some, high) with their level of power (low, some, high).

2.5 analyze a given scenario and apply appropriate stakeholder management strategies.

Indicative content

a. Watch, keep satisfied, constant active management, keep onside, keep informed, ignore
b. RACI

Guidance

Based on the Power and Interest grid, stakeholders require different management strategies, and this too is likely to change as the project progresses. RACI charts may also be used to understand how the level of involvement from a stakeholder differs at each project stage by categorizing a stakeholder as responsible, accountable, consulted, or informed during each activity.

3 Analyzing the current state

The candidate can…

3.1 analyze a given scenario and identify suitable methods to research the business situation.

Indicative content

a. Background research

Guidance

To establish the current state, research should be completed into the organization's performance, structure, and ways of working. This information may be sourced from websites, company reports or internal documentation.

3.2 analyze a given scenario and identify a suitable quantitative or qualitative investigation technique.

Indicative content

a. Interviews
b. Workshops
c. Observation
d. Document analysis
e. Scenario analysis
f. Surveys/questionnaires
g. Data analysis

Guidance

All investigation techniques can be classed as either quantitative or qualitative. Candidates should recognize when a situation requires either or both types of techniques, and from this, be able to select a technique which is most suitable to a given circumstance.

3.3 identify advantages and disadvantages of the different investigation techniques.

Indicative content

a. Environment
b. Project

Guidance

There are advantages and disadvantages to using any given investigation technique. Advantages and disadvantages can be dependent on the size of a domain to be investigated, location of the analyst and/or the domain to be investigated, the number of stakeholders to keep informed and the nature of the information being investigated.

3.4 apply tools to represent the current business situation.

Indicative content

a. Customer journey maps
b. Rich pictures
c. Empathy maps
d. Mind maps

Guidance

These tools exist to allow the analyst to record the findings of their investigations. Customer journey maps and empathy maps specifically show a process from the customer's perspective. Both can be used in conjunction with user roles and personas to provide further insight into the customer experience. Rich pictures and mind maps are useful in offering a visual representation of a whole solution, in a simple format. Candidates can expect to be examined on the application of these tools – using information to complete them or drawing information from them.

4 Establishing the target state

The candidate can…

4.1 analyze a given scenario and identify aspects of a business activity model (BAM).

Indicative content

a. How to construct
b. What, not how

Guidance

A BAM is used to model activity, from a specific stakeholder perspective. Multiple BAMs are likely to be created to represent all stakeholder perspectives. BAMs will be used alongside target operating models (TOMs) and gap analyses to establish a view of the target state.

4.2 identify the five activities included in a BAM.

Indicative content

a. Planning
b. Enabling
c. Doing
d. Monitoring
e. Controlling

Guidance

Within a BAM, there are five categories of activity to record, as shown. Candidates should expect to be examined on the use of these five categories by identifying which activities align with which category.

4.3 explain the need for a consensus BAM.

Indicative content

a. Stakeholder buy-in
b. Agreed perspective

Guidance

As above, multiple BAMs are created in the first instance, with the objective being to create one, consensus BAM which all stakeholders find agreeable. This consensus BAM is a single model (a shared perspective) of what the business activity should look like and is a key part of stakeholder buy in and engagement. The analyst should apply the skills mentioned in this syllabus to manage the creation of the consensus BAM.

4.4 explain the three types of business events.

Indicative content

a. Internal
b. External
c. Time-based

Guidance

When modelling a business process, there are three types of events which should be recorded, including internal – things which happen inside the business, external – things which happen outside of the business, and time-based – events which occur with advance warning or regular frequency. Candidates can expect to be examined on these event types and their explanations and descriptions.

4.5 explain the use of a target operating model (TOM).

Indicative content

a. POPIT
b. Gap analysis

Guidance

A TOM is created to show how a business should be operating, to achieve their target state. The POPIT model (People, Organization, Process, Information and Technology) is often used a basis for creating a TOM. By establishing the TOM, gap analyses can then be used to compare the current and target state.

5 Designing and defining the solution

The candidate can…

5.1 analyze a given scenario and identify the stages of design thinking.

Indicative content

a. Empathize
b. Define
c. Ideate
d. Prototype
e. Evaluate
f. Create

Guidance

Design thinking is an iterative way of identifying, exploring, and testing solutions, while focusing on the customer need. Candidates should expect to be examined on the stages of design thinking and the techniques used within them.

5.2 describe the use of divergent and convergent thinking.

Indicative content

a. Double diamond model

Guidance

As part of design thinking, the double diamond model of discover, define, develop, deliver, uses the concepts of divergent thinking – where all ideas are considered – and convergent thinking – where ideas are refined to explore and define solutions.

5.3 explain the process of gap analysis.

Indicative content

a. Comparing current and target state
b. Developing options and process

Guidance

Gap analysis is used to identify differences between the current and target state, by comparing tools and models mentioned in earlier topics such as rich pictures (current state) and TOM (target state). Where gaps are identified, the analyst should explore options to address these gaps.

5.4 analyze a given scenario and identify the different areas of feasibility.

Indicative content

a. Business
b. Technical
c. Financial

Guidance

Feasibility must be considered when considering a solution, with three key areas to consider.

Business – does the proposed solution align with the business strategy and objectives?

Technical – does the technology exist and is it available to deliver the solution?

Financial – can the organization afford to fund the solution?

6 Developing a business case

The candidate can…

6.1 explain the rationale for the development of a business case.

Indicative content

a. Purpose and use

Guidance

A business case is created only after investigation into potential solutions has taken place, but before any commitment is made to a solution. The purpose of a business case is to present multiple courses of action to decision maker and make recommendations.

6.2 analyze a given scenario and identify the contents of a business case.

Indicative content

a. Introduction
b. Management summary
c. Description of current state
d. Options considered
- Analysis of costs and benefits
- Impact assessment
- Risk assessment

e. Recommendation

Guidance

A business case should contain each of these elements, providing decision makers with enough detail to agree or disagree with the proposed recommendations. Candidates can expect to be examined on this list of contents and the type of information included in each section.

While not listed here, a project sponsor will often appear on a business case to support the project and demonstrate commitment from an executive level to the recommendations presented.

6.3 identify tangible and intangible costs and benefits.

Indicative content

a. Cost benefit analysis

Guidance

The costs and benefits of a solution can be categorized as tangible or intangible. Tangible in this context meaning measurable or verifiable. Candidates can expect to be examined on the types of costs and benefits which would be included in the business case, and whether they would be categorized as tangible or otherwise. Examples include: staff training, recruitment, improved communication, customer satisfaction.

6.4 identify risks and their potential impact.

Indicative content

a. Types of risk
b. Risk analysis
c. Risk impact

Guidance

Risks must be included for options presented in the business case. These risks should be analyzed, and their probability, impact, countermeasures, and owner must be recorded as part of the risk assessment.

6.5 analyze a given scenario and explain the use of appraisal techniques.

Indicative content

a. Payback

b. Discounted cash flow and net present value

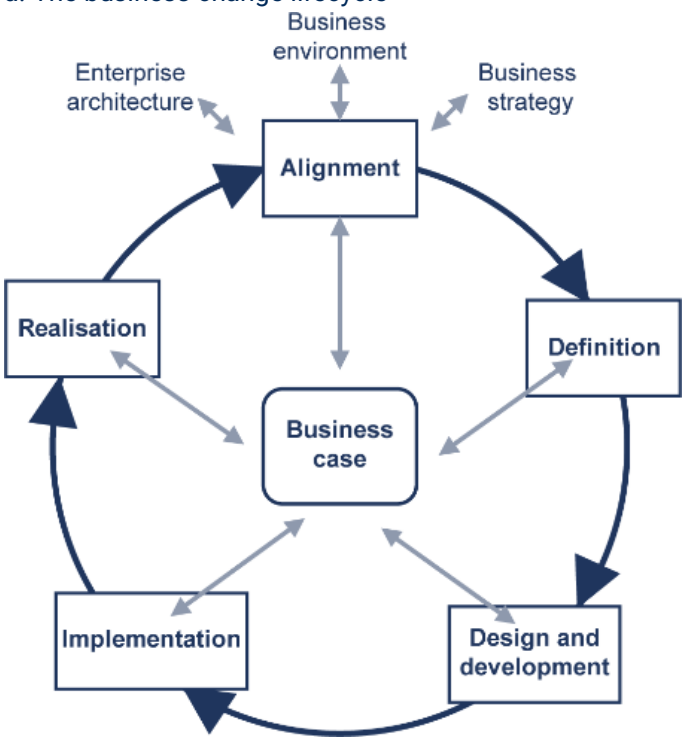
Guidance

In a business case, the financial impact of paying for a solution (or not taking any action) must be considered. A payback calculation can be completed to show the costs of the solution, and the financial benefits over time. Discounted cash flow must be considered; this addresses the time value of money and how the costs and benefits may vary due to external economic factors. Net present value must also be considered; this uses discounted cash flow to discount future monies back to today's values. The net present value takes into account the time value of money and presents the value of investment in today's terms.

6.6 explain the relationship between the business case and business change lifecycle.

Indicative content

a. The business change lifecycle



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Guidance

The business case is central in the business change lifecycle. As demonstrated in the diagram, the five stages (alignment, definition, design and development, implementation, and realization) all feed into the business case, and likewise, the contents of the business case will impact the activity at each stage depending on its contents and recommendations.

3. Levels of Knowledge / SFIA Levels

This award provides candidates with the level of knowledge highlighted within the table, enabling candidates to develop the skills to operate successfully at the levels of responsibility indicated.

Level	Levels of Knowledge	Levels of Skill and Responsibility (SFIA)
K7		Set strategy, inspire, and mobilize
K6	Evaluate	Initiate and influence
K5	Synthesize	Ensure and advise
K4	Analyze	Enable
K3	Apply	Apply
K2	Understand	Assist
K1	Remember	Follow

SFIA Plus

This syllabus has been linked to the SFIA knowledge, skills and behaviors required at level 4 for an individual working in Requirements Definition and Management.

KSB01	Acquiring a proper understanding of a problem or situation by breaking it down systematically into its component parts and identifying the relationships between these parts. Selecting the appropriate method/tool to resolve the problem and reflecting critically on the result, so that what is learnt is identified and assimilated.
KSC04	Applying techniques which help investigating, analyzing, modelling, and recording a business area or system of interest. Example, but not limited to: business environment analysis and process modelling.
KSC19	Applying standards, practices, codes, and assessment and certification programs relevant to the IT industry and the specific organization or business domain modelling.
KSC97	Performing a proof of concept or prototyping exercise to demonstrate or evaluate the feasibility and potential benefits of applying a particular technological business change in order to meet a business need.
KSD04	The selection and application of information elicitation methods, tools and techniques which are appropriate to the information required and the sources available. Examples, but not limited to: focus groups and surveys/questionnaires.
KSD07	Organizational structures: their mission, objectives, strategies, and tactics adopted by organizations; measures of performance such as critical success factors and key performance indicators; organizational cultures and cultural dimensions.
KSD25	Methods and techniques for writing clear, accessible, and persuasive business and technical reports.
KSD85	Establishing relationships, analyzing perspectives, and managing stakeholders from a variety of backgrounds and disciplines. Adapting stakeholder engagement style to meet the needs of different audiences. The identification of key business stakeholders and an assessment of their level of power and interests, and their perspectives to inform the way(s) in which they should be considered and managed.

Further detail around the SFIA Levels can be found at www.bcs.org/levels.

4. e-CF mapping

All e-Competence Framework competences related to the EXIN BCS Business Analysis Practice certification can be found below. Also indicated is the level of the competence and whether the competence is covered entirely, partially or superficially. For more information about the e-CF, please visit https://itprofessionalism.org/ or contact EXIN.



e-Competence Level		1	2	3	4	5
A.1.	IS and Business Strategy Alignment					
A.3.	Business Plan Development					
D.11.	Needs Identification					
E.2.	Project and Portfolio Management					
E.4.	Relationship Management					
E.7.	Business Change Management					

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5. Literature

Exam literature

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

A. Debra Paul and James Cadle
Business Analysis
BCS (4th edition, July 2020)
ISBN: 978-1-78017-510-2
https://shop.bcs.org/store/221/detail/workgroup?id=3-221-9781780175102

Additional literature

B. James Cadle, Debra Paul, Jonathan Hunsley, Adrian Reed, David Beckham, and Paul Turner
Business Analysis Techniques: 123 essential tools for success
BCS (August 2021)
ISBN: 978-1-78017-569-0

Comment

Additional literature is for reference and depth of knowledge only.



Contact EXIN

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