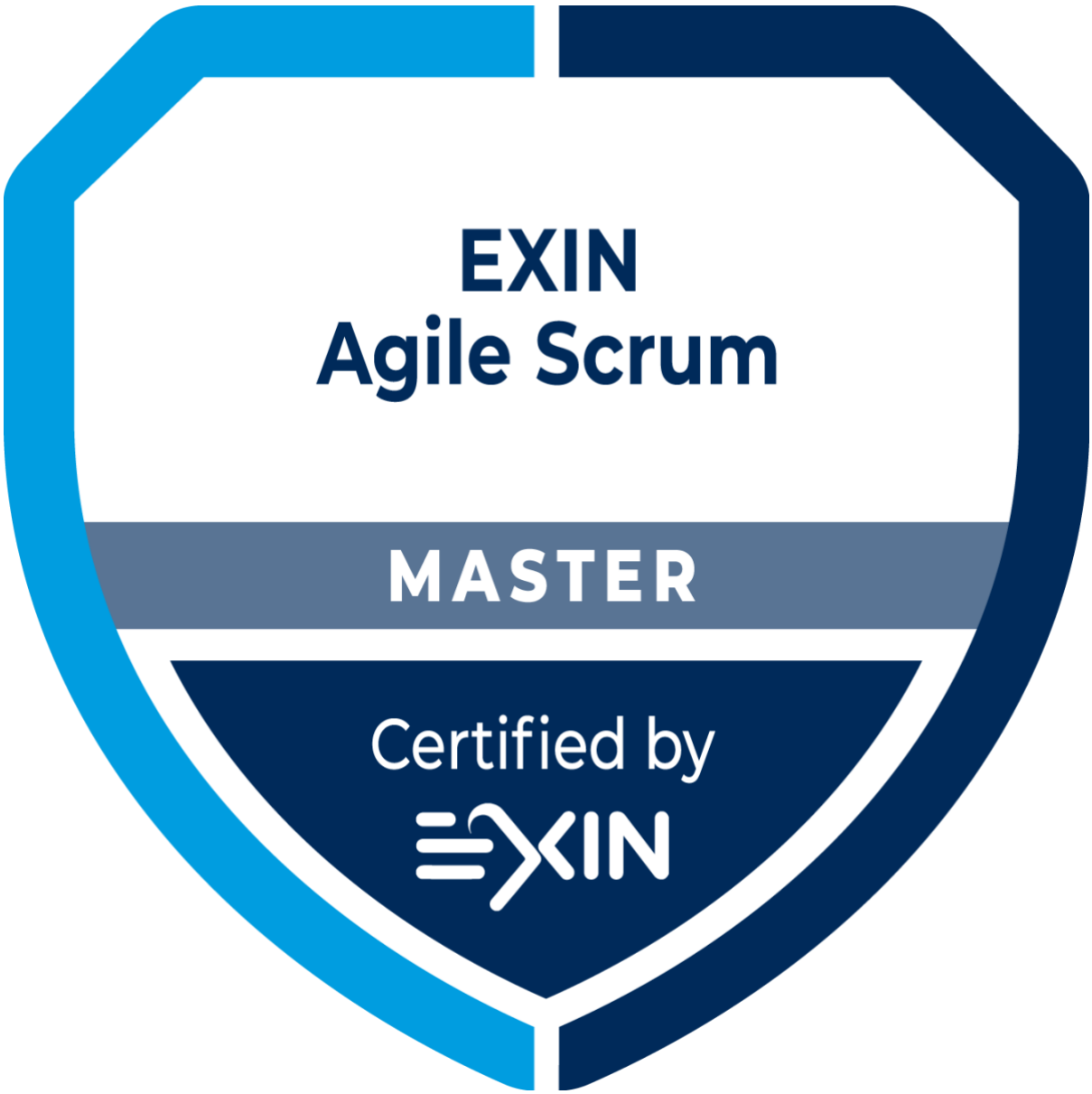


# Preparation Guide

Edition 202408

# Content

# 1. Overview

EXIN Agile Scrum Master (ASM.EN)

### Scope

EXIN Agile Scrum Master certification confirms that the professional can function as a Scrum Master by facilitating a team to create value using Scrum, ensuring Scrum practices are well understood and correctly used by all team members.

This certification includes the following topics:

- Agile way of thinking
- Scrum Master accountability
- Agile estimating, planning, monitoring and control
- Complex projects
- Adopting Agile

### Summary

Agile and Scrum are about working together to successfully reach the goal. Agile principles are popular in software development and are increasingly being used in other areas. The Scrum framework includes establishing cross-functional and self-managing teams, producing a working increment at the end of each iteration or sprint.

The Scrum Master is responsible for ensuring that the Scrum framework is understood by the team. They do this by coaching, training, and facilitating the Scrum team, thereby helping the team to produce value. A successful Scrum Master can work well with others, both inside and outside the team. They help those outside the Scrum team understand which interactions with the Scrum team are helpful and which are not.

The EXIN Agile Scrum Master certification focuses on adopting Agile principles and the Scrum framework in the workplace and on assuming the accountability of the Scrum Master.

## Context

The EXIN Agile Scrum Master 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 to facilitate a Scrum team by taking on the Scrum Master accountability.

## Requirements for certification

- Successful completion of the EXIN Agile Scrum Master exam.
- Accredited EXIN Agile Scrum Master 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 Master 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. Scrum Master accountability** | | **27.5%** |
| | 2.1 Responsibilities and commitment | 12.5% |
| | 2.2 Facilitating and coaching the team | 7.5% |
| | 2.3 Other accountabilities (Product Owner, Developers) | 7.5% |
| **3. Agile estimating, planning, monitoring and control** | | **32.5%** |
| | 3.1 Writing and maintaining the product backlog and the sprint backlog | 7.5% |
| | 3.2 Agile planning | 5% |
| | 3.3 Agile estimation | 5% |
| | 3.4 Tracking and communicating progress | 10% |
| | 3.5 Staying in control | 5% |
| **4. Complex projects** | | **12.5%** |
| | 4.1 Scaling Agile projects | 5% |
| | 4.2 Suitability of Agile for different types of projects | 5% |
| | 4.3 Agile administration in tooling and tool integration | 2.5% |
| **5. Adopting Agile** | | **17.5%** |
| | 5.1 Introducing Agile | 7.5% |
| | 5.2 Self-management | 5% |
| | 5.3 Agile requirements and proper environment | 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 Scrum Master accountability**

2.1 Responsibilities and commitment

The candidate can…

2.1.1 explain which tasks and responsibilities belong to the Scrum Master.

2.1.2 analyze a scenario for the best solution to a problem typical to Scrum Masters.

2.1.3 explain which tools to use to facilitate the team.

2.2 Facilitating and coaching the team

The candidate can…

2.2.1 explain how to facilitate the team by removing roadblocks.

2.2.2 explain how to coach and train the team.

2.3 Other accountabilities (Product Owner, Developers)

The candidate can…

2.3.1 explain all accountabilities within the Scrum framework.

**3 Agile estimating, planning, monitoring and control**

3.1 Writing and maintaining the product backlog and the sprint backlog

The candidate can…

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

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

3.1.3 explain how to maintain the product backlog and how to add product backlog items.

3.2 Agile planning

The candidate can…

3.2.1 explain planning of portfolio, products, and roadmaps.

3.2.2 explain the accountabilities of the Scrum Master in the sprint planning.

3.3 Agile estimation

The candidate can…

3.3.1 explain how to use story points, ideal hours, ideal days, and velocity during planning.

3.3.2 recognize errors in estimation.

3.4 Tracking and communicating progress

The candidate can…

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

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

The candidate can…

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

## 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.

4.2 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 Agile administration in tooling and tool integration

The candidate can…

4.3.1 explain which tools can help a team to use or adopt Agile and thereby increase the quality of the development process.

## 5 Adopting Agile

5.1 Introducing Agile

The candidate can…

5.1.1 explain how some project management activities are transferred to the Scrum Master after the transition to Scrum.

5.1.2 identify what can go wrong when transitioning to Scrum.

5.1.3 explain how to deal with resistance to change.

5.2 Self-management

The candidate can…

5.2.1 explain what self-management means for a team.

5.2.2 explain what it means to have a cross-functional team.

5.3 Agile requirements and proper environment

The candidate can…

5.3.1 explain what changes in culture must be made before adopting Agile.

# 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)
affinity estimation
anti-pattern
burn-down (bar) chart
burn-up chart
business value
coach
collocated team
commitment
conserver
continuous delivery
continuous improvement
continuous integration
customer
customer/user needs
daily scrum
definition of done (DoD)
Developers
diehard
distributed team
epic user story
estimation
fine-grained user story
flow
follower
functional requirement
Gantt chart
grow-and-split
ideal days
ideal hours
impediment
increment
information radiator
internal coaching
iteration
Kanban board
Lean
minimal marketable product (MMP)
minimum viable product (MVP)
MoSCoW
niko-niko calendar
non-functional requirement
originator
osmotic communication
other Agile frameworks:
- Crystal
- Extreme Programming (XP)
- DSDM
- LeSS
- SAFe
- Kanban
- pair programming

planning poker
potentially shippable
pragmatist
product backlog item
product goal
Product Owner
product roadmap
refinement (of the product backlog)
release
release planning
resistance
responsibility[2]
return on investment (RoI)
roadblock
saboteur
scaling
sceptic
Scrum board
Scrum Master
Scrum team
servant leader
software tooling
split-and-seed
splitting teams
sprint
sprint backlog item
sprint goal
sprint planning
sprint retrospective
sprint review

[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.

story point
swimlane
task board
test-driven development
timebox/timeboxing
transitioning to Scrum
user story
value
value stream mapping (VSM)
velocity
voice of the customer (VoC)
waste
Waterfall
work-in-progress limit (WIP-limit)

# 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 (2024)
ISBN: 9789076531137
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. Scrum Master accountability** | | |
| | 2.1 Responsibilities and commitment | Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11 |
| | 2.2 Facilitating and coaching the team | Chapters 5, 7, 13 |
| | 2.3 Other accountabilities (Product Owner, Developers) | Chapters 5, 14 |
| **3. Agile estimating, planning, monitoring and control** | | |
| | 3.1 Writing and maintaining the product backlog and the sprint backlog | Chapters 5, 6, 12 |
| | 3.2 Agile planning | Chapters 5, 6 |
| | 3.3 Agile estimation | Chapters 7, 10 |
| | 3.4 Tracking and communicating progress | Chapters 5, 7, 10, 14 |
| | 3.5 Staying in control | Chapters 6, 10<br>Appendix B |
| **4. Complex projects** | | |
| | 4.1 Scaling Agile projects | Chapters 2, 6, 12, 14 |
| | 4.2 Suitability of Agile for different types of projects | Chapters 1, 2, 5, 13 |
| | 4.3 Agile administration in tooling and tool integration | Chapter 10 |
| **5. Adopting Agile** | | |
| | 5.1 Introducing Agile | Chapters 2, 5, 13 |
| | 5.2 Self-management | Chapters 1, 3, 5, 7 |
| | 5.3 Agile requirements and proper environment | Chapters 1, 2, 13 |
| | | |


## Contact EXIN

www.exin.com