

Certified Smart: Steps to Becoming SAS® Certified

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ABSTRACT

Have you been wondering what all the buzz is about SAS® certification? Is that next big job promotion hinging on you becoming SAS certified? Do you want to make yourself more marketable to potential employers by becoming a SAS® Global Certified Professional? If you have been considering becoming SAS certified and are not sure just where to start, then this seminar is for you! This seminar is designed to help you get started on your journey to becoming SAS certified. In this session, we discuss the available SAS certifications in various technology areas, show you how to find more information about the certification process, and even show you the resources that are available to you as you begin your preparation to become a SAS Global Certified Professional.

INTRODUCTION

There is no question that SAS programming skills are among the most sought-after skills for data management and analytic careers. Acquiring SAS skills proves beneficial to you in your career and to your employer as they seek return on their investment in SAS.

The importance of having SAS skills was highlighted in a May 2016 *Money Magazine* report, “The 21 Most Valuable Career Skills Now.” According to this report, three of the top five listed skills include the following:

- SAS programming (#1)
- Data Mining and Data Warehousing (#2)
- Data Modeling (#4)
- Business Analytics (#14)
- Forecasting (#17)

With over 80,000 SAS customer sites worldwide, there is no better way to prove your competence in SAS to your current or future employer than becoming a SAS certified professional! In this session, we will identify ways to increase your chances of success in becoming SAS certified. Specifically, we will do the following:

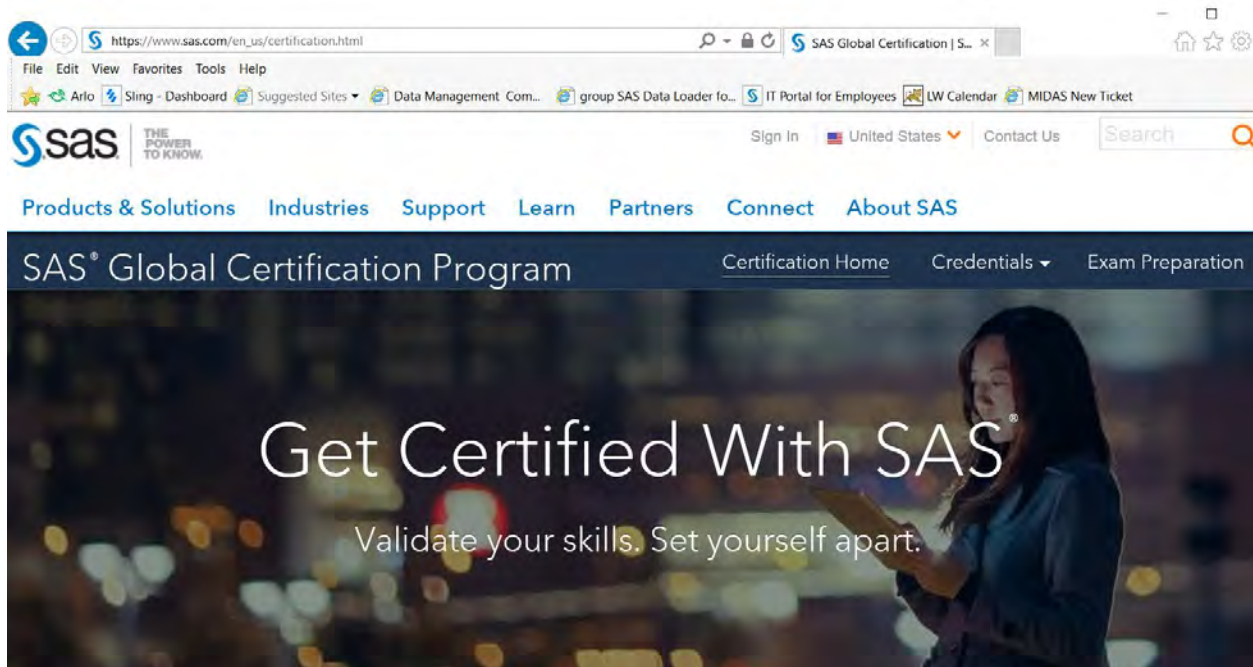
- Explore the available certifications
- Explain the preparation needed to take a certification exam, utilizing the following resources:
 - Training options
 - Books and documentation
 - Exam content guide
 - Practice questions
 - Practice exams
- Discuss next steps after becoming certified

While all of these resources will assist you in preparing for a certification exam, no single resource, by itself, will adequately prepare you for the exam. Your preparation strategy should include as many of these resources as possible to increase your chances of success. In addition, your real-world experience in the exam topic will greatly increase your success in your certification efforts.

EXPLORING AVAILABLE CERTIFICATIONS

The first step in becoming a SAS certified professional is deciding on the right certification for you. Your initial success will depend on choosing the level of exam that is consistent with your knowledge. For this reason, SAS offers a variety of base-level exams, as well as a number of more advanced exams. More information about the SAS® Global Certification Program can be found at www.sas.com/certification.

Display 1 shows the SAS Global Certification Program website.



Display 1. SAS Global Certification Program Website

On the SAS Global Certification website, you will find information about the certification process, available credentials, testing sites, and information about how to prepare for the exams. These assets are available to help you decide which credential is appropriate for you, as well as to help make you as successful as possible as you plan and prepare for the certification exam.

Choosing the exam that aligns with your level of SAS expertise will be key to your success in becoming SAS certified. The SAS Global Certification Program website is a great resource for obtaining information about the available certifications. Currently, you can choose certification exams in the following areas:

- Foundation Tools
- Advanced Analytics
- BI and Analytics
- Data Management
- Administration

You can access information about the available certification exams by scrolling down to the **Choose a Credential** area on the certification website.

Display 2 shows the credential categories that are available via the SAS Global Certification Program website.



Display 2. SAS Global Certification Program – Choose a Credential Website

PREPARING TO TAKE A CERTIFICATION EXAM

Once you have decided which exam to take, the next step is to prepare yourself to successfully pass the exam. The SAS Global Certification Program website has a wealth of information to help you prepare for taking a certification exam. You can access this information by selecting **Exam Preparation** on the certification website.

Display 3 shows the Training and Preparation options that are available via the SAS Global Certification Program website.



Display 3. SAS Global Certification Program – Training & Exam Preparation Website

In the **Training & Exam Preparation** section of the website, you can access collateral that will assist you with exam preparation including the following:

- Training course options
- Books and documentation
- Exam content guide

- Sample questions
- Practice exams

You can access these items by expanding the selected credential in the Training & Exam Preparation portion of the website.

TRAINING OPTIONS

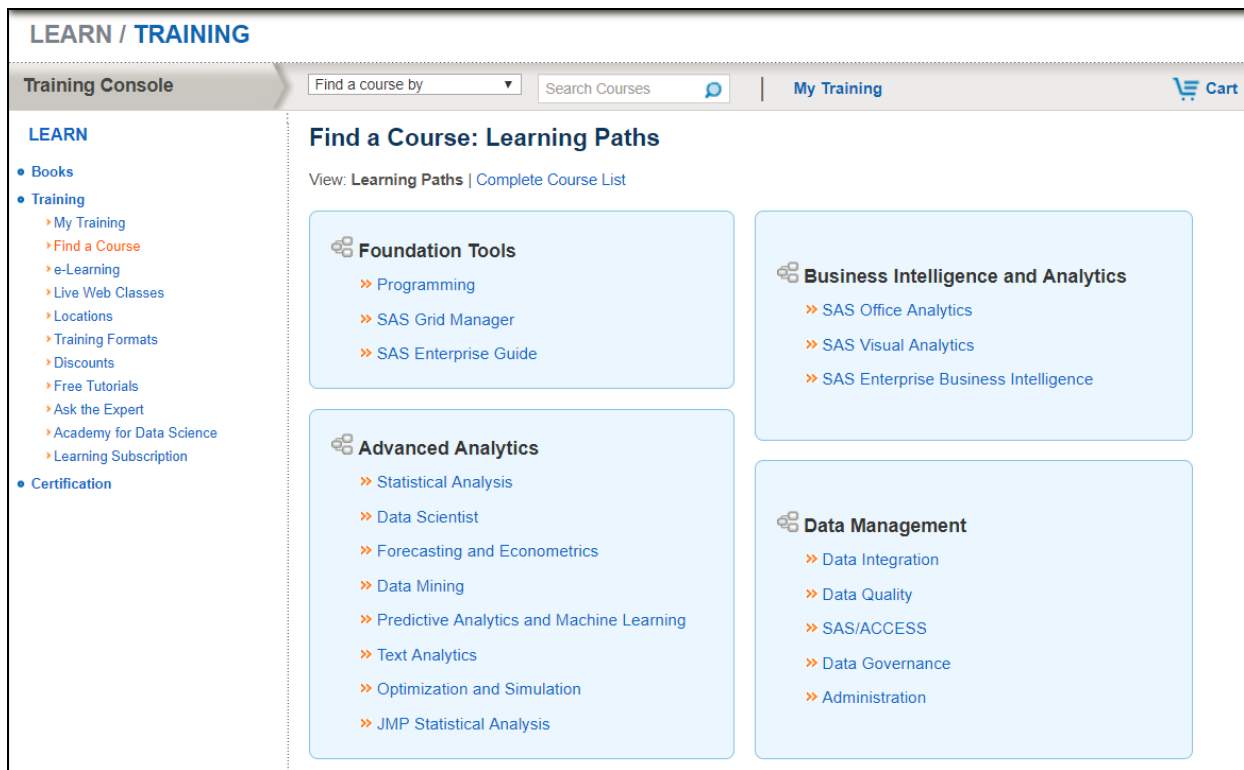
There are a number of training options available to assist you as you prepare for an exam. These include training courses, books and product documentation, sample exam questions, and practice exams. Keep in mind that no single resource is more beneficial than another, and no single resource can ensure your success on an exam. However, you should consider all resources when planning for a successful test preparation strategy, in addition to your experience using the technology.

Training Courses

Training courses, designed and delivered by SAS® Education, will certainly prove beneficial to you as you prepare for your exam. For each credential level, there are a variety of courses identified on the SAS Global Certification website that is associated with a particular credential. Go to the Training section to display the recommended courses for the specific credential on the website.

When choosing a SAS Education training course, you can attend an instructor-based training course, or often you will have the option of subscribing to an online e-learning course. More information about the training courses available through SAS Education can be found at www.sas.com/training.

Display 4 shows some of the learning paths available on the SAS® Training website.



Display 4. SAS Training Website – Find a Course Page (partial)

Books and Documentation

There are many documentation options available for you as you prepare to take the certification exam. The available documentation includes the following:

- Product documentation
- SAS® Certification Prep Guide
- Other publications

Exam Content Guide

Exam content guides are helpful to you in preparing to take a certification exam. The guides provide a list of topics covered on the exam. You can use the exam content guide as an outline of the topics to study. These guides will definitely help to add structure to your studies and preparation. The exam content guides also help you gauge your readiness to attempt an exam.

Display 5 shows the Exam Content Guide for the SAS Data Integration Development for SAS 9 Exam.

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Exam Content Guide

SAS Data Integration Development for SAS 9 Exam

Overview

- Define the architecture of the platform for SAS Business Analytics.
- Describe the available interfaces including:
 - SAS Data Integration Studio
 - DataFlux Data Management Studio
- Define the change management feature of SAS Data Integration Studio.
- Discuss the DataFlux Data Management Server.

Creating Metadata for Source and Target Data

- Define administrative tasks to be performed for SAS Data Integration Studio.
- Describe the New Library Wizard.
- Use Register Tables wizard to register source data.
 - Use Register Tables wizard to register metadata for a Microsoft Access database table using ODBC.
- Use Register Tables wizard to register metadata for a Microsoft Access database table using ODBC.
- Register metadata for a comma-delimited external file.
- Import and Export Metadata.
 - Discuss SAS packages.
 - Discuss importing and exporting of relational metadata.

Creating Metadata for Target Data and Jobs

- Describe features of the New Table wizard.
- Discuss components of Join's Designer window including:
 - Navigate pane
 - SQL clauses pane

Display 5. Partial Exam Content Guide for the SAS Data Integration Development for SAS 9 Exam

Sample Questions

Another useful resource in preparing for a certification exam is the sample questions that are available for a specific exam. While the sample questions will not appear on the actual exam, they will provide you with a good representation of the types of questions that will be on the exam.

- SAS Data Integration Development for SAS®9 (PE-260P)
- SAS Data Quality Using DataFlux® Data Management Studio (PE-262P)
- SAS Interactive Model Building and Exploration Using SAS® Visual Statistics 7.4 (PE-272P)

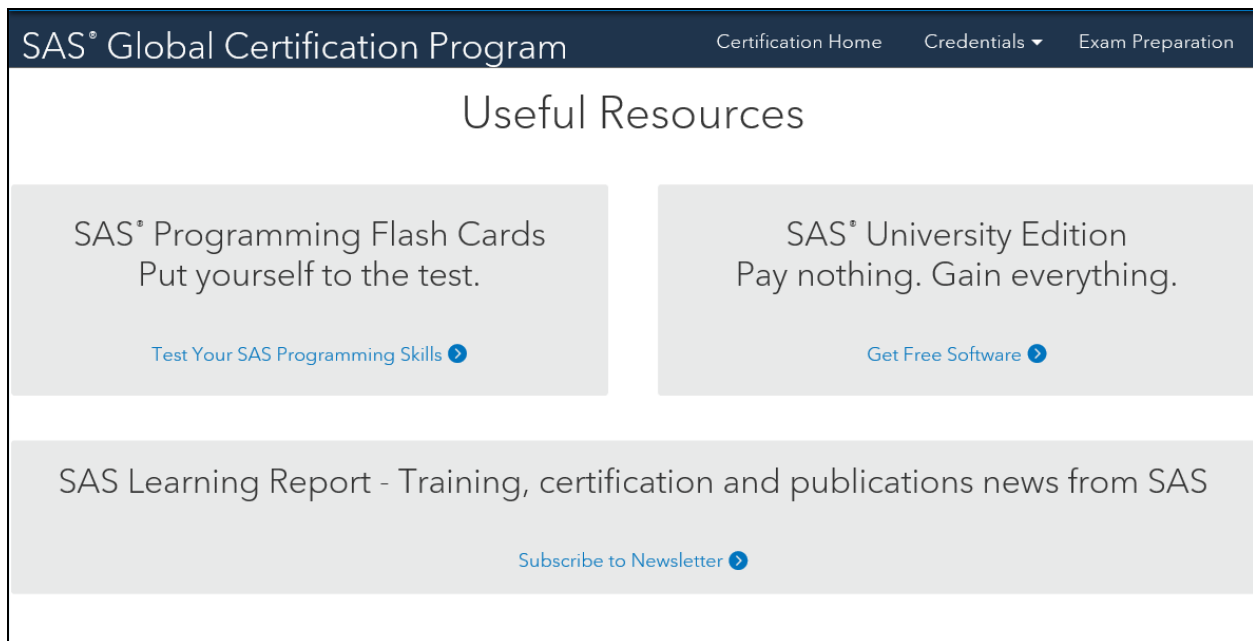
Note: There are several differences between the practice exams purchased through SAS and the practice exams purchased through Pearson VUE. The formats are different, and you should review the features before purchasing.

While the questions on the practice exam will not appear on the actual exam, they are very indicative of the type of knowledge being tested on the exam. In addition, the questions are associated with a specific section in the associated certification exam outline, so any area that needs more work will be highlighted in the scores of the practice exam.

Additional Resources

There are other resources available on the SAS Global Certification Program website that you might find useful in your preparations as well. These include flash cards, complimentary SAS® University Edition software, and SAS newsletters and publications. To access these items, scroll to the bottom of the SAS Global Certification Program website, to the Useful Resources section.

Display 7 shows the bottom portion of the SAS Global Certification Program home page, which displays the additional useful resources available for exam preparation.



Display 7. SAS Global Certification Program Useful Resources

POST-CERTIFICATION CONSIDERATIONS

Once you complete a certification exam, you will see your results immediately, and you can access your exam history. The score report for the exam provides you with immediate feedback on how you performed on each section of the exam.

Display 8 shows a post-completion example score report from the SAS Global Certification program.



SAS® Global Certification

SAS Visual Analytics 7.3 Exploration and Design Score Report

CANDIDATE

REGISTRATION NUMBER: 310974560

DATE: 01/20/2017

EXAM: SAS Visual Analytics 7.3 Exploration and Design

SITE NUMBER: Proctored

PASSING SCORE: 68%

YOUR SCORE: 76%

GRADE: Pass

The report below shows the percentage of items in each section that you answered correctly for the SAS Visual Analytics 7.3 Exploration and Design exam. Please note: These section scores are calculated on a per section basis and cannot be used in determining your total score. They are provided to you for descriptive purposes only.

SECTION NAME:	PERCENT CORRECT:
SAS Visual Analytics Designer	65%
Data Sources and Data Items	77%
SAS Visual Analytics Explorer	95%

Congratulations on passing the SAS Visual Analytics 7.3 Exploration and Design exam. Once your information has been processed and if you have completed all of the requirements for a credential, you will receive an email from SAS with instructions to access your certificate. This e-mail will be sent to the e-mail address you provided to Pearson VUE at exam registration. Please allow at least two weeks to receive your e-mail. Once a passing score is achieved on a specific exam, no further attempts are allowed on that exam.

Visit us on the Web at: www.sas.com/certify

Display 8. Example SAS Global Certification Score Report

Successful completion of a certification exam makes you eligible to be listed in the [SAS® Global Certified Professional Directory](#). This directory contains the names of all SAS certified professionals and the credentials they have earned. This directory enables employers to verify your competence in certain areas of SAS.

Upon successful completion of a certification exam, you will also receive a digital badge indicating your new credential. This digital badge serves as a trusted method for real-time credential verification and serves as a way of sharing your newly earned credentials with others.

Display 9 shows a digital badge that can be used in a variety of ways to share and display your newly earned credential.



Display 9. Example SAS® Global Certification Digital Badge

CONCLUSION

There is no doubt that becoming a certified SAS professional makes you more marketable and can lead to a significant increase in salary. Your success in becoming a SAS certified professional depends on the amount of preparation you put into studying for the exam. The SAS Global Certification Program website contains a wealth of information to assist you as you prepare for the exam. Taking advantage of these available resources, coupled with real-world experience working with SAS technology, will certainly increase your chances for success in obtaining your credentials as a SAS certified professional.

REFERENCES

Money Magazine. 2016. "The 21 Most Valuable Career Skills Now." Accessed May 16, 2016 at <http://time.com/money/4328180/most-valuable-career-skills>.

RECOMMENDED READING

- SAS® Certification Community
<https://communities.sas.com/t5/SAS-Certification/bd-p/certification>
- SAS Global Certification Program: Training and Exam Preparation
https://www.sas.com/en_us/certification/training-exam-preparation.html
- SAS Global Certified Professional Directory
https://www.sas.com/en_us/certification/resources/certified-professionals-directory.html
- SAS training leads to certification success
<https://blogs.sas.com/content/sastraining/2016/04/22/11861/>
- Top 10 reasons to get SAS certified
<https://blogs.sas.com/content/sastraining/2012/08/01/top-10-reasons-to-get-sas-certified>

CONTACT INFORMATION

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