CISA Domain 1 Practice Exam (Sample)

Study Guide

Everything you need from our exam experts!

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Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

- **Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,**
- **Improve accuracy and speed,**
- **Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and**
- **Approach the exam with greater confidence.**

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

Remember: successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

How to Use This Guide

This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here’s how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:

1. Start with a Diagnostic Review

Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.

2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions

Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 – 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations.

3. Learn from the Explanations

After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.

4. Track Your Progress

Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.

5. Simulate the Real Exam

Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.

6. Repeat and Review

Don’t just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning. Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.

There’s no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly, adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!

Questions

1. Which process should an IS auditor follow when assessing IT governance?

- **A. A. Review the organization’s strategic plans.**
- **B. B. Evaluate the effectiveness of IT operations.**
- **C. C. Assess the alignment of IT with business objectives.**
- **D. D. Monitor the performance metrics of IT resources.**

2. When performing a risk analysis, what should an IS auditor do FIRST?

- **A. Review the data classification program**
- **B. Identify the organization's information assets**
- **C. Identify the inherent risk of the system**
- **D. Conduct a cost-benefit analysis for controls**

3. After identifying audit findings, what should the IS auditor do FIRST?

- **A. Gain agreement on the findings**
- **B. Determine mitigation measures for the findings**
- **C. Inform senior management of the findings**
- **D. Obtain remediation deadlines to close the findings**

4. What is the purpose of a checksum in electronic data interchange communications?

- **A. Integrity**
- **B. Authenticity**
- **C. Authorization**
- **D. Nonrepudiation**

5. The decisions and actions of an IS auditor are MOST likely to affect which of the following types of risk?

- **A. A. Inherent**
- **B. B. Detection**
- **C. C. Control**
- **D. D. Business**

6. An IS auditor uses source code comparison software during the evaluation of program change controls primarily to:

- **A. Examine source program changes without information from IS personnel**
- **B. Detect changes made between acquiring the source and the comparison run**
- **C. Confirm that the control copy is the current version of the production program**
- **D. Ensure that all changes in the current source are tested**

7. Which sampling method is MOST useful when testing for compliance?

- **A. A. Attribute sampling**
- **B. B. Variable sampling**
- **C. C. Stratified mean-per-unit sampling**
- **D. D. Difference estimation sampling**

8. Which situation could impair the independence of an IS auditor?

- **A. A. Implementing specific functionality during the development of an application.**
- **B. B. Designing an embedded audit module for auditing an application.**
- **C. C. Participating as a member of an application project team.**
- **D. D. Providing consulting advice concerning application good practices.**

9. What type of control does a requirement for branch manager approval of high-value transactions represent?

- **A. Detective**
- **B. Preventive**
- **C. Corrective**
- **D. Directive**

10. If an IS auditor discovers that access reviews are not performed by a third-party IT service provider, what should be the auditor's action?

A. Report the issue to IT management.

B. Discuss the issue with the service provider.

C. Perform a risk assessment.

D. Perform an access review.

Answers

1. C
2. B
3. A
4. A
5. B
6. A
7. A
8. A
9. B
10. A

Explanations

1. Which process should an IS auditor follow when assessing IT governance?

A. A. Review the organization’s strategic plans.

B. B. Evaluate the effectiveness of IT operations.

C. C. Assess the alignment of IT with business objectives.

D. D. Monitor the performance metrics of IT resources.

When assessing IT governance, the primary focus is on ensuring that IT strategies align closely with the organization’s business objectives. This alignment is crucial because it helps to ensure that IT investments deliver value and support the overall strategic goals of the organization. By assessing the alignment of IT with business objectives, an IS auditor evaluates whether IT initiatives are effectively contributing to the organization’s mission and whether they are fostering business growth and innovation. In addition, this assessment typically involves analyzing how well IT resources and processes help achieve business goals, how risk is managed within IT operations, and whether compliance with laws and regulations is maintained. Therefore, emphasizing the alignment ensures that IT governance is not merely about managing resources but also about enabling the success of the business overall. While reviewing strategic plans, evaluating the effectiveness of IT operations, and monitoring performance metrics are important tasks, they support the broader goal of ensuring that IT activities are directly supporting the business's strategic direction and objectives. Therefore, aligning IT with business objectives is foundational in assessing IT governance.

2. When performing a risk analysis, what should an IS auditor do FIRST?

A. Review the data classification program

B. Identify the organization's information assets

C. Identify the inherent risk of the system

D. Conduct a cost-benefit analysis for controls

In the context of risk analysis, the initial step an IS auditor should take is to identify the organization's information assets. This is crucial because understanding what assets exist sets the foundation for evaluating their value, sensitivity, and the potential risks they face. Information assets can include data, hardware, software, and intellectual property; knowing these assets allows the auditor to focus on the elements that are most critical to the organization. Once the information assets are identified, the auditor can consider the specific risks to those assets, including threats, vulnerabilities, and potential impacts on the organization. This prioritization ensures that resources are allocated effectively and that the risk analysis process is relevant and comprehensive. Without a clear understanding of the assets in question, subsequent steps, such as assessing their inherent risks or considering controls, would lack the necessary context to be truly effective.

3. After identifying audit findings, what should the IS auditor do FIRST?

A. Gain agreement on the findings

B. Determine mitigation measures for the findings

C. Inform senior management of the findings

D. Obtain remediation deadlines to close the findings

The first step an IS auditor should take after identifying audit findings is to gain agreement on the findings. Ensuring that all relevant stakeholders acknowledge and understand the findings is critical to facilitate meaningful discussions about the next steps. This step ensures that there is a shared understanding of the issues raised and fosters an environment where constructive solutions can be developed. Agreement on the findings serves as the foundation for the subsequent actions, such as determining mitigation measures, communicating with senior management, and establishing remediation deadlines. Without this consensus, any efforts to address the identified issues may be met with resistance or lack of commitment, which could diminish the effectiveness of the auditing process. Thus, gaining agreement is essential for ensuring that everyone involved is on the same page and ready to work collaboratively towards resolving the audit findings.

4. What is the purpose of a checksum in electronic data interchange communications?

A. Integrity

B. Authenticity

C. Authorization

D. Nonrepudiation

The purpose of a checksum in electronic data interchange communications is primarily related to integrity. A checksum is a value derived from the data being sent, calculated using a specific algorithm. It serves as a means to verify that the data has not been altered or corrupted during transmission. When data is transmitted, the sender computes the checksum based on the data and sends it along with the message. The recipient then performs the same checksum calculation on the received data. If the checksum computed by the recipient matches the one sent by the sender, it indicates that the data has remained intact. Any discrepancies would suggest that the data may have been altered, whether due to errors in transmission or intentional tampering. Integrity is essential in data communications as it ensures the accuracy and completeness of the information exchanged. Although checksums do contribute to other aspects of communications like detecting errors (which can indirectly support authenticity), their primary function lies in ensuring that the data has not changed in an unauthorized or unintended manner.

5. The decisions and actions of an IS auditor are MOST likely to affect which of the following types of risk?

A. A. Inherent

B. B. Detection

C. C. Control

D. D. Business

The correct answer focuses on detection risk, which is a critical area in the context of an IS auditor's role. Detection risk refers to the possibility that an auditor will not discover a material misstatement in the financial statements or other areas being audited. This risk can be influenced by the effectiveness of the auditing processes used, including the procedures performed and the auditor's judgment. An IS auditor's expertise, judgment, and actions during an audit significantly impact the likelihood of detecting potential issues, vulnerabilities, or inaccuracies within the information systems being evaluated. By employing appropriate audit techniques, tools, and methodologies, an auditor can minimize detection risk, thereby enhancing the reliability of their audit conclusions. Inherent risk pertains to risks that exist naturally in the absence of any control activities, while control risk is associated with the chance that existing controls might fail to prevent or detect errors or irregularities. Business risk refers to the broader category of risks impacting an organization's ability to achieve its goals, which is not directly influenced by an auditor's specific actions. Detection risk is the most directly related to the operational effectiveness of the auditing process itself and is thus the correct focus when considering the impact of an IS auditor's decisions and actions.

6. An IS auditor uses source code comparison software during the evaluation of program change controls primarily to:

A. Examine source program changes without information from IS personnel

B. Detect changes made between acquiring the source and the comparison run

C. Confirm that the control copy is the current version of the production program

D. Ensure that all changes in the current source are tested

Using source code comparison software allows an auditor to evaluate program change controls more effectively by facilitating the examination of source program changes independently. This approach minimizes reliance on information provided by IS personnel, thereby enhancing the objectivity of the audit process. When the auditor can analyze the source code directly, they are better positioned to identify any discrepancies, unauthorized changes, or adherence to established change management protocols. Additionally, this method can reveal issues that might not be disclosed through standard reporting from IS personnel, such as undocumented changes or errors during the coding process. As a result, the auditor can more confidently assess the integrity and security of the program without bias or influence from those who managed the changes, fostering a thorough and transparent evaluation of the change management controls in place.

7. Which sampling method is MOST useful when testing for compliance?

A. A. Attribute sampling

B. B. Variable sampling

C. C. Stratified mean-per-unit sampling

D. D. Difference estimation sampling

Attribute sampling is particularly effective for testing compliance because it evaluates whether specific attributes or characteristics are present or absent in a population. This method focuses on assessing compliance with established criteria, typically resulting in a simple "pass" or "fail" outcome for each sampled item. In compliance testing, the objective is often to determine whether a set of requirements, regulations, or controls are being adhered to. Since attribute sampling enables auditors to draw conclusions about the proportion of items in compliance versus those that are not, it is the preferred method for such assessments. The results can provide a clear indication of compliance levels and help in making informed decisions based on the findings. Other methods, like variable sampling, are more suited for detailed quantitative analyses rather than binary compliance checks. Stratified mean-per-unit sampling provides a mean estimate across different strata, which may be useful for general assessments but does not directly address compliance in the same straightforward manner as attribute sampling. Difference estimation sampling focuses on estimating the difference between two populations or conditions, which again diverges from the primary goal of compliance testing.

8. Which situation could impair the independence of an IS auditor?

A. A. Implementing specific functionality during the development of an application.

B. B. Designing an embedded audit module for auditing an application.

C. C. Participating as a member of an application project team.

D. D. Providing consulting advice concerning application good practices.

The situation that could impair the independence of an IS auditor is when they are involved in implementing specific functionality during the development of an application. This involvement may lead to a conflict of interest, as the auditor's role is to evaluate and provide assurance on the effectiveness and compliance of the systems being developed. By participating in the development process, the auditor risks losing objectivity, potentially biasing their evaluations related to that project. Maintaining independence is crucial for an IS auditor to ensure that their assessments are impartial and credible. If they have been involved in the functional implementation, they may find it challenging to analyze and critique the work done objectively, which could compromise the integrity of the audit findings. In contrast, roles such as designing an embedded audit module, participating as a member of an application project team, or providing consulting advice concerning application good practices may have their own considerations, but they generally do not inherently compromise the independence of the auditor in the same direct manner as developing application functionality does.

9. What type of control does a requirement for branch manager approval of high-value transactions represent?

A. Detective

B. Preventive

C. Corrective

D. Directive

A requirement for branch manager approval of high-value transactions is an example of a preventive control. This type of control is designed to inhibit undesirable events from occurring before they happen. By requiring approval from a branch manager, the organization ensures that transactions are reviewed and assessed for legitimacy and appropriateness before they are processed. This layered approach helps to minimize the risk of fraud, error, or unauthorized transactions, thereby safeguarding the organization's assets and maintaining the integrity of its operations. Preventive controls, in this context, help to establish a culture of accountability and oversight, ensuring that significant transactions undergo scrutiny, which decreases the likelihood of financial loss or compliance issues.

10. If an IS auditor discovers that access reviews are not performed by a third-party IT service provider, what should be the auditor's action?

A. Report the issue to IT management.

B. Discuss the issue with the service provider.

C. Perform a risk assessment.

D. Perform an access review.

The appropriate action for the auditor upon discovering that access reviews are not conducted by a third-party IT service provider is to report the issue to IT management. This step ensures that the organization's leadership is made aware of a significant control weakness in the management of user access rights, which is critical for maintaining information security and compliance. By informing IT management, the auditor prompts the decision-makers to evaluate the risks associated with insufficient access controls. Management can then take appropriate actions, such as engaging with the service provider to rectify the situation, undertake a risk assessment to understand the potential impacts, or implement additional oversight mechanisms. This approach aligns with the auditor's role in communicating findings that may affect the organization's risk and security posture, enabling them to focus on essential management decisions and improvements.

Next Steps

Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.

As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.

If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at hello@examzify.com.

Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:

https://cisadomain1.examzify.com

We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!