Professional Scrum Master (PSM) Certification Practice Exam (Sample)

Study Guide

BY EXAMZIFY

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. **What approach should a Scrum Master take to ensure effective training in Scrum?**

    A. Emphasizing rigid adherence to rules

    B. Encouraging open dialogues and feedback

    C. Focusing only on theoretical knowledge

    D. Limiting participation to senior team members

2. **How often should feedback be captured from stakeholders?**

    A. Only during Sprint Review

    B. At the beginning and end of each Sprint

    C. Continuously throughout the Sprint

    D. Only after major releases

3. **What should be done if a Scrum Team is facing external pressure?**

    A. The team should ignore it and focus on the Sprint goal

    B. The Scrum Master should intervene to support the team

    C. The team should meet with stakeholders regularly

    D. The team should increase their output

4. **Who is responsible for creating the Sprint Goal?**

    A. The Scrum Master

    B. The Product Owner

    C. The Scrum Team

    D. The Development Team only

5. **Is the Sprint Backlog considered baselined at the end of Sprint Planning?**

    A. Yes, it is a fixed document

    B. No, it is dynamic and can change during the Sprint

    C. Yes, but only for the remainder of the Sprint

    D. No, but it cannot be modified after planning

6. What should the team do if the Sprint Goal cannot be met?

A. Increase team work hours

B. Assess and possibly reduce the scope or abandon the Sprint Goal

C. Continue without changes

D. Seek external assistance

7. In Scrum, what does "empirical process control" imply?

A. Decisions based on theoretical knowledge

B. Decisions based on predefined timelines

C. Decisions based on observation and experimentation

D. Decisions based on assumptions and estimations

8. How should non-functional features be addressed by developers?

A. Ignored in favor of functional features

B. Incorporated into every increment

C. Assigned to specific Sprints

D. Documented but not implemented

9. Which of the following statements is true regarding Scrum artifacts?

A. They are only used for documentation purposes

B. They promote transparency and accountability within the team

C. They can be modified at any time

D. They are not important for team progress

10. What defines a "ready" item in the Product Backlog?

A. Items that are well-defined and small

B. Items that are complex and large

C. Items that have been discussed with stakeholders

D. Items that are recently added

Answers

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

Explanations

1. What approach should a Scrum Master take to ensure effective training in Scrum?

A. Emphasizing rigid adherence to rules

B. Encouraging open dialogues and feedback

C. Focusing only on theoretical knowledge

D. Limiting participation to senior team members

The most effective approach for a Scrum Master to ensure training in Scrum is to encourage open dialogues and feedback. This method promotes an environment where team members feel comfortable sharing their thoughts, asking questions, and expressing concerns. Open dialogue fosters collaboration and allows team members to learn from one another, enhancing their understanding of Scrum principles and practices. In a Scrum context, training isn't just about conveying theoretical knowledge; it is also about enabling individuals to see how those principles apply in real scenarios. Feedback loops, which are integral to the Scrum framework, also help to continually refine practices based on team experiences and insights. This collaborative learning environment is essential for building a high-performing Scrum team that can adapt and improve over time. Other approaches, such as emphasizing rigid adherence to rules, might stifle creativity and discourage team members from engaging actively in the learning process. Focusing solely on theoretical knowledge misses the practical application that is crucial in a framework like Scrum, where real-life experiences and interactions are key to effective learning. Similarly, limiting participation to senior team members can create a disconnect within the team, as valuable perspectives from other members may be overlooked, preventing a holistic understanding of Scrum.

2. How often should feedback be captured from stakeholders?

A. Only during Sprint Review

B. At the beginning and end of each Sprint

C. Continuously throughout the Sprint

D. Only after major releases

Feedback from stakeholders should be captured continuously throughout the Sprint to ensure that the development team is aligned with stakeholder expectations and can make adjustments as needed. By engaging stakeholders regularly, the team can validate assumptions, clarify requirements, and adapt swiftly to changes in direction or priority. This approach fosters collaboration and enhances the overall quality of the product being developed. Regular feedback allows for the identification of issues early in the development process, enabling teams to take corrective action before problems escalate. It also ensures that stakeholders remain informed and engaged, which can lead to a more successful and accepted product outcome. While the Sprint Review is a significant event for soliciting stakeholder feedback, relying solely on it would limit the opportunities for iterative improvements and hinder responsiveness to changing needs. Collecting feedback only at the beginning and end of each Sprint or exclusively after major releases could result in missed opportunities for refinement and adjustments during the development process. Engaging continuously aligns with the Agile principles of responsiveness and customer collaboration.

3. What should be done if a Scrum Team is facing external pressure?

A. The team should ignore it and focus on the Sprint goal

B. The Scrum Master should intervene to support the team

C. The team should meet with stakeholders regularly

D. The team should increase their output

When a Scrum Team is facing external pressure, the most effective response is for the Scrum Master to intervene to support the team. This is because the Scrum Master's primary role includes protecting the team from external disruptions that can hinder their focus and productivity. By intervening, the Scrum Master can help to facilitate communication between the team and stakeholders, clarify expectations, and address any issues arising from the external pressures. A commitment to upholding the Scrum framework entails ensuring that the team can work effectively towards their Sprint Goals without being overwhelmed by outside factors. The Scrum Master can assist in removing obstacles, mediating conflicts, and coaching the team on how to manage external pressures constructively. Choosing to ignore external pressure, while appealing in terms of maintaining focus, can lead to misalignment with stakeholder expectations and ultimately diminish the value delivery of the Scrum Team. Meeting with stakeholders regularly may help in understanding their concerns but does not directly address immediate pressures affecting the team. Increasing output in response to pressure can lead to burnout and reduced quality, as teams may compromise their sustainable pace to meet expectations. Hence, the intervention of the Scrum Master is a proactive and supportive measure that aligns with the principles of Scrum, creating an environment where the team can be successful despite external challenges.

4. Who is responsible for creating the Sprint Goal?

A. The Scrum Master

B. The Product Owner

C. The Scrum Team

D. The Development Team only

The Sprint Goal is a collaborative commitment that reflects what the Scrum Team aims to achieve during a Sprint. The responsibility for creating the Sprint Goal lies with the entire Scrum Team, which includes the Product Owner, Scrum Master, and Development Team.   While the Product Owner articulates the highest priority items in the Product Backlog and helps inform the purpose of the Sprint, it is during Sprint Planning that the whole Scrum Team collaborates to create the Sprint Goal. This collaborative effort ensures that all team members are aligned on the objective and have a shared understanding of what the focus will be for the duration of the Sprint. This collective approach fosters team accountability and encourages both teamwork and commitment towards achieving the identified goal. The Scrum Master plays a pivotal role in facilitating dialogue and ensuring that the Scrum framework is adhered to, but does not hold the sole responsibility for the Goal's creation. Similarly, while the Development Team contributes to the discussions surrounding the Sprint Goal and its feasibility, they do not create the goal in isolation; they work collaboratively with others in the Scrum Team. Thus, the involvement of the entire Scrum Team in creating the Sprint Goal underscores the importance of collaboration in Scrum.

5. Is the Sprint Backlog considered baselined at the end of Sprint Planning?

    A. Yes, it is a fixed document

    B. No, it is dynamic and can change during the Sprint

    C. Yes, but only for the remainder of the Sprint

    D. No, but it cannot be modified after planning

The Sprint Backlog is dynamic and can indeed change during the Sprint. This flexibility is a core principle of Scrum, allowing the team to adapt to changes and new information that emerges throughout the Sprint.   While the Sprint Backlog is created during Sprint Planning, it is not a fixed document; rather, it is an evolving artifact that reflects the team's understanding of the work needed to meet the Sprint Goal. As the team progresses through the Sprint, they may discover new tasks, re-evaluate the priority of certain backlog items, or modify their approaches based on what they learn. This adaptability is crucial to ensuring they can effectively address any challenges or opportunities that arise.   In this context, saying that it is static or fixed would contradict the agile philosophy that values responding to change over following a plan. Emphasizing the dynamic nature of the Sprint Backlog supports the Scrum team's ability to deliver valuable increments, as they can modify their focus based on ongoing insights and situations throughout the Sprint.

6. What should the team do if the Sprint Goal cannot be met?

    A. Increase team work hours

    B. Assess and possibly reduce the scope or abandon the Sprint Goal

    C. Continue without changes

    D. Seek external assistance

If the Sprint Goal cannot be met, the team should assess and possibly reduce the scope or abandon the Sprint Goal. This approach aligns well with the principles of the Scrum framework, which emphasizes flexibility and adaptability. It is crucial for the Scrum Team to regularly inspect progress and adapt plans accordingly.   When the team realizes that the Sprint Goal is unattainable, it can either adjust the scope of work to make the goal achievable or decide to abandon the goal altogether. This allows for a more realistic focus on delivering value within the remaining time of the Sprint, ensuring that the team doesn't overcommit or forcefully try to complete work that is no longer feasible. Such decisions should be grounded in collaboration among team members and stakeholders to maintain transparency and alignment with project objectives.   The other options may not serve the best interest of the team or the project. Increasing work hours could lead to burnout and does not address the root issue of scope management. Continuing without changes may lead to a disconnect between expectations and actual deliverables, ultimately harming stakeholder trust. Seeking external assistance could be useful in certain contexts but relies heavily on the nature of the challenges faced and may not always be practical or timely. Overall, reassessing and adjusting the scope is the most pragmatic and in accordance with Agile

7. In Scrum, what does "empirical process control" imply?

A. Decisions based on theoretical knowledge

B. Decisions based on predefined timelines

C. Decisions based on observation and experimentation

D. Decisions based on assumptions and estimations

Empirical process control is a fundamental principle of Scrum, emphasizing that knowledge comes from experience and making decisions based on what is known. This approach highlights the significance of observation and experimentation in the development process. In Scrum, teams work iteratively, learning and adapting through feedback loops, such as during Scrum events like Sprint Reviews and Retrospectives. By focusing on observation, teams can assess ongoing work, identify challenges, and discover solutions through experimentation, rather than relying solely on theoretical knowledge or set timelines. This adaptability fosters continuous improvement and allows teams to respond effectively to changing requirements or unforeseen issues, which is essential in a dynamic work environment. In contrast to this correct perspective, decisions based on theoretical knowledge would detach from the realities of the project, predefined timelines could impose constraints that ignore the need for flexibility, and reliance on assumptions and estimations might lead to inaccuracies and misalignment with actual progress and challenges encountered during development. Thus, empirical process control is pivotal in ensuring Scrum teams remain responsive and aligned with their goals.

8. How should non-functional features be addressed by developers?

A. Ignored in favor of functional features

B. Incorporated into every increment

C. Assigned to specific Sprints

D. Documented but not implemented

Addressing non-functional features by incorporating them into every increment is an essential practice in Scrum development. Non-functional features, which include aspects such as performance, usability, reliability, and security, are crucial for the overall quality and user experience of the product. By integrating these features consistently throughout the development process, teams ensure that the product remains viable and meets user expectations in all dimensions, not just the functional requirements. This approach promotes a holistic view of product development, where improvements to non-functional aspects occur alongside functional features. It helps avoid the situation where these important characteristics are overlooked, which can lead to significant technical debt or user dissatisfaction if they are only considered at a later stage. In contrast, ignoring non-functional features in favor of functional ones can result in a product that functions well but lacks the robustness, performance, or usability needed for success. Assigning non-functional features to specific Sprints might create uncertainty about when they will be addressed, potentially leading to gaps in quality if they are not prioritized continuously. Documenting non-functional features without implementing them fails to enhance the product, rendering the documentation somewhat pointless if those requirements are not reflected in the end result.

9. Which of the following statements is true regarding Scrum artifacts?

A. They are only used for documentation purposes

B. They promote transparency and accountability within the team

C. They can be modified at any time

D. They are not important for team progress

Scrum artifacts are critical elements that provide essential information and promote transparency and accountability within the Scrum Team and stakeholders. They include the Product Backlog, the Sprint Backlog, and the Increment. Each artifact serves a specific purpose in enhancing collaboration and communication among team members and ensuring that all stakeholders are aligned with the team's goals and progress. When Scrum artifacts are effectively used, they allow team members to understand the progress of the work, what has been completed, and what remains to be done. This visibility encourages discussions around the work being done, promotes a shared understanding, fosters trust among the team members, and holds everyone accountable for their contributions to the project. The focus on transparency is key in Scrum, as it helps identify issues early, thereby supporting adaptive planning and continuous improvement. Artifacts that are transparent lead to better decision-making and allow teams to respond to changing circumstances effectively. The other options do not reflect the true purpose of Scrum artifacts—documentation is indeed a byproduct of artifacts, but their real value lies in promoting collaboration and visibility. Artifacts are designed to evolve throughout the project; while they can be modified, it's essential to do so thoughtfully within the Scrum framework, following proper processes and respecting the integrity of the artifacts. Lastly, neg

10. What defines a "ready" item in the Product Backlog?

A. Items that are well-defined and small

B. Items that are complex and large

C. Items that have been discussed with stakeholders

D. Items that are recently added

A "ready" item in the Product Backlog refers to those that are well-defined and small enough to be understood and actionable for the team during a sprint. When backlog items meet these criteria, they are usually described using the "INVEST" criteria—Independent, Negotiable, Valuable, Estimable, Small, and Testable. Having well-defined items ensures that the Scrum Team clearly understands the acceptance criteria and can engage effectively in the upcoming sprint, reducing uncertainties or ambiguities. Additionally, smaller items are manageable and can be completed within a sprint, accommodating the iterative nature of Scrum while enabling continuous delivery of value. Other options, while they may touch on aspects of the backlog, do not capture what makes an item "ready." Large or complex items might require decomposition into smaller parts. Items that have been discussed with stakeholders alone do not guarantee they have been sufficiently refined to be actionable by the team. Similarly, recently added items may lack the necessary detail or clarity until they are explored and refined in collaboration with the team.

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://professionalscrummaster.examzify.com

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