

Human Factors International (HFI) Certification for Individuals

# CUA EXAM FACT SHEET

## Certified Usability Analyst (CUA) Exam Overview

- The CUA is the leading worldwide credential for User Experience practitioners, demonstrating their mastery of the fundamental principles of user-centered design.
- HFI launched the CUA program in 2001, and since then, close to 6,000 individuals in 59 countries around the world have received the CUA designation.

## Purpose of the CUA Exam

- The goal of the CUA exam is to gauge an individual's knowledge and skills. It is not designed to be a final exam for the CUA courses, and attending the courses is not required to take the exam.
- The CUA certification is not intended to replace or compete with academic degrees earned in the field of Human Computer Interaction.
- The CUA exam measures a practitioner's factual knowledge and application of user-centered design principles in four competency areas, in the approximate percentages of the total questions:
  - User experience foundations, 20%
  - User-centered analysis, 30%
  - Web and application design, 30%
  - Usability testing, 20%

## Benefits of the CUA Designation

- The CUA designation validates that practitioners possess a common set of skills in user-centered design, with the knowledge to routinely make quality interfaces that are effective, easy to learn, efficient, memorable, and satisfying.
- CUAs have a shared set of techniques, vocabulary, and best practices to make informed interface design decisions.

## No Prerequisites

- There are no prerequisites for taking the CUA exam.
- Test-takers are not required to take any HFI courses since the exam assesses mastery of basic principles of user-centered design.

## CUA Exam Format

- The CUA exam is only available online.
- It is offered one day per month.
- There are a total of 100 multiple-choice questions, with four available response options.
- A unique online exam is presented to each test-taker by randomly selecting equivalent questions from a larger database of questions.

## Relevant Preparation

- The exam is challenging. Many questions assess factual knowledge, while other questions test the ability to apply methodologies and tools to common design challenges.
- Those who have the best chance of passing the exam on the first attempt typically have:
  - A few years of practical experience in user-centered design
  - Prepared for the exam by organizing their materials
  - Conducted a review of the concepts individually by themselves or in a group
  - Formulated a strategy for taking the exam
  - Attended all of the most recent CUA training courses

## Time Limit of Exam

- Test-takers have a 2.5 hour time limit to complete the exam.
- Test-takers in India have a 3 hour time limit.
- Test-takers not fluent in English may request a time extension for a total of 4 hours.

## Taking the CUA Exam

- HFI course materials and personal notes may be used as resources during the exam, however the use of online resources or in-person assistance is not allowed.
- Test-takers may take the online exam on their own computer, whether at home or at work. (Note: Candidates in India are required to test in proctored classrooms.)
- The test platform requires that a secure app be download prior to taking the exam.
- The exam can be started anytime during a 24-hour period on the scheduled test date.
- Test-takers may not pause the exam once it is started.
- Test-takers may skip and flag a question within a section and return to it.
- After each of the four sections is submitted, those questions are no longer accessible.

## Passing Requirements

- A passing score is 70% or higher out of the total of 100 questions.
- If someone does not pass, they can schedule to retake it within six months at no extra cost.
- The final screen of the exam shows the percent correct for each of the four sections.
- The assessment result at the bottom of the screen is the overall score for the exam.

## Cost of CUA Exam

- The CUA exam costs \$800 USD, which includes two attempts, if needed.
- For those who have taken all four CUA courses and purchase the exam separately, the exam costs \$230 USD.
- When the CUA training is purchased as a package, the exam fee is included at no extra cost.

## No Expiration of Certification

- The CUA certification does not expire since passing the CUA exam demonstrates mastery of the fundamental principles of user-centered design.
- Upon passing the CUA exam, successful test-takers will receive:
  - An authenticated certificate, sent by postal mail.
  - A profile in the HFI online CUA Directory, which they can update at any time.
  - An invitation to join the CUA group on LinkedIn.
  - An invitation to join CUA Central, the official online community for CUAs.