



Cisco Channel Partner Specialization Program

Cisco Qualified Specialist

Revised November 4, 2003

Section 1: Channel Partner Program Certification Requirements

Q: Does a Cisco Qualified Specialist certification fulfill any of the Channel Partner program career certified individual requirements?

A: No. According to the Channel Partner program requirements, the sales expert requirement can only be fulfilled by a Cisco® Sales Expert, the associate requirement can only be fulfilled by those holding CCDA® or CCNA® certification, and professional requirement can only be fulfilled by those holding CCDP®, CCNP®, CCIP™, or CCSP™ certification, and the expert requirement can only be fulfilled those holding CCIE® certification.

Section 2: Specializations

Q: What are we changing?

A: Cisco Partner Specialization program job roles will now be aligned to a Cisco Qualified Specialist or Cisco Career certifications wherever possible. This provides the following benefits:

- Provides recognition to the individual passing the exam
- Eliminates individual exam requirements upon specialization program renewal
- Reduces partner specialization program investment
- Improves the return on investment (ROI) of the Cisco Channel Partner program

Q: Why are we realigning Cisco Qualified Specialist certifications in partner specialization job roles?

A: Realigning the Cisco Qualified Specialist certification extends the life span of the specialization job role for two years and therefore improves ROI for partners who invest in specializations. The alignment to a career certification gives individuals recognition for helping their company achieve specializations.

Q: What affect will the realignment have on my company or on my status as a certified individual?

A: The Cisco Qualified Specialist awards individuals with recognition from Cisco, extends the life span of a specialization job role to



two years, and provides more stable specialization job role requirements with fewer frequent changes around courses and exams. A certificate will be issued to all individuals meeting the requirements of a Cisco Qualified Specialist.

Q: How have the requirements of the specializations changed?

A: The Cisco Qualified Specialist, introduced as part of this announcement on November 4, 2003, represents all current requirements for each of the existing Cisco specializations. Therefore, requirements in all existing Cisco specializations have not changed.

Q: Do all specialization job roles require a Cisco Qualified Specialist?

A: While not all specialization job roles require a Cisco Qualified Specialist, most do. We will continue to complete the alignment with the Cisco Qualified Specialist program over time. Some specialization job roles will require career certifications. Please see the [job role requirements in each specialization](#) to ensure you are following the correct learning path.

Q: Is there any action I am required to take if my company currently holds a Cisco specialization? When do I need to update my exams or Cisco Qualified Specialist for a specialization job role?

A: It won't be necessary to update any qualifications until your specialization is up for renewal. However, you may want to review the [specialization job role requirements](#) to see if you will comply at renewal time.

Q: What do we do if our company is currently in the process of renewing a specialization?

A: If you are working toward the current specialization exam requirements, they will align to the Cisco Qualified Specialist requirements. You may view the Cisco Qualified Specialist learning map of choice in the [Partner E-Learning Connection](#). In addition, customers may view the [Cisco Qualified Specialist requirements](#).

Q: Where do I go to verify my Cisco Qualified Specialist certification?

A: Please visit the [Certifications tracking system tool](#). Only Cisco career certified individuals have immediate access to their profile, certification status, and exam history. Partner company administrators and application authors are not able to view an employee's profile, certification status, or exam history unless the individual who holds the Cisco career certification grants them the rights to view this data. See the [Certifications tracking system tool user guide](#) for more information on third-party access.

Q: Is there a way to determine whether my employee is certified as a Cisco Qualified Specialist?

A: Your employee may verify his or her status and provide proof to you of that status. Ask the employee to verify certification and exam history in the [Certifications tracking system tool](#). Because this tool is for individual access only, partner company administrators and application authors will not be able to view an employee profile, certification status, or exam history. Cisco Certification and Specialization application authors can access the Locations and Contacts section of their [Cisco Channel Partner Application](#) to view current certifications per individual.

Q: How do I determine what requirements still need to be fulfilled by my employee to achieve a Cisco Qualified Specialist certification? How do I track my employees' Cisco Qualified Specialist progress?



A: Instruct your employee to visit the [Certifications tracking system tool](#). He or she will be able to view exam history and can compare it against the requirements of the specific Cisco Qualified Specialist certification.

Only Cisco career certified individual may access their profiles, certification status, and exam history. Partner company administrators and application authors will not be able to view an individual employee's profile, certification status, or exam history.

Q: Is there a limit to the number of Cisco Qualified Specialist certifications an individual can hold?

A: No. An individual may hold as many Cisco Qualified Specialist certifications as he or she can achieve. However, when using your Cisco Qualified Specialist qualification to fulfill a specialization job role, an individual can be allocated to a maximum of two job roles in a maximum of two specializations.

Section 3: General Cisco Qualified Specialist Certification

Q: What is a Cisco Qualified Specialist?

A: Part of the Cisco Career Certifications program, the title of Cisco Qualified Specialist is awarded to individuals who have demonstrated significant competency in a specific technology, solution area, or job role, which is demonstrated through the successful completion of one or more proctored exams. Most Cisco Qualified Specialist designations require the individual to hold a core certification such as CCNA or CCDA. For complete program details and specific requirements of each of the Cisco Qualified Specialists, view the Cisco Qualified Specialist learning map of choice in the [Partner E-Learning Connection](#). In addition, customers may view the [Cisco Qualified Specialist requirements](#).

Q: Where do I find information on Cisco Qualified Specialist requirements?

A: You may view the Cisco Qualified Specialist learning map of choice in the [Partner E-Learning Connection](#). In addition, customers may view the [Cisco Qualified Specialist requirements](#).

Q: How do I determine what requirements I still need to fulfill to complete my Cisco Qualified Specialist certification?

A: Please visit the [Certifications tracking system tool](#). You will be able to view your exam history and can compare it against the requirements of the specific Cisco Qualified Specialist certification. Only Cisco career certified individuals may access their profiles, certification status, and exam history. Partner company administrators and application authors will not be able to view an employee profile, certification status, or exam history.

Q: How and when will I be notified that it's time to renew my Cisco Qualified Specialist certification? How will I know if my Cisco Qualified Specialist certification is expired?

A: You will receive an e-mail reminder from Cisco Systems® six months prior to your expiration date, and a second e-mail reminder three months in advance of your certification expiration date. Your certification is valid for two years from the date you pass the exam(s) required to achieve the Cisco Qualified Specialist designation. You can verify your certificate start and expiration date in the [Certifications tracking system tool](#).



Q: What e-mail address will Cisco use to notify me?

A: Cisco uses the address in your personal information file in the [Cisco Career Certifications Tracking System tool](#). It is the responsibility of the Cisco Qualified Specialist to keep this information current.

Q: What if my Cisco Qualified Specialist certification expires before I take the appropriate actions to re-certify?

A: Holders of expired certifications must repeat the entire certification exam process to regain their certifications.

Q: How long is a Cisco Qualified Specialist certification valid?

A: The Cisco Qualified Specialist certification is valid for two years from the date the individual passed the exam required to achieve the Cisco Qualified Specialist designation.

Q: Will I receive a certificate?

A: Yes. After a candidate passes all exams required for the Cisco Qualified Specialist certification, and signs the required agreements, Cisco will send a Cisco Career Certifications certificate identifying the candidate's Cisco Career Certifications ID and valid certification dates (arrives six to eight weeks after all agreements have been accepted).

Q: When an exam changes, is my Cisco Qualified Specialist certification invalid?

A: No, your Cisco Qualified Specialist certification remains valid for two years, regardless of any new exams that may have been released during that time. You must recertify with current exams when you renew your Cisco Qualified Specialist certification.

Q: How do I renew my Cisco Qualified Specialist certification?

A: To renew your Cisco Qualified Specialist certification, you must pass the current required exam(s) and sign the "Cisco Career Certifications Agreement" at the testing center. Go to the [Cisco Qualified Specialist Website](#) to determine which exams are required and what recommended training is available to help you prepare to pass the exam.

Q: What are the additional benefits of passing a Cisco Qualified Specialist exam?

A: Passing any technical Cisco Qualified Specialist exam also renews your base-level Associate Career Certification, CCNA or CCDA. Therefore, if you have a current CCNA or CCDA badge at the time of passing a technical CQS exam, your CCNA or CCDA badge will be extended an additional three years. Technical exams are those that typically relate to Systems Engineer or Field Engineer roles.

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