
**ISTQB Certified Tester
Advanced Level**

**Release Plan
CTAL 2012**

Version 1.1



Advanced Level Working Group	Version: 1.1
AL2012 Release Plan	Date: 9 th March 2012

Revision History

Date	Version	Description	Author(s)
8 th January 2012	1.0	Release Plan for GA Approval, March 2012	Graham Bath, Mike Smith
9 th March 2012	1.1	Minor date schedule updates prior to GA Approval and on change of WG Chairs and Vice-Chairs	Mike Smith

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Release Plan

1. Introduction

This document provides information about the release of the ISTQB Advanced Level Syllabus, Version 2012 (CTAL2012). The ISTQB Advanced Level Working Group (ALWG) is responsible for creating and maintaining the syllabus. The CTAL2012 consists of four separate documents.

- Overview
- Test Manager syllabus
- Test Analyst syllabus
- Technical Test Analyst syllabus

Unless explicitly stated in this Release Plan, use of the term “CTAL2012” implies all four of these documents.

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of the Release Plan is to

- identify the items to be released (chapter 2)
- provide a plan to implement the release (chapter 3)
- identify the relevant roles and responsibilities (chapter 4)
- outline the processes to be used (chapter 5)
- identify any areas of risk (chapter 6)

1.2 Applicable Documents

The following documents have supported the creation of this Release Plan

Document	Version
ISTQB Release Policy	11-25-2010
ISTQB Release Process Procedure	05-15-2011
ISTQB Release Manager Requirements	Draft Version 0.2, 23/10/2011

1.3 Syllabus Versions

The following syllabus versions are planned (see section 3.1 for further planning information):

Version	Purpose
Draft 1	ALWG review
Draft 2	First National/Regional Board review
Alpha	Second National/Regional Board review
Beta	For GA Approval and commencement of localization activities
Release 1.0	Released version

1.4 Release Strategy

The modular structure of the AL syllabi enables individual modules to be released separately. The current release strategy is for simultaneous release of all AL modules. The separate release of individual modules shall only apply if issues arise which prevent simultaneous release. In the event that priorities must be allocated to individual modules, the following priorities shall apply:

- Priority 1: Test Management
- Priority 2: Test Analyst
- Priority 3: Technical Test Analyst

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1.5 Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
ALWG	ISTQB Advanced Level Working Group
CTAL2012	ISTQB Advanced Level Syllabus, Version 2012
EWG	ISTQB Exam Working Group
GA	ISTQB General Assembly
RM	Release Manager
TA	Test Analyst
TBOK	ISTQB Test Body of Knowledge
TM	Test Manager
TTA	Technical Test Analyst
WG	ISTQB Working Group

2. Release Items

2.1 General Documents

Release Item	Responsibility
Advanced Level Overview	ALWG
Advanced Level Overview: Review comments list	ALWG
Updated TBOK Matrix	TBOK WG
Updated Glossary	Glossary WG
Release Notes	ALWG

2.2 Test Manager Module

Release Item	Responsibility
TM Syllabus	ALWG-TM Coordinator
TM Review Comments	ALWG-TM Coordinator
TM Practice Exam	EWG
TM Accreditation Structure & Rules*	ALWG
TM Examination Structure & Rules*	EWG

* may be combined into a single document covering all AL modules

2.3 Test Analyst Module

Release Item	Responsibility
TA Syllabus	ALWG-TA Coordinator
TA Review Comments	ALWG-TA Coordinator
TA Practice Exam	EWG

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TA Accreditation Structure & Rules*	ALWG
TA Examination Structure & Rules*	EWG

* may be combined into a single document covering all AL modules

2.4 Technical Test Analyst Module

Release Item	Responsibility
TTA Syllabus	ALWG-TTA Coordinator
TTA Review Comments	ALWG-TTA Coordinator
TTA Practice Exam	EWG
TTA Accreditation Structure & Rules*	ALWG
TTA Examination Structure & Rules*	EWG

* may be combined into a single document covering all AL modules

3. Plan

The following planning documents shall be created for the AL2012 release:

- Overall Release Plan (section 3.1)
- Localization Plan (section 3.2)
- Grandfathering Plan (section 3.3)

3.1 Milestones

The following milestones have been completed:

Milestone	Date
Completion of Draft 1 syllabus version for review by ALWG	September 15 th 2011
Completion of ALWG review	October 15 th 2011
Completion of Draft 2 syllabus version for review by National/Regional Boards	November 14 th 2011
Completion of National/Regional Board review	December 14 th 2011

The following milestones are planned:

Milestone	English	Non - English
Release plan available for approval	January 9 th 2012	
Localization Plan available for approval (part of release plan with separate vote)	January 9 th 2012	
Grandfathering Plan available for approval (part of release plan with separate vote)	January 9 th 2012	
Create reviewer guidelines	January 31 st 2012	

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Milestone	English	Non - English
Alpha syllabus version submitted for review to National/Regional Boards, together with the reviewer guidelines	February 1 st 2012	
ALWG Glossary change requests submitted	February 1 st 2012	
Alpha syllabus review completed by National/Regional Boards	February 29 th 2012	
GA Approval of release plan and localization plan	March 9 th 2012	
Announcement of sunset date for accreditations (June 8 th 2012 English/September 8 th Non-English): National/Regional Boards stop accepting new applications for accreditation of training material against the 2007 AL syllabus.	March 9 th 2012	
ALWG submits the Beta syllabus to the GA	April 7 th 2012	
Glossary WG submits version 2.2 to the GA	April 7 th 2012	
ALWG submits the Exam Structure and Rules to the GA	April 7 th 2012	
ALWG submits the Accreditation Structure and Rules to the GA	April 7 th 2012	
Sunset date for accreditations: National/Regional Boards stop accepting new applications for accreditation of training material against the 2007 AL syllabus.	June 8 th 2012	September 8 th 2012
GA Approval of Beta syllabus	June 8 th 2012	
GA Approval of Exam Structure and Rules	June 8 th 2012	
GA Approval of Accreditation Structure and Rules	June 8 th 2012	
Partial sample exams ready	June 8 th 2012	
GA Approval of Glossary updates	June 8 th 2012	
ALWG notification to National Boards to kick off localization activities (e.g. translations) using Beta version of syllabus		June 9 th 2012
Submit AL2012 syllabus V1.0 for GA release	August 18 th 2012	
Full sample exams ready	October 11 th 2012	
TBOK updated	October 11 th 2012	
Completion of Release Notes and Release Checklist	October 18 th 2012	

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Milestone	English	Non - English
GA release of AL2012 V1.0 syllabus	October 19th 2012	
Earliest date for accredited AL2012 courses with exams	December 1 st 2012	December 1 st 2012
Localization completed. Note: translation is optional. Not all boards will choose to do so.		April 19 th 2013
Sunset date for courses: no further 2007 courses allowed to start	April 19 th 2013	July 19 th 2013
Sunset date for exams: no further 2007 exam re-sits allowed	July 19 th 2013	October 19 th 2013

3.2 Localization Plan

The milestones identified in 3.1 under the Non-English column form the basis of the Localization plan.

In general, there is a 3 month lag in milestones for localization activities, although some milestones are common for both English and non-English. The following milestones are applicable to English and Non-English versions:

- March 9th 2012 – Announcement of Sunset date for accreditations: National/Regional Boards to stop accepting new applications for accreditation of training material against the 2007 AL syllabus (June 8th English, September 8th Non-English).
- December 1st 2012 - Earliest date for accredited AL2012 courses with exams.

This means that it is feasible for Boards who decide to localize to meet the requirements for localization within the same timeframes as those Boards who choose not to perform localization. This is made possible because localization can commence after GA approval of the Beta version of the syllabus, together with Exam Structure & Rules plus Accreditation Structure & Rules. This provides a period of 4 months for localization activities prior to the official release of the AL2012 syllabus.

The following are the milestones relating specifically to localization:

- June 9th 2012 - ALWG notification to National Boards to kick off localization activities (e.g. translations) using the Beta version of syllabus plus Exam & Accreditation deliverables
- April 19th 2013 - Localization completed – Note that this milestone gives 6 months for localization from release of the syllabus, even though localization could commence from Beta release, thereby providing 10 months for completion of localization. Also note that translation is optional. Not all boards will choose to do so.
- July 19th 2013 - Sunset date for courses: no further 2007 non-English courses allowed to start.
- October 19th 2013 - Sunset date for exams: no further 2007 non-English exam re-sits allowed.

The implication of the localization plan is that within 12 months of the release of the AL2012 syllabus, there will be no further activity for either the English or Non-English version of the 2007 syllabus.

3.3 Grandfathering Plan

A large number of existing Advanced certificates have been issued by recognized National Boards and by Exam Boards which are authorized to issue Advanced certificates by at least one recognized National Board. To preserve the continuity of the program, the ISTQB, the National Boards, and the Exam Boards agree to the following six statements of equivalent treatment:

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- ISTQB Advanced Test Manager certificates earned by passing exams against all earlier versions of Advanced Syllabi are treated as equivalent to the Advanced Test Manager certificates earned by passing exams against CTAL2012-TM.
- ISTQB Advanced Functional Tester and Advanced Test Analyst certificates earned by passing exams against all earlier versions of Advanced Syllabi are treated as equivalent to the Advanced Test Analyst certificates earned by passing exams against CTAL2012-TA.
- ISTQB Advanced Technical Tester and Advanced Technical Test Analyst certificates earned by passing exams against all earlier versions of Advanced Syllabi are treated as equivalent to the Advanced Technical Test Analyst certificates earned by passing exams against CTAL2012-TTA.
- ISEB Practitioner certificates earned by passing an exam taken no later than March 31, 2008 [i.e., under the original Practitioner program] are treated as equivalent to the Advanced Test Manager, Advanced Test Analyst, and Advanced Technical Test Analyst certificates earned by passing exams against CTAL2012.
- ISEB Test Management Practitioner certificates earned by passing exams against the new ISEB Practitioner Syllabus (since April 1st, 2008) are treated as equivalent to the Advanced Test Manager certificates earned by passing exams against CTAL2012-TM.
- ISEB Test Analysis Practitioner certificates earned by passing exams against the new ISEB Practitioner Syllabus (since April 1st, 2008) are treated as equivalent to the Advanced Test Analyst certificates earned by passing exams against CTAL2012-TA.

This treatment of equivalence has the following four consequences.

First, the ISTQB, the National Boards, and the Exam Boards shall not take any action, impose any pre-requisites, or pass any rule or by-law, including at the Expert level, which would favor one equivalent certificate over another. For example, suppose that Advanced Test Analyst certification is a pre-requisite to take a given Expert exam. Advanced Functional Tester or ISEB Test Analysis Practitioner certificate holders may also take the same Expert exam, and no additional burden shall be placed on them to do so.

Second, equivalence does not mean substitution. The ISTQB, the National Boards, and the Exam Boards shall only issue certificates showing certification against the CTAL2012 for candidates who have passed an exam run against CTAL2012.

Third, treatment as equivalent does not mean that they are in fact identical in coverage.

Fourth, the ISTQB, the National Boards, and the Exam Boards shall post on their Web sites the six statements of equivalent treatment listed above.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Responsibilities for individual release items are stated in chapter 2.

The following people are allocated to the specific roles.

Role	Person
ALWG-Chair	Mike Smith
ALWG-Vice	Bernard Homes
EWG-Chair	Debra Friedenberg
RM	Ken Young
TA-Coordinator	Judy McKay
TBOK-Chair	<TBD>
TM-Coordinator	Rex Black
TTA-Coordinator	Graham Bath

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5. Processes

5.1 Release Process

The release process and milestones (see section 3.1) are based on the current version of the general ISTQB Release Process Procedure (see section 1.2).

The AL2012 release shall be used to pilot the general ISTQB release process, which is likely to result in changes and improvements to the process. It should be noted that the general ISTQB release process was adopted after commencement of work on the AL2012 syllabus. As a result, some of the activities defined the general ISTQB release process will not have been completed.

5.2 Review Process

The review process is based on the current ISTQB Release Process Procedure (see section 1.2). The following aspects relate specifically to the review activities for the AL2012 release:

- Following the review of syllabus Draft 2 version by the National/Regional Boards, an additional National/Regional Board review is scheduled for the Alpha syllabus. This is required to due to the volume of changes resulting from the Draft 2 review.
- Review comments shall be submitted to the ALWG-Chair and ALWG Vice-Chair, who are responsible for distributing the comments to the relevant coordinator.

6. Risks

The following risks are identified:

Risk	Likelihood %	Impact	Mitigation
Delay in completion of the practice exam papers for each syllabus module may delay the final release to 2013	50	High	Intensive planning and coordination with EWG and ISTQB Exec. Allocated priorities (section 1.4) Possibility to release individual AL modules separately.
The future form of the TBOK is currently not known. This is currently a release item	90	Low	Inform RM that this should be waived as a release item.