Claude Certified Associate – Foundations

Exam Guide

Version 1.1 · Effective November 2026 · Exam code: CCAO-F · This guide is subject to change without notice.

1. About This Certification

The Claude Certified Associate – Foundations certification validates that an individual can apply Claude to complete business and productivity tasks with minimal guidance. This includes using built-in platform features, capabilities, and tools to streamline workflows; identifying opportunities to improve processes with Claude; selecting approaches that balance quality, efficiency, and cost; and recognizing limitations and escalating more complex or technical work to Claude Architects and Developers.

It is intended for professionals who use Claude as a productivity tool in roles such as operations, marketing, project management, education, and communications. This guide is the authoritative reference for candidates preparing to sit the exam; it describes the credential's purpose, audience, exam format and blueprint, scoring, policies, and rules of conduct. Read it in full before scheduling.

2. Purpose and Value of the Credential

The primary purpose of the Claude Certified Associate – Foundations certification is to provide an independent assessment of the knowledge and skills required to use Claude effectively and responsibly in real-world business workflows. Earning the credential indicates that the holder has demonstrated the knowledge and skills defined in the exam blueprint.

Candidates who earn the credential can demonstrate that they are able to:

- Apply Claude to complete structured business tasks with minimal guidance
- Use built-in platform features and tools to streamline workflows
- Identify opportunities to improve processes using Claude
- Select appropriate approaches to balance quality, efficiency, and cost
- Recognize limitations and escalate more complex or technical implementations

3. Intended Audience

The certification is intended for professionals who use Claude as a productivity tool and build Claude Projects in their day-to-day roles. They operate across functions such as operations, marketing, project management, education, communications, and general knowledge work, applying AI to improve efficiency, decision-making, and content development. The audience includes both internal staff who maintain and optimize ongoing AI-enabled workflows and external consultants who support implementation, use-case identification, and process redesign.

Candidates generally have limited to moderate technical expertise. They are positioned between casual AI prompt users and technical AI practitioners, and are distinguished by their ability to translate business objectives into effective AI interactions, select appropriate tools and features, create structured prompts, critically evaluate AI-generated content, adapt outputs for different audiences, and recognize when human expertise, validation, or escalation is required.

This certification is not intended for software developers who build against APIs or design agentic systems, nor for specialists in machine learning, software engineering, or advanced AI system design. Candidates are not expected to design enterprise-scale AI architectures or integrations; that scope belongs to the Claude Architect and Claude Developer credentials, to which Associates escalate more complex or technical work.

4. Minimally Qualified Candidate Profile

The exam is targeted at the minimally qualified candidate (MQC): a professional who uses Claude as a core productivity tool and can apply it effectively within real-world workflows to improve efficiency, quality, and outcomes. The MQC has foundational, applied knowledge of Claude's capabilities, including prompt structuring, task orchestration, and familiarity with features such as Projects, Artifacts, and workflow-based interactions, and moves beyond basic question-and-answer usage to process reimagination, task automation, and project development.

The MQC is aware of organizational context: how Claude creates value, where adoption risks exist, and how to align usage with business needs and responsible-AI practices. They have regular, hands-on experience using Claude in a professional setting and can independently complete common productivity and workflow tasks on the platform.

Recommended experience

- Regular, hands-on experience using Claude in a professional setting
- A foundational understanding of structured problem-solving, workflow design, and digital tool usage
- Experience in roles such as business analyst, project manager, operations lead, marketing/communications/HR/education professional, consultant, or knowledge worker
- A practical understanding of AI limitations, including hallucinations, context constraints, and data sensitivity

Prerequisites: There are no mandatory prerequisites or required courses, and no software-development or API experience is needed. The experience above is recommended, not required. The credential is awarded based on exam performance alone.

5. Exam Details at a Glance

Credential	Claude Certified Associate – Foundations
Exam code	CCAO-F
Number of items	60
Item format	Multiple-choice and multiple-response items; each item states how many responses to select
Time limit	120 minutes
Delivery	Proctored: online proctored and/or test center, per program policy
Passing score	Scaled score of 720 on a scale of 100–1,000
Exam fee	$99 USD
Validity period	12 months from the date the credential is awarded
Result reporting	Pass/fail with scaled score (100–1,000), plus percent-correct by domain on the score report

6. Exam Content Outline (Blueprint)

The exam blueprint defines the content domains measured and the approximate weight of each domain on the exam. Weights reflect the relative importance of each domain to competent performance as determined through the job task analysis. The percentages indicate the approximate proportion of scored items drawn from each domain.

Domain	Content Domain	Weight
1	Prompting and Task Execution	14%
2	Output Evaluation and Validation	21%
3	Product and Model Selection	12%
4	Workflow Integration and Solution Design	16%
5	Configuration and Knowledge Management	12%
6	Governance, Risk, and Responsible Use	15%
7	Troubleshooting and Optimization	10%
Total		100%

Detailed objectives by domain

Each domain below lists the tasks a candidate is expected to perform. Exam items are written against these objectives.

Domain 1: Prompting and Task Execution (14%)

- Create effective prompts for business and technical tasks
- Apply task decomposition techniques to structure complex requests
- Iterate prompts to improve output quality
- Adapt prompting strategies based on task type (analysis, research, drafting, brainstorming)

Domain 2: Output Evaluation and Validation (21%)

- Evaluate Claude-generated outputs for accuracy and completeness

- Identify hallucinations, inconsistencies, and biases in responses
- Apply fact-checking and validation techniques
- Determine when human review or additional verification is required
- Edit, adapt, refine, and compare outputs for the intended audience
- Organize and curate information and select appropriate output formats (artifacts, inline, structured data)

Domain 3: Product and Model Selection (12%)

- Select appropriate Claude product features (Projects, research mode, chat, artifacts)
- Differentiate between Claude model types (Haiku, Sonnet, Opus)
- Align model selection with task requirements (cost, speed, quality)
- Understand and manage context limitations and memory considerations (when to restart, summarize, or persist)

Domain 4: Workflow Integration and Solution Design (16%)

- Apply Claude to analyze requirements and use cases
- Leverage Claude for research, planning, and process optimization
- Use Claude to support solution design, development, and iteration
- Integrate Claude into existing workflows to augment or redesign them
- Communicate Claude's value and limitations to stakeholders

Domain 5: Configuration and Knowledge Management (12%)

- Configure Claude Projects with instructions and knowledge sources
- Manage uploaded knowledge and connectors (e.g., Google Drive, Gmail)
- Create effective system-level instructions
- Inform, maintain, and update Claude configurations, knowledge sources, and instructions

Domain 6: Governance, Risk, and Responsible Use (15%)

- Identify appropriate and inappropriate use cases
- Apply data sensitivity, regulatory, and privacy considerations

- Follow organizational AI policies and governance standards
- Understand the ethical implications of AI usage

Domain 7: Troubleshooting and Optimization (10%)

- Identify, diagnose, and resolve issues with underperforming prompts or poor outputs
- Adjust approach based on feedback and results
- Optimize workflows for efficiency and effectiveness

7. How to Prepare

There is no single required course. Anthropic does not guarantee that any particular resource ensures a passing result. Candidates are encouraged to combine hands-on experience with the resources below:

- Study the exam blueprint in Section 6 and self-assess against each objective
- Review official Anthropic documentation and help articles for Claude features such as Projects, Artifacts, Memory, Skills, and Code Execution
- Practice structuring prompts, decomposing tasks, and iterating to improve outputs
- Build real workflows: configure a Project with instructions and knowledge sources, and evaluate outputs for accuracy and bias
- Practice responsible-use judgment: data sensitivity, appropriate use cases, and when to escalate or seek human review
- Complete the sample questions in Section 8 to familiarize yourself with item style

8. Sample Questions

These illustrative items show the style and cognitive level of the exam. They are not drawn from the live item bank. Correct answers and rationale appear after the questions.

Sample 1

· Domain 2 — Output Evaluation and Validation

An associate asks Claude to summarize a new regulation, and Claude produces a confident summary citing a specific subsection number. Before sending the summary to the compliance team, what is the most appropriate action?

A. Send it as-is, since Claude expressed high confidence.

B. Verify the cited subsection against the official regulation text before sharing.

C. Ask Claude to rate its own confidence and send it if the rating is high.

D. Reword the summary to sound more formal, then send it.

Sample 2

· Domain 3 — Product and Model Selection

An associate needs to generate a high volume of short customer-reply drafts where speed and cost matter more than deep reasoning. Which choice best fits the task?

A. Use the most capable, highest-cost model for every reply to maximize quality.

B. Use a faster, lower-cost model suited to straightforward, high-volume tasks.

C. Disable all product features to reduce cost.

D. Switch to a different AI platform.

Sample 3

· Domain 6 — Governance, Risk, and Responsible Use

A project manager wants to upload a spreadsheet containing customer names and account numbers so Claude can analyze trends. Organizational policy restricts sharing regulated personal data. What is the most appropriate action?

A. Upload the file as-is, since the analysis is internal.

B. Remove or anonymize the personal identifiers before uploading, consistent with policy.

C. Upload the file but instruct Claude not to retain it.

D. Skip the analysis entirely.

Answer key and rationale

Sample 1: B. Language models can fabricate specific-looking details such as citation numbers, a hallucination. Validating factual claims, especially citations bound for a compliance audience, against an authoritative source is the diligence step required. Self-reported confidence (A, C) is not a reliable accuracy signal, and reformatting (D) does not address correctness.

Sample 2: B. Aligning model selection with task requirements means matching a faster, lower-cost model to straightforward, high-volume work, reserving the most capable model for complex reasoning. Always using the top model (A) wastes the cost and latency budget; disabling features (C) or switching platforms (D) does not address the trade-off.

Sample 3: B. Applying data-sensitivity and privacy safeguards means redacting or anonymizing regulated identifiers before use, so the analysis can proceed without exposing protected data. Uploading as-is (A) violates policy; instructing the model not to retain data (C) does not satisfy the policy control; abandoning the task (D) is unnecessary when anonymization enables it.

9. How the Exam Is Scored

The Claude Certified Associate – Foundations exam is a criterion-referenced assessment: each candidate is measured against a fixed performance standard, not against other candidates. You pass by demonstrating the knowledge and skills defined in the blueprint, not by outperforming a percentage of peers.

Passing standard. The passing score was established through a formal standard-setting study in which trained subject matter experts judged the level of performance expected of a minimally qualified candidate. The score is reported on a scaled range of 100–1,000, and the cut score is 720.

Result reporting. Your result is reported as a pass or fail status with a scaled score from 100 to 1,000. Your score report also shows the percentage of items you answered correctly within each content domain. Section-level percentages are provided to help you understand your performance and are not used to determine your pass or fail result, which is based on your total scaled score.

10. Registration and Scheduling

Registration and scheduling are handled through the Anthropic Partner Academy and Pearson VUE:

1. Go to your certification page on the Anthropic Partner Academy and review the exam details.

2. Download the Exam Guide and review the Certification Terms and Conditions and the Certification Exam Policy.
3. Click Register, confirm your exam and exam profile, then select Continue to Pearson.
4. At Pearson, choose online proctoring or a test center, select a date and time, and complete checkout. The price reflects any partner discount.
5. If you have already registered, use Go to my Pearson account to schedule, take your exam, or view your results and receipts.
6. OnVUE (online proctored) exams can be canceled or rescheduled up to one hour before your appointment, and test center exams up to 48 hours before. Later changes forfeit the exam fee. Rescheduling keeps your price, including any discount. Canceling starts an automatic refund of anything you paid at Pearson's checkout, which takes 7 to 10 business days. If you paid through the Anthropic Partner Academy before 8 a.m. PT on November 12, 2026, Anthropic refunds your payment after you cancel, which can take a few extra days. If your refund has not arrived after 10 business days, email certifications-support@anthropic.com.

11. Exam Policies

Identification

On exam day you must present a valid, unexpired, government-issued photo identification. The name on your ID must match the name on your registration exactly. If you need to correct the name on your registration, you can update this information in your exam profile within your Partner Academy profile before scheduling your exam. For OnVUE (online proctored) exams, updates sync in near real time. For test center appointments, updates sync only once per day — update your name at least 24 hours in advance, or the update may not be reflected when you check in. **NOTE**: You can update your name yourself once; it locks when you confirm your profile. For any later change, contact certifications-support@anthropic.com.

Accommodations

Reasonable accommodations are available for candidates with documented disabilities or needs, in accordance with applicable law. Accommodations must be requested and approved by Pearson VUE before you schedule your exam. Do not schedule your appointment until your request has been approved. Request accommodations at pearsonvue.com/us/en/test-takers/accommodations.

Retake policy

Candidates who do not pass may retake the exam after a required waiting period. Waiting periods increase with each failed attempt: 14 days after the first, 30 days after the second, and 90 days after the third. You may take an exam up to four times within a rolling twelve-month period. Limits apply per exam, so not passing one exam does not prevent you from registering for a different one. The exam fee applies to each attempt.

No-show and late arrival

Candidates who fail to appear for a scheduled exam, or who arrive after the permitted late-arrival window, forfeit the exam fee and must re-register. Cancellation and rescheduling deadlines are described in Section 10.

12. Exam-Day Experience and Rules of Conduct

The exam is administered in a standardized, secure, proctored environment. Whether you test online or at a Pearson VUE test center, the following rules apply to protect the integrity of the credential for everyone who holds it.

During the exam you must:

- Remain within view of the proctor and webcam for the entire session, if testing online
- Keep your workspace clear of notes, books, phones, secondary monitors, and other materials
- Refrain from communicating with any other person during the exam
- Not capture, copy, photograph, or reproduce any exam content in any form

Prohibited items include mobile phones, smart watches, smart glasses, headphones, study materials, and any recording device. Permitted items, if any, such as scratch paper provided by the proctor, are specified by Pearson VUE.

Consequences of misconduct. Cheating, attempting to access prohibited resources, or disclosing exam content may result in invalidation of your result, revocation of your credential, and a ban from future exams.

13. Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure Agreement

Before the exam begins you must accept a confidentiality and non-disclosure agreement. By accepting, you agree that all exam content, including questions, answer options, and scenarios, is the confidential and proprietary property of Anthropic, and that you will not disclose, reproduce, or distribute any portion of it. If you do not accept the agreement, the exam session ends and no refund is issued.

14. Credential Maintenance and Recertification

The Claude Certified Associate – Foundations credential is valid for 12 months from the date it is awarded. Because the underlying technology evolves rapidly, the credential is time-limited so that holders maintain current knowledge.

To renew on time, you review what has changed since you certified and complete a free, non-proctored assessment on the Anthropic Partner Academy. There is no fee for on-time renewal. If your credential lapses, you must retake the full exam at the full fee to regain certified status.

If exam content changes significantly, Anthropic may require holders to retake the full exam to recertify rather than complete the renewal assessment.

Holders remain subject to the rules of conduct described in Section 12.

15. Candidate Support, Appeals, and Privacy

Support

To correct the name on your registration, update your exam profile in your Partner Academy profile before you confirm it. For trouble signing in or reaching Pearson, an exam missing from your Pearson account, a missing partner discount, or profile details you can't change, email certifications-support@anthropic.com. For exam-day problems, other checkout issues, scheduling, rescheduling, canceling, accommodations, and results, contact Pearson support at pearsonvue.com/us/en/anthropic.html.

Appeals and complaints

You may appeal a decision within 14 days of the date you are notified of it, or, for a concern about your exam result, within 14 days of your exam date. Submit your appeal to Pearson VUE support at the link above. Appeals are reviewed under the program's appeals policy. The standard-setting outcome and the content of individual exam items are not subject to appeal.

Privacy

Personal data collected during registration and testing is handled in accordance with Anthropic's privacy policy, Pearson VUE's privacy policy, and applicable data-protection law.

16. Document Control

Version	Summary of change	Date
1.0	Initial publication	July 2026
1.1	Registration, identification, and support updates	November 2026