



SOA Exams Moving to Computer-Based Delivery: Additional Details

Updated September 22, 2020

The SOA is moving to a computer-based testing (CBT) approach for nearly all examinations beginning with the Fall 2020 written-answer exam administration. Candidates will take their exams at a Prometric testing facility. Prometric's technology and testing platform will allow for the use of Excel and Word on written-answer exams as needed. Candidates without access to a Prometric test center should e-mail SOA customer service to request assistance. These requests will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

The Exam Experience at Prometric Centers

- Candidates will use Word and Excel to construct their responses and be restricted to working and submitting one Word document and one Excel file. See information later in this document on which Word and Excel features will be available.
- The exam questions, case studies, formula sheets, tables and/or other material will be provided as PDF files.
- The exam questions will be repeated in the Word document that will also hold the responses.
- The Excel file may be pre-loaded with data.
- Candidates will not receive hard copies of the exam questions.
- Candidates will be provided with scratch paper,* which will be handed in to a Prometric center administrator and shredded.
- Each exam will have specific instructions for providing responses. For example, an exam could instruct candidates to provide written explanations in the Word document and calculations in the Excel file.
- Candidates will submit their completed Word and Excel files electronically via the Prometric submission portal.

A video simulating the exam environment candidates will experience will be made available prior to the exam administration.

*Some exams will require the use of a paper answer booklet at Prometric centers – see Exams with Special Arrangements for Fall 2020 below. For these exams, candidates will be provided with scratch paper within the answer booklet.

Fall Exam Schedule

The fall exam schedule is posted on the [Education General Information page](#). The registration deadline is Monday, September 28, 2020.

Sample Exam Questions

New sample exam questions are now available on the home page for each written-answer exam. The questions are designed to give candidates an understanding of how written-answer questions may be posed in a CBT environment.

Availability of Word and Excel Features in Prometric Testing Environment

1. Candidates will be able to copy and paste between Word and Excel and vice versa, including pasting cells from Excel into Word as a table.
2. There is a file size limit of 25MB per file.
3. Analysis-ToolPak in Excel will not be available.
4. Solver in Excel will not be available.
5. Candidates will not have access to Help in Excel and Word.
6. Certain short-cut keys will be disabled. See below for the full list.

The following list of shortcut keys will not be available

ALT - F4 Down	CTRL - P Down
ALT - F4 Up	CTRL - P Up
ALT - Space Down	CTRL -ESC Down
ALT - Space Up	CTRL- ESC Up
ALT -ESC Down	CTRL-ALT-DEL
ALT- ESC Up	CTRL-ESC
ALT -Tab Down	CTRL-N
ALT- Tab Up	CTRL-SHIFT-N
ALT-ESC	F1
ALT-F4	F1 Down
ALT-Space	F1 Up
ALT-TAB	F11
Application/Context Menu	F11 Down
Application Down	F11 Up
Application Up	F3
CTRL - B Down	Left WIN Down
CTRL - B Up	Left WIN Up
CTRL - L Down	Right WIN Down
CTRL - L Up	Right WIN Up
CTRL - N Down	Shift - F10 Down
CTRL - N Up	Shift - F10 Up
CTRL - O Down	Shift - F10
CTRL - O Up	Windows keys (both)

Exams with Special Arrangements for Fall 2020

Two exams have been identified as exceptions needing special arrangements for the Fall 2020 administration due to infrastructure requirements to securely capture unique hand-written calculations, figures and graphs. It is anticipated that an appropriate mechanism can be implemented by the Spring 2021 administration, but for the fall 2020 administration the following assessment methods will be used.

- The **Long-Term Actuarial Mathematics (LTAM) Exam** will be run as a traditional paper and pencil exam at SOA organized exam centers, not at Prometric locations.
- The **QFI Quantitative Finance Exam** will be administered at Prometric test centers, but candidates will submit hand-written answers to select questions in a paper answer booklet to be collected by Prometric and enter answers electronically for other questions.

Please send any questions to customerservice@soa.org.