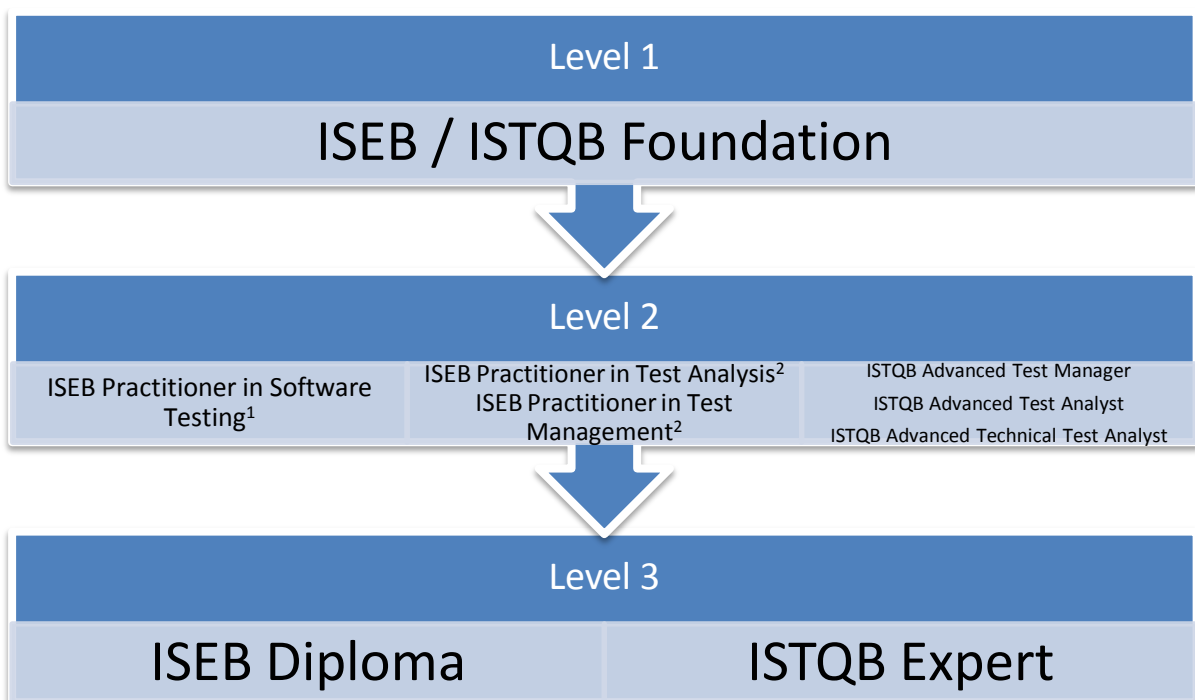


## Tester Certification Explained

The testing industry is now seeing a number of exciting changes in the training and certification schemes available to testers. This document details SQS's understanding of these changes and how we at SQS will provide training, support and guidance to delegates wishing to continue following a certified career development path in testing.

There are 3 levels of certification:

- Level 1 – Foundation
- Level 2 – Practitioner / Advanced
- Level 3 – Diploma / Expert



<sup>1</sup> The ISEB Practitioner Certificate in Software Testing was withdrawn by ISEB in March 2008. It remains a valid international certification but no new candidates can take this route.

<sup>2</sup> To sit the new ISEB Practitioner in Test Analysis or Test Management exams, candidates must first pass the 1 hour 25 multiple choice ISEB Intermediate Certificate exam.

## SQS's Offering

Level 1:

- SQS continues to offer our popular 3 and 4 day Foundation level training courses. This certificate is jointly recognised by ISEB and ISTQB and has an above-industry average pass rate of 86%.

Level 2:

- The old-style ISEB Practitioner was withdrawn by ISEB in March 2008 and replaced with a new-format split scheme and new syllabi which offers more flexibility and allows training and exams to be taken in a more effective manner than before.



- SQS is proud to be the first training provider in the world to offer all three certifications for the new ISEB scheme: Intermediate, Practitioner Test Management and Practitioner Test Analyst.
- We are also looking at how best to introduce new courses for the new ISTQB certification and new courses are currently in development. It is likely that these will arrive in January 2009.
- Importantly, we are working closely with ISEB and ISTQB to look towards converging the level 2 certifications, as we did with Foundation level.

Level 3:

- We will offer the level 3 certifications as and when they become available, at time of writing neither ISEB nor ISTQB had released any concrete plans.
  - For the ISEB Diploma, ISEB have stated that they “will start development work on a higher level qualification at the end of 2008 with the aim for it being available in Quarter 3 2009.”
  - ISTQB have a working party for their Expert level and work has commenced on defining the structure and syllabus but no release dates are currently available.

To help choose your certification path read on for more details of each scheme, or contact our training advisors to discuss your needs.

## The Levels Explained

### Level 1 - Foundation

The entry level of certification for testers is the Foundation Certificate in Software Testing, based on the ISTQB syllabus. Foundation exams are administered by ISEB in the UK, Ireland and several other countries and by other local examination bodies elsewhere. Training and certification at Foundation level remains unchanged and SQS offers an extensive range of public courses and onsite events at this level. Important point: An ISEB Foundation Certificate is the same as an ISTQB Foundation Certificate.

### Level 2 - Practitioner / Advanced

At level 2 there are separate schemes from ISEB and ISTQB. As with Foundation level many in the industry would prefer a single internationally recognised certification for Practitioner and Advanced levels. Both schemes are broadly equivalent and discussions are underway between the various bodies and training providers to look towards converging the ISEB and ISTQB syllabus and/or exams. We do not expect anything to happen on convergence until 2009-10 at the earliest so it is likely that parallel schemes will exist in the interim. As a tester you therefore have a choice of the ISEB or ISTQB scheme, both of which are based on the same ISTQB Glossary and build on the ISTQB Foundation Syllabus.

### ISEB Practitioner

The single exam ISEB Practitioner has now been closed to new candidates. For those who have passed the old style ISEB Practitioner qualification, your certificate will remain valid as an internationally recognised certification and both ISEB and ISTQB have stated that they will regard this as valid for their proposed third level of certification, outlined below. Please see ISEB's portability statement on their website for more details: [www.bcs.org/upload/pdf/iseb-portability.pdf](http://www.bcs.org/upload/pdf/iseb-portability.pdf)

### New syllabus – separate exams

ISEB has now phased out the current exam and introduced a new series of three examinations. SQS offers three separate training courses to prepare delegates for each exam:

- *ISEB Intermediate Certificate in Software Testing*, 3 days with the exam taken on day 4 or at an ISEB public exam session. **AVAILABLE NOW**
- *ISEB Practitioner Certificate in Test Management*, 3 days leading to an exam taken quarterly at a separate event. **AVAILABLE NOW**
- *ISEB Practitioner Certificate in Test Analysis*, 3 days leading to an exam taken quarterly at a separate event. **AVAILABLE NOW**

### How does the new syllabus work?

1. You should hold the ISEB Foundation Certificate in Software Testing.
2. You must then pass the 25 multiple choice Intermediate Certificate exam (taken at the end of the *ISEB Intermediate Certificate in Software Testing* training course). This exam tests your knowledge to K4 on the Bloom's Taxonomy scale.
3. After passing the Intermediate Certificate, you may then take the *ISEB Practitioner Certificate in Test Analysis*, or *ISEB Practitioner Certificate in Test Management*, or both. It is recommended, but not mandatory, to take these within 2 years of passing the Intermediate Certificate.



SQS offers training courses for each, leading to a formal written exam taken quarterly in March, June, September or December. The written exams will require the delegate to choose 4 half-hour questions from 6 possible questions and you are tested to K6 on the Bloom's Taxonomy scale.

### **ISTQB Advanced**

At level 2, ISTQB plan to split their qualifications into 3 separate exams:

- Advanced Level Test Manager
- Advanced Level Test Analyst
- Advanced Level Technical Test Analyst

Passing all 3 modules allows you to obtain the "Full Advanced Testing Professional" certification.

A syllabus has been published and is available in English and German. No exam dates have been released in Europe though it is our understanding that this is likely to be late 2008 or early 2009. The multiple choice exams will only examine to K4 level so will not go to the same depth as the ISEB qualifications.

### **Level 3 - ISEB Diploma and ISTQB Expert**

In due course there will be a third level of certification. Neither ISEB nor ISTQB have made any firm announcements though we understand the current thinking to be different from each organisation:

- ISEB's vision is for a Diploma level where people broaden their perspective and also take qualifications in other ISEB-supported areas. The ISEB qualification portfolio includes a number of exciting qualifications in areas such as project management, requirements engineering, development and service management. ISEB have stated that they "will start development work on a higher level qualification at the end of 2008 with the aim for it being available in Quarter 3 2009."
- ISTQB's vision is for people to narrow their focus and specialise in more detailed aspects of testing, such as automation or performance testing. ISTQB have a working party for their Expert level and work has commenced on defining the structure and syllabus but no release dates are currently available.
- Both alternatives have their relative merits and SQS will offer training towards these exams and as soon as each organisations outlines their plans we will update you on our position.