



Certified Privacy Engineering Specialist (CPES)

Exam Objectives CPES-001

About the exam

Item	Detail
Level	Advanced
Number of questions	120. A performance-based exam: each form can carry up to 5 to 12 performance-based questions alongside the multiple-choice questions.
Delivery model	Computer adaptive in 3 stages of 42, 39, 39 questions. Your score on each stage selects the difficulty of the next, so no two candidates sit the same paper.
Time limit	180 minutes
Scoring	You need a score of 700 out of 900 to pass. Results are reported on a scale of 100 to 900, and 700 corresponds to answering 72% of the exam correctly. Harder questions carry more weight, so a score means the same thing on any route. Multiple-response items and PBQs are scored all or nothing.
Delivery	Online, fully proctored (webcam, microphone and screen).
Prerequisites	No formal prerequisite. Candidates do best with two years in software, data or security work and 50 to 80 hours of study.
Retakes	No waiting period after a failed first attempt. Candidates pay the exam price each time they attempt the exam. See the CertLabz Certification Retake Policy at certlabz.com/certification-retake-policy.html
Validity	3 years. Renew with 75 CEUs per cycle and the \$55 annual continuing-education fee, or by passing the current exam.
Language	English
Exam voucher	\$199 for one sitting, valid 12 months. Bundles add the study guide ebook and the All Access plan.

Domain weights

Domain	Questions
D1 Privacy Foundations, Principles and Law (16%)	19

D2 Privacy by Design and Threat Modeling (16%)

	19
D3 Data Governance, Mapping and Minimization (17%)	21
D4 Privacy-Enhancing Technologies (17%)	21
D5 Privacy in Systems and Engineering (17%)	20
D6 Privacy Program, Assessments and Breach (17%)	20
Total (100%)	120

Objectives by domain

Each objective may appear as knowledge, a scenario to judge, a circuit to trace or assemble, or a number to compute. Each form can carry up to 5 to 12 performance-based questions: drag-and-drop matching, sequencing and table completion, drawn fresh each attempt. The exam does not test any vendor's SDK syntax.

D1 Privacy Foundations, Principles and Law

16% 19 questions

- D1.1 Privacy versus security; personal and special-category data
- D1.2 Core principles: minimization, purpose and storage limitation
- D1.3 Lawful bases, controller and processor roles
- D1.4 Data-subject rights including access and erasure
- D1.5 Privacy by Design and by Default
- D1.6 GDPR and CCPA/CPRA at a high level; accountability

D2 Privacy by Design and Threat Modeling

16% 19 questions

- D2.1 LINDDUN privacy threat modeling
- D2.2 Linkability, identifiability and other privacy threats
- D2.3 Data flow diagrams as the basis for controls
- D2.4 Privacy design strategies and patterns
- D2.5 On-device and edge processing to avoid collection
- D2.6 Privacy requirements as testable acceptance criteria

D3 Data Governance, Mapping and Minimization

17% 21 questions

- D3.1 Records of Processing Activities and data catalogs
- D3.2 Data discovery, classification and mapping
- D3.3 Retention schedules enforced technically across copies
- D3.4 Least-privilege access and access logging
- D3.5 Unstructured stores, cross-border transfer, model deletion
- D3.6 Governance metadata at ingest

D4 Privacy-Enhancing Technologies

17% 21 questions

- D4.1 Anonymization versus pseudonymization
- D4.2 k-anonymity, l-diversity and t-closeness
- D4.3 Differential privacy and the privacy budget
- D4.4 Tokenization, encryption with scoped keys
- D4.5 Secure computation, homomorphic encryption, private set intersection
- D4.6 Re-identification risk assessment

D5 Privacy in Systems and Engineering

17% 20 questions

- D5.1 Consent management and evidence
- D5.2 DSAR and deletion pipelines across systems and processors
- D5.3 Logging, test data and dark patterns
- D5.4 Data APIs, field-level authorization and masking
- D5.5 Preference centers and consent withdrawal propagation
- D5.6 Privacy in machine learning; membership inference

D6 Privacy Program, Assessments and Breach

17% 20 questions

- D6.1 Data Protection Impact Assessments and when they trigger
- D6.2 Vendor assessment and data processing agreements
- D6.3 Breach risk assessment and notification duties
- D6.4 Privacy in the SDLC and program metrics
- D6.5 The DPO role and prior consultation
- D6.6 Training and feeding lessons into design standards

Continuing education

Renewal	Requirement
Validity	3 years from the date of issue
CEUs required per cycle	75
Annual CE fee	\$55
Alternative to CEUs	Pass the current version of the exam before the expiry date

Qualifying activities

Activity	CEUs
CertLabz labs, PBQs, courses and SkillTracker assessments	1 CEU per hour, up to 25 per cycle
Other industry certifications earned or renewed	10 to 25 each, depending on level
Conferences, webinars and training	1 CEU per hour, up to 20 per cycle
Privacy, security or data-governance work experience	3 per year, up to 9 per cycle
Teaching, mentoring, publishing or open-source contributions	Up to 15 per cycle
College courses in privacy, law, security or computing	10 per completed course

CertLabz Certification Retake Policy

- **No waiting period after a failed first attempt:** If you fail your first attempt at any CertLabz certification examination, CertLabz does not require any waiting period between the first and second attempt.
- **Once you pass, you cannot resit the same exam code:** A candidate who has passed an exam and achieved a certification cannot take that exam again under the same exam code without prior consent from CertLabz. You will need to wait until a new series of the exam is published before attempting to recertify by examination.
- **Beta examinations, one attempt only:** A CertLabz beta examination may be taken one time by each candidate.
- **Violations invalidate the attempt:** A test found to be in violation of this policy will be invalidated, and the candidate may be subject to a suspension period. Repeat violators will be permanently banned from the CertLabz Certification Program.
- **Every attempt is paid for:** Candidates must pay the exam price each time they attempt the exam. CertLabz does not offer free retests or discounts on retakes.

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<https://certlabz.com/certifications/certified-privacy-engineering-specialist.html>