

CRE

# THE ASQ CERTIFIED RELIABILITY ENGINEER



Quality excellence to enhance your career  
and boost your organization's bottom line

[asq.org/cert](https://asq.org/cert)



**ASQ**

Excellence Through Quality®

Certification from ASQ is considered a mark of quality excellence in many industries. It helps you advance your career, and boosts your organization's bottom line through your mastery of quality skills. Becoming certified as a Reliability Engineer confirms your commitment to quality and the positive impact it will have on your organization.



## Examination

Each certification candidate is required to pass a written examination that consists of multiple-choice questions that measure comprehension of the body of knowledge.

## The ASQ Certified Reliability Engineer

The Certified Reliability Engineer (CRE) understands the principles of performance evaluation and prediction to improve product/systems safety, reliability, and maintainability. This body of knowledge and applied technologies include, but are not limited to, design review and control; prediction, estimation, and apportionment methodology; failure mode and effects analysis; the planning, operation, and analysis of reliability testing and field failures, including mathematical modeling; understanding human factors in reliability; and the ability to develop and administer reliability information systems for failure analysis, design, and performance improvement and reliability program management over the entire product life cycle.



### CRE

**Computer Delivered** - The CRE examination is a one-part, 165-question exam and is offered in English only. 150 questions are scored and 15 are unscored. Total appointment time is four-and-a-half hours, exam time is 4 hours and 18 minutes.

**Paper and Pencil** – The CRE examination is a one-part, 150-question, four-hour exam, and is offered in Korean and Mandarin in certain locations.

For comprehensive exam information on the Certified Reliability Engineer certification, visit [asq.org/cert](https://asq.org/cert).

## Work Experience

You must have eight years of on-the-job experience in one or more of the areas of the Certified Reliability Engineer Body of Knowledge. A minimum of three years of this experience must be in a decision-making position. "Decision making" is defined as the authority to define, execute, or control projects/ processes and to be responsible for the outcome. This may or may not include management or supervisory positions.

If you are now or were previously certified by ASQ as a Quality Engineer, Quality Auditor, Software Quality Engineer, Supplier Quality Professional, or Manager of Quality/ Organizational Excellence, experience used to qualify for certification in these fields often applies to certification as a Reliability Engineer.

If you have completed a degree\* from a college, university, or technical school with accreditation accepted by ASQ, part of the eight-year experience requirement will be waived as follows (only one of these waivers may be claimed):

- Diploma from a technical or trade school— one year waived
- Associate's degree— two years waived
- Bachelor's degree— four years waived
- Master's or doctorate— five years waived

\*Degrees or diplomas from educational institutions outside the United States must be equivalent to degrees from U.S. educational institutions.







# BODY OF KNOWLEDGE

## The ASQ Certified Reliability Engineer (CRE)

**Topics** in this body of knowledge include additional detail in the form of subtext explanations and the cognitive level at which the questions will be written. This information will provide useful guidance for both the Examination Development Committee and the candidates preparing to take the exam. The subtext is not intended to limit the subject matter or be all-inclusive of what might be covered in an exam. It is intended to clarify the type of content to be included in the exam. The descriptor in parentheses at the end of each entry refers to the highest cognitive level at which the topic will be tested. A more comprehensive description of cognitive levels is provided at the end of this document.

---

### I. Reliability Fundamentals (25 questions)

#### A. Leadership Foundations

##### 1. Benefits of reliability engineering

Describe the value that reliability has on achieving company goals and objectives, and how reliability engineering techniques and methods improve programs, processes, products, systems, and services. (Understand)

##### 2. Interrelationship of safety, quality, and reliability

Describe the relationship of and distinguish between reliability and quality, and describe the importance of safety in reliability engineering and how reliability impacts safety. (Understand)

##### 3. Reliability engineer leadership responsibilities

Describe how to be a reliability champion by influencing program decisions and facilitating cross-functional communication. (Understand)

##### 4. Reliability engineer role and responsibilities in the product life cycle

Describe how the reliability engineer influences the product life cycle, and describe a reliability engineer's role in the design review process in order to anticipate how reliability can impact risk and costs, and ensure performance over time. (Understand)

##### 5. Function of reliability in engineering

Describe how reliability techniques can be used to apply best practices in engineering (e.g., measuring reliability early), how industry standards can impact reliability, and how reliability can inform the decision analysis process. (Analyze)

##### 6. Ethics in reliability engineering

Identify appropriate ethical behaviors for a reliability engineer in various situations. (Evaluate)

##### 7. Supplier reliability assessments

Explain how supplier reliability impacts the overall reliability program and describe key reliability concepts that should be included in supplier reliability assessments. (Analyze)

## 8. Performance monitoring

Describe the importance of performance monitoring to ensure that product reliability or safety requirements continue to be met, and identify life-cycle points in which process and product reliability data are collected and evaluated. (Understand)

## B. Reliability Foundations

### 1. Basic reliability terminology

Explain basic terms related to reliability and the associated metrics (e.g., MTTF, MTBF, MTTR, service interval, maintainability, availability, failure rate, reliability, and bathtub curve). (Apply)

### 2. Drivers of reliability requirements and targets

Describe how customer expectations and industry standards, safety, liability, and regulatory concerns drive reliability requirements. (Understand)

### 3. Corrective and preventive action (CAPA)

Identify corrective and preventive actions to take in specific situations and evaluate their measures of effectiveness. (Evaluate)

### 4. Root cause analysis

Describe root cause analysis, and use a root cause and failure analysis tool to determine the causes of degradation or failure. (Evaluate)

### 5. Product life-cycle engineering stages

Describe the impact various life-cycle stages (concept/design, development/test, introduction, growth, maturity, decline) have on reliability, and the cost issues (product maintenance, life expectation, software defect phase containment, etc.) associated with those stages. (Understand)

### 6. Economics of product maintainability and availability

Describe the cost tradeoffs associated with product maintainability strategies and availability. (Understand)

## 7. Cost of poor reliability

Describe how poor reliability affects costs over the life cycle. (Understand)

## 8. Quality triangle

Describe the relationship between cost, time, and quality with respect to reliability. (Understand)

## 9. Six Sigma methodologies

Describe how Six Sigma principles support reliability engineering. (Understand)

## 10. Systems engineering and integration

Describe the role of reliability engineering within systems engineering, including the integration of components and their interfaces/interactions within the system. (Understand)

## II. Risk Management (25 questions)

### A. Identification

#### 1. Risk management techniques

Use risk management tools and processes to identify, document, and track concerns. Identify and prioritize safety, economic, performance, and customer satisfaction concerns utilizing an appropriate risk management framework. (Analyze)

#### 2. Types of risk

Identify the various types of risks, including technical, scheduling, safety, and financial, and describe their relationship to reliability. (Analyze)

### B. Analysis

#### 1. Fault tree analysis (FTA)

Use fault tree analysis (FTA) techniques to evaluate product or process failure. (Analyze)

#### 2. Failure mode and effects analysis (FMEA)

Define and distinguish between failure mode and effects analysis (FMEA) and failure mode, effects, and criticality analysis (FMECA) and apply these techniques to systems, products, processes, and designs. (Evaluate)

### 3. Common mode failure analysis

Describe common mode failure (also known as common cause failure) and how it affects risk. (Understand)

### 4. Hazard analysis

Describe how hazard analysis informs the development process, and how information obtained as a result of the hazard analysis is used by the reliability engineer. (Understand)

### 5. Risk matrix

Describe how risk matrices are used in the assessment of risk in regard to likelihood and severity. (Understand)

### 6. System safety

Identify safety-related issues by analyzing customer feedback, design data, field data, and other information. Prioritize safety concerns, and identify steps that will minimize the improper use of equipment, products, or processes. (Evaluate)

## C. Mitigation

Identify appropriate risk mitigation (treatment) plans to include controls that will minimize risk and subsequent impact in terms of safety, liability, and regulatory compliance. (Evaluate)

## III. Probability and Statistics (35 questions)

### A. Basic Concepts

#### 1. Basic statistics

Define various basic statistical terms (e.g., population, parameter, statistic, sample, the central limit theorem, parametric, and nonparametric), and compute and interpret their values. (Analyze)

#### 2. Basic probability concepts

Use basic probability concepts (e.g., independence, mutually exclusive, conditional probability), and compute and interpret the expected values. (Analyze)

#### 3. Probability distributions

Compare and contrast various distributions (e.g., binomial,

Poisson, exponential, Weibull, normal, and log-normal), and recognize their associated probability plots. (Analyze)

### 4. Probability functions

Compare and contrast various probability functions (e.g., cumulative distribution functions (CDFs), probability density functions (PDFs), and hazard functions), and recognize their application in various situations. (Apply)

### 5. Sampling plans for statistics and reliability testing

Use various theories, tables, and formulas to determine appropriate sample sizes or testing time for statistical and reliability testing. (Apply)

### 6. Statistical process control (SPC) and process capability studies ( $C_p$ , $C_{pk}$ )

Define and describe SPC and process capability studies ( $C_p$ ,  $C_{pk}$ , etc.), control charts, and how each is related to reliability. (Understand)

### 7. Confidence and tolerance intervals

Compute confidence intervals and tolerance intervals, draw conclusions from the results, and describe how point estimates are used to determine the interval. (Evaluate)

### B. Data Management

#### 1. Sources and uses of reliability data

Describe sources of reliability data (prototype, development, test, field, warranty, published, etc.), their advantages and limitations, and how the data can be used to measure and enhance product reliability. (Analyze)

#### 2. Types of data

Identify and distinguish between various types of data (e.g., attributes vs. variable, discrete vs. continuous, censored vs. complete, and univariate vs. multivariate). Select appropriate analysis tools based on the data type. (Evaluate)



### 3. Data collection methods

Identify and select appropriate data collection methods (e.g., surveys, automated tests, automated monitoring, and reporting tools) in order to meet various data analysis objectives and data quality needs. (Evaluate)

### 4. Data summary and reporting

Examine collected data for accuracy and usefulness. Analyze, interpret, and summarize data for presentation using various techniques, based on data types, sources, and required output. (Create)

### 5. Failure analysis methods

Describe failure analysis tools and methods (e.g., mechanical, materials, physical analysis, and scanning electron microscopy (SEM)) that are used to identify failure mechanisms. (Understand)

### 6. Failure reporting, analysis, and corrective action system (FRACAS)

Identify elements necessary for FRACAS, and demonstrate the importance of a closed-loop process. (Evaluate)

### 3. Failure consequence

Describe the importance of identifying the consequences of failure modes when establishing reliability acceptance criteria. (Understand)

### 4. Failure criteria

Define and describe failure criteria based on system requirements and warranty terms and conditions. (Understand)

### 5. Test environment

Appraise the environment in terms of system location and operational conditions, and designate the environment in the test plan to ensure an appropriate test strategy is implemented. (Evaluate)

## B. Testing

Describe the purpose, advantages, and limitations of each of the following types of tests, and use common models to develop test plans, evaluate risks, and interpret test results. (Evaluate)

### 1. Accelerated life tests

(single-stress, multiple-stress, sequential stress, step-stress, HALT, margin tests)

### 2. Stress screening

(ESS, HASS, burn-in tests)

### 3. Qualification/ Demonstration testing

(sequential tests, fixed-length tests)

### 4. Degradation (wear-to-failure) testing

### 5. Software testing

(white-box, black-box, operational profile, and fault-injection)

## C. Modeling

### 1. Reliability block diagrams and models

Generate and analyze various types of block diagrams and models, including series, parallel, partial redundancy, and time-dependent. (Evaluate)

## IV. Reliability Planning, Testing, and Modeling (35 questions)

### A. Planning

#### 1. Reliability test strategies

Develop and apply the appropriate test strategies (e.g., truncation, test-to-failure, degradation, growth plan, and test, analyze, and fix (TAAF)) for various product development phases. (Evaluate)

#### 2. Environmental and conditions of use factors

Identify environmental and use factors (e.g., temperature, humidity, and vibration) and stresses (e.g., severity of service, electrostatic discharge (ESD), throughput, and duty cycle) to which a product may be subjected. (Analyze)

## 2. Physics of failure and failure mechanisms

Identify various potential failure mechanisms (e.g., fracture, corrosion, memory corruption) and describe the physical process of these failures. (Apply)

## 3. Failure models

Select appropriate theoretical models (e.g., Arrhenius, S-N curve) to assess or predict failure rates. (Analyze)

## 4. Reliability prediction methods

Use various reliability prediction methods (e.g., Monte Carlo Simulation, part stress analysis, and parts count prediction) for both repairable and nonrepairable components and systems, and describe the inputs into the model. (Apply)

## 5. Design prototyping

Describe the advantages and limitations of prototyping to enhance product reliability. (Understand)

## 5. Human factors

Describe the relationship between human factors and reliability engineering, including user safety, user and usage profiles, failure modes, and mechanisms. (Understand)

## 6. Design for X (DFX)

Apply DFX techniques such as design for manufacturability, testability, and maintainability. (Apply)

## 7. Design for Reliability (DfR)

Apply DfR in order to meet reliability requirements throughout the product or system life cycle. Understand how built-in reliability and fault tolerance/avoidance are key goals for design for reliability. (Evaluate)

# V. Life-Cycle Reliability (30 questions)

## A. Reliability Design Techniques

### 1. Design evaluation techniques (validation and verification)

Explain how validation, verification, and other review techniques are used to assess the reliability of a product's design at various life-cycle stages. (Apply)

### 2. Stress-strength analysis

Apply the stress-strength analysis method of calculating probability of failure, and interpret the results. (Analyze)

### 3. Design of experiments (DOE)

Develop and interpret the results of a standard design of experiments (DOE) (e.g., full factorial and fractional factorial). (Analyze)

### 4. Reliability optimization

Use various approaches to optimize reliability within the constraints of cost, schedule, weight, and other design requirements. (Apply)

## B. Parts and Systems Development

### 1. Materials and components selection techniques

Apply techniques (e.g., derating and commercial off-the-shelf (COTS)) for selecting materials and components to meet reliability goals and requirements. (Analyze)

### 2. Parts standardization and system simplification

Describe the importance of standardization, simplification, and parts re-use to meet reliability goals and requirements. (Apply)

## C. Maintainability

### 1. Maintenance strategies

Develop a maintenance plan incorporating various strategies (e.g., predictive maintenance, repair or replace decision making, spare parts analysis/forecasting, and equipment warranties). (Apply)

### 2. Preventive maintenance (PM) analysis

Define and use PM tasks, optimum PM intervals, and other elements of this analysis. Identify situations when PM is not effective. (Apply)

### 3. Corrective maintenance analysis

Describe and apply the elements of corrective maintenance analysis (e.g., fault-isolation time, repair/replace time, skill level, and crew hours). (Apply)

# LEVELS OF COGNITION

*Based on Bloom's Taxonomy—Revised (2001)*

In addition to **content** specifics, the subtext for each topic in this BoK also indicates the intended **complexity level** of the test questions for that topic. These levels are based on "Levels of Cognition" (from Bloom's Taxonomy – Revised, 2001) and are presented below in rank order, from least complex to most complex.

**REMEMBER** | Recall or recognize terms, definitions, facts, ideas, materials, patterns, sequences, methods, principles, etc.

**UNDERSTAND** | Read and understand descriptions, communications, reports, tables, diagrams, directions, regulations, etc.

**APPLY** | Know when and how to use ideas, procedures, methods, formulas, principles, theories, etc.

**ANALYZE** | Break down information into its constituent parts and recognize their relationship to one another and how they are organized; identify sublevel factors or salient data from a complex scenario.

**EVALUATE** | Make judgments about the value of proposed ideas, solutions, etc., by comparing the proposal to specific criteria or standards.

**CREATE** | Put parts or elements together in such a way as to reveal a pattern or structure not clearly there before; identify which data or information from a complex set is appropriate to examine further or from which supported conclusions can be drawn.

Visit [asq.org/cert](https://asq.org/cert) for comprehensive exam information.



# Enhance your career with ASQ certification today!

Visit [asq.org/cert](https://asq.org/cert) for additional  
certification information including:

- Applications
- Available certifications and international language options
- Reference materials
- Study guides and test-taking tips
- Comprehensive exam information
- ASQ sections
- International contacts
- Endorsements

2018 CRE BoK

---

Item B0060