

# GLOBAL INFORMATION ASSURANCE CERTIFICATION

The Industry Standard for Security Knowledge



## GIAC Certification Program Candidate's Handbook



# GIAC Certification Program Candidate Handbook

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## What is GIAC?

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### **GIAC provides information security certifications for IT managers and security professionals.**

GIAC stands for Global Information Assurance Certification. GIAC was founded in 1999 to validate the real-world skills of IT security professionals. GIAC's purpose is to provide assurance that a certified individual has practical knowledge and skills in key areas of computer security. GIAC offers certifications for job-specific responsibilities that reflect the current practice of information security. GIAC is unique in measuring specific knowledge areas instead of general purpose information security knowledge.



GIAC certifications are classified in five subject areas:

- ◆ Security Administration
- ◆ Forensics
- ◆ Management
- ◆ Audit
- ◆ Software Security

Prior to starting any certification attempt, candidates should be familiar with the specific certification objectives covered on the exam .

**GIAC Certification:** Requires passing one proctored exam. GIAC certifications assure an individual holds knowledge of practical real-world skills related to the specific skill set covered on the certification.

**GIAC Gold Status:** The GIAC Gold program allows certificants to demonstrate a deeper knowledge of the subject area. Requires candidates to research and write a detailed technical report or white paper. Certificants work closely with an advisor to developing a technical report. Once complete, the report is reviewed for acceptance into the GIAC Reading Room. Participating in the GIAC Gold program shows that not only has an individual mastered the subject area comprised by a specific certification, but that they are also experienced researchers and technical writers.

<http://www.giac.org/certifications/gold>

**GIAC Expert Status:** The GIAC Expert Level program yields the most respected credential in the industry and is for the top professionals in the industry. Prerequisites include achieving multiple specific milestones within our certification and Gold programs. The multi-day hands-on Expert-level testing is given annually. Testing includes individual and group computer security exercises, presentations, research and essay assignments, and scenario-based exam sections. The examination procedure assesses specific real-world skills to ensure that the individual is ready to confront various information security threats on multiple levels.

<http://www.giac.org/certification/security-expert-gse>

## GIAC's Mission

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A certification is proof that an individual meets a minimum standard of knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) for a particular profession. The mission of GIAC is to provide assurance to employers that their employees and prospective hires can perform their job duties. To accomplish this mission, GIAC shifts beyond theory and terminology and tests the pragmatics of Audit, Security, Operations, Management and Software Security tasks.

The primary goal of the program is to address the need to validate the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) of information security professionals and developers. GIACs' certifications were developed using the measurement and industry testing and measurement standards in including ANSI/ISO 17024.

### Benefits to Individuals

- Added confidence that you can proficiently protect systems, networks, and code.
- Keep your skills and knowledge current, through periodic recertification.

### Benefits to Employers

- Increased confidence that GIAC certified individuals charged with securing your systems, networks, and software applications actually know how to do the job.
- Training for certification provides system and network administrators with the technical skills needed to meet their security responsibilities through preparing for certification.

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# General Information

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- To attain GIAC Certification, you must complete one proctored certification exam at a PearsonVUE proctored testing facility.
- For proctor program details, [visit here](http://www.giac.org/exams/proctor/program-details) (http://www.giac.org/exams/proctor/program-details).
- For details specific to the certification you're interested in, including how to register, [visit here](#).
  - To ensure the ongoing validity and quality of certification exams, GIAC may present some questions which will not be scored.
- GIAC exams are open book. For details on what is and is not acceptable to use as a reference during your certification exam, [visit here](http://www.giac.org/certifications/get-certified/roadmap) (http://www.giac.org/certifications/get-certified/roadmap)
- Candidates must complete exam within the 4-month certification attempt period. For information on deadlines, retakes and extensions, visit [here](http://www.giac.org/exams/retakes-and-extensions) (http://www.giac.org/exams/retakes-and-extensions). However, GIAC requests that certification candidates manage their time properly and adequately prepare for exams, so that extensions and retakes are very rare events.
- All GIAC-related correspondence is sent to the email address used to register for your portal account and/or certification attempt. Your personal contact information can be managed through your GIAC [account](https://www.sans.org/account/login) (https://www.sans.org/account/login)

# GIAC Certification Renewal

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All GIAC certifications must be renewed every four years. Your recertification will become available for registration in your GIAC portal account two years in advance of your certification expiration date. The first 2 years you are certified require no further action from you. After 2 years, the certification renewal process will begin, with the ultimate goal being that you have demonstrated ongoing competency in the Information Assurance field.

There are four primary options to renew your certification in order to obtain the 36 CMUs required to maintain certification and include:

1. [Retaking the standard certification exam](#)
2. [Attending or Teaching a SANS or ISO 17024 Related Training Courses](#)
3. [Publishing an Information Assurance Related Paper, Book or Article](#)
4. [Information Assurance Post Graduate Classes](#)

There are also supplemental options, which can be combined with the primary options above, to help you obtain the required 36 CMUs:

1. [ther Training Courses / Events \(non-SANS/ISO 17024 related training\)](#)
2. [Work Experience](#)
3. [GIAC/SANS Community Participation/Contribution to InfoSec Magazine](#)
4. [Cyber Ranges/Exercises](#)

For details on GIAC Certification Renewal program outlined above, visit [here](http://www.giac.org/certifications/renewal) (http://www.giac.org/certifications/renewal).

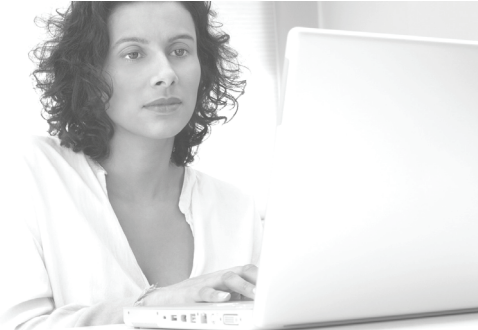
## Tips for Success & Where to get Help

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The GIAC certification program is challenging and we want to help you succeed! We offer the following advice when pursuing your certification:

### **Plan your time carefully.**

Do not postpone until the last minute. GIAC requests that candidates manage their time properly and prepare for the exams. Please note that the exam failure rate is much higher for candidates taking exams in the last 48 hours of their certification time.



### **Plan to spend some "hands on" time with the technology.**

GIAC does not formally require experience in the field in order to take the GIAC certifications. However, keep in mind that by design GIAC focuses on and tests your ability to apply your knowledge and skills in practice.

### **For additional tips for success, visit**

<http://www.giac.org/certifications/get-certified/steps#tips>

### **Preparing for Certification**

- Training is available from a variety of resources including on line, course attendance at a live conference, and self study.
- Practical experience is another way to ensure that you have mastered the skills necessary for certification. Many professionals have the experience to meet the certification objectives identified.
- Finally, college level courses or study through another program may meet the needs for mastery.

# GIAC Code of Ethics

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Information security professionals are afforded a great deal of responsibility and trust in protecting the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of an organization's information assets.

It is not enough for information security professionals to simply "do the job". We must hold ourselves and our discipline to the highest standards of ethical and professional conduct.

GIAC is committed to upholding these standards and fostering them within the information security community. All GIAC-certified individuals agree to uphold and be bound by the following Code of Ethics.

## **Code of Ethics**

The scope and responsibilities of an information security professional are diverse. The services provided by an information security professional are critical to the success of an organization and to the overall security posture of the information technology community. Such responsibilities place a significant expectation on certified professionals to uphold a standard of ethics to guide the application and practice of the information security discipline.

A professional certified by GIAC acknowledges that such a certification is a privilege that must be earned and upheld. GIAC certified professionals pledge to advocate, adhere to, and support the Code of Ethics.

GIAC certified professionals who willfully violate any principle of the Code may be subject to disciplinary action by GIAC.

## **Respect for the Public**

I will accept responsibility in making decisions with consideration for the security and welfare of the community.

I will not engage in or be a party to unethical or unlawful acts that negatively affect the community, my professional reputation, or the information security discipline.

## **Respect for the Certification**

I will not share, disseminate, or otherwise distribute confidential or proprietary information pertaining to the GIAC certification process.

I will not use my certification, or objects or information associated with my certification (such as certificates or logos) to represent any individual or entity other than myself as being certified by GIAC.

## **Respect for my Employer**

I will deliver capable service that is consistent with the expectations of my certification and position.

I will protect confidential and proprietary information with which I come into contact.

I will minimize risks to the confidentiality, integrity, or availability of an information technology solution, consistent with risk management practice.

## **Respect for Myself**

I will avoid conflicts of interest.

I will not misuse any information or privileges I am afforded as part of my responsibilities.

I will not misrepresent my abilities or my work to the community, my employer, or my peers.

To report a Code of Ethics violation or for more information on the Ethics violation process, please visit [here](http://www.giac.org/about/ethics/report-violation) (<http://www.giac.org/about/ethics/report-violation>).



## Accommodations for Individuals with Disabilities

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GIAC provides reasonable special accommodations according to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1991. Reasonable accommodations will provide candidates with disabilities a fair, equal opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skill in the essential functions being measured by GIAC Certification examinations. All reasonable special accommodation requests must be received by GIAC at least four weeks in advance of a candidate taking a specific exam.

Reasonable accommodations are decided upon based on the individual's specific request, specific disability, documentation submitted, and appropriateness of the request.

Reasonable accommodations do not include actions that fundamentally alter the purpose or nature of the examination. Reasonable accommodations generally are provided for candidates who have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits that person in one or more major life activities (e.g., walking, talking, hearing and performing manual tasks); have a record of such physical or mental impairment; or is regarded as having a physical or mental impairment.

To apply for reasonable special accommodations, you must submit a written request along with supporting documentation from your licensed health care provider. Documentation must include information that explains the nature of the disability, the specific type of accommodation you are requesting and must be presented to GIAC on official letter head from your health care provider.

To request a reasonable special accommodation from GIAC, fax your request along with the required support information to 808-822-4810; requests must be received at least four weeks in advance of when you plan to take the exam.

For questions regarding special accommodation requests, please email [ADA@giac.org](mailto:ADA@giac.org)

## Contacting GIAC

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If you have not found the information you're looking for, you may email one of the following addresses below. In order to serve your needs most effectively, *please do not email multiple email addresses.*

In order for us to provide faster service, include your full name, student ID number (found at the bottom of your portal home page), email address associated with your portal account, and the certification you are attempting.

[info@giac.org](mailto:info@giac.org) — All GIAC related questions can be sent here at any time, including testing, procedures, policies, deadlines, availability of certifications, more details, problems logging into your portal account, etc.. *Emergencies* should NOT be sent to this address.

[proctor@giac.org](mailto:proctor@giac.org) — Any questions regarding GIAC's proctor policy or becoming a proctor for GIAC exams. Any questions regarding Kryterion scheduling and support should be directed here. DO NOT contact Kryterion directly.

[testexam@giac.org](mailto:testexam@giac.org) — For reporting practice test problems. This email is monitored evenings and weekends.

[retest@giac.org](mailto:retest@giac.org) — For reporting exam problems. This email is monitored evenings and weekends.

[Cert-renewal@giac.org](mailto:Cert-renewal@giac.org)— Support through the certification renewal process.

[webmaster@giac.org](mailto:webmaster@giac.org) — Any problem related to the website.

[gse@giac.org](mailto:gse@giac.org)— Any questions regarding our platinum program.

**Grievances:** GIAC has an established process for answering candidate questions and addressing issues and complaints. If you have contacted GIAC previously and have not received a satisfactory response, you may submit a grievance to escalate the matter. For additional details on the Grievance procedure or to submit a grievance, visit [here](#).





# **GIAC Certification Program Handbook: Part II (Certification Bulletins)**

For the Bulletin specific to the Certification you are attempting,  
<http://www.giac.org/certifications/categories>