

# CERTIFIED INFORMATION SYSTEMS SECURITY PROFESSIONAL (CISSP) CERTIFICATION

## WHO ISSUES THE CERTIFICATION?

(ISC)<sup>2</sup> (International Information System Security Certification Consortium).

## WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE CERTIFICATION?

The purpose of the [CISSP](#) is to validate an information security professional's deep technical and managerial knowledge and experience to effectively design, engineer, and manage the overall cybersecurity posture of an organization. A CISSP certification holder possesses and maintains a level of competence defined by a globally-recognized, common body of knowledge to ensure its relevancy across all disciplines. It is not designed to be an initial route of entry into the profession or to promote economic mobility within the field.

## WHAT IS THE CAREER LEVEL OF THE CERTIFICATION AND WHO IS IT GEARED TO?

The CISSP is a mid-level certification geared to information security professionals who have at least five years of work experience.

## WHAT ARE THE EDUCATION AND/OR EXPERIENCE PREREQUISITES FOR THE CERTIFICATION?

The CISSP requires five years of related work experience to obtain. A four-year college degree or equivalent, or an additional credential from the (ISC)<sup>2</sup> approved list will satisfy one year of the required experience. If an individual does not have enough work experience, but takes and passes the CISSP exam, he/she can become an Associate of (ISC)<sup>2</sup> and will have six years to gain the necessary experience to fully obtain the CISSP.

## WHAT IS THE COST AND STRUCTURE OF THE CERTIFICATION'S EXAM(S)?

The English exam contains eight domains of knowledge (software development security, security and risk management, asset security, security architecture and engineering, communication and network security, identity and access management, security assessment and testing, and security operations), and consists of 100-150 items that must be completed within three hours. It is a computer-adaptive test in which a candidate's ability is determined based on the difficulty of exam items completed. The exam is proctored at computerized testing centers and costs \$749. In addition, the exam is offered in seven other languages and the format for those exams is a 250 item, fixed-form exam that must be completed within six hours.

## WHAT IS THE GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE OF THE CERTIFICATION?

The geographic scope is international, though the majority of certification holders are from the U.S.

## IS THE CERTIFICATION ACCREDITED?

Yes, (ISC)<sup>2</sup> meets the ANSI National Accreditation Board (ANAB) accreditation program requirements and those set forth in ISO/IEC 17024:2012 *Conformity assessment – General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons* for the CISSP.

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## **HOW LONG IS THE CERTIFICATION VALID?**

It is valid for three years.

## **IS THERE A PROCESS FOR RENEWING THE CERTIFICATION, OR RECERTIFICATION?**

Yes. Recertification is based on earning 120 continuing professional educational credits in activities (e.g., participating in webinars, attending training and events, and taking courses through the (ISC)<sup>2</sup> Professional Development Institute) related to areas covered by the specific domains of CISSP every three years and paying a \$125 annual maintenance fee.

## **CAN THE CERTIFICATION BE REVOKED?**

Yes, the CISSP could be revoked if holders knowingly violate any provision of the (ISC)<sup>2</sup> code of ethics.

## **IS THE CERTIFICATION LINKED TO LICENSURE?**

No.

## **HOW DOES THE CERTIFICATION RELATE TO OTHER (ISC)<sup>2</sup> CERTIFICATIONS OR THOSE OF OTHER CERTIFICATION BODIES?**

The CISSP is part of the (ISC)<sup>2</sup> family of certifications. Once someone earns the “base” CISSP, he/she can pursue a concentration in either architecture, engineering, or management – resulting in a hyphenated credential (e.g., CISSP-ISSAP, CISSP-ISSEP, or CISSP-ISSMP). In addition, parallel certifications in specialized areas of cybersecurity, such as the Systems Security Certified Practitioner, Certified Cloud Security Professional, Certified Secure Software Lifecycle Professional, Certified Authorization Professional, HealthCare Information Security and Privacy Practitioner, can be attained as standalone credentials or held simultaneously with the CISSP.

## **WHAT ARE SOME ORGANIZATIONS OR INDUSTRIES THAT RECOGNIZE OR USE THE CERTIFICATION?**

The CISSP can be used in all types of industries, but is especially common in cybersecurity firms and in the national security sector.

## **ARE THERE ANY COMPANIES, CORPORATIONS, OR OTHER ORGANIZATIONS THAT HAVE PUBLICLY DECLARED THEY PREFER OR REQUIRE THE CERTIFICATION?**

Yes, the U.S. Department of Defense’s Directive 8570 created a list of preferred cybersecurity certifications and included the CISSP as well as the whole (ISC)<sup>2</sup> portfolio of certifications.

## **WHAT OCCUPATIONS USE THE CERTIFICATION?**

Some example positions include security auditor, security systems engineer, chief information officer, director of security, IT director, IT manager, security analyst, security manager, security architect, security consultant, and network architect.

## **DOES (ISC)<sup>2</sup> OFFER TRAINING MATERIALS TO HELP INDIVIDUALS PREPARE FOR THE CERTIFICATION EXAM?**

Yes, (ISC)<sup>2</sup> publishes the CISSP exam blueprint, a study guide, practice tests, flash cards, suggested references, a study app, webcasts, and sells some instructor-led training options. They also approve external training providers and provide a directory of approved training providers on their website with a caution against purchasing training from unapproved training providers.