CERTIFICATION SYLLABUS

Certified IT Operations Lead

Exam Code: CITOL™



A complete preparation guide covering exam objectives, core competencies, domain weightage, and topics to prepare.

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   - *Team Leadership, Vendor & Stakeholder Management*

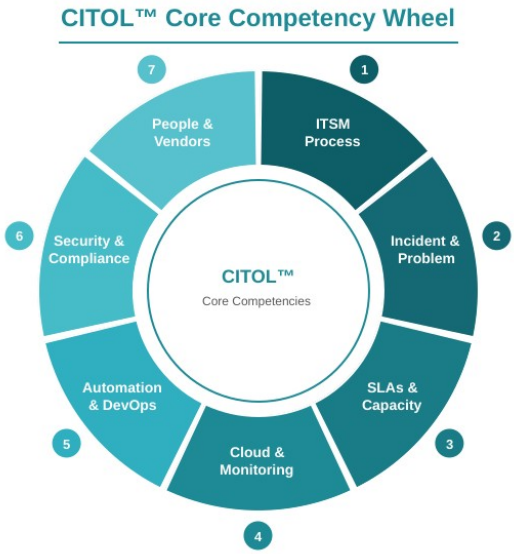
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Objective of the Certification

- **Lead IT operations service delivery:** own the day-to-day performance of operations teams and the services they support.
- **Own and improve ITSM processes:** manage incident, request, change, and release processes and drive continual improvement.
- **Lead major incidents:** coordinate response, communication, and restoration, and run blameless post-incident reviews.
- **Drive problem management and root cause analysis:** apply structured techniques to remove the recurring causes of incidents.
- **Manage service levels, capacity, and availability:** define and track SLAs, KPIs, capacity plans, and availability targets.
- **Oversee infrastructure, cloud, and monitoring operations:** patching, backups, disaster recovery testing, observability, and cloud cost awareness.
- **Introduce automation and DevOps practices:** reduce manual work through scripting, infrastructure as code, and CI/CD concepts.
- **Embed security, risk, and compliance in operations:** vulnerability and patch management, access reviews, audit evidence, and risk-based change decisions.
- **Lead people, vendors, and stakeholders:** plan shifts and on-call rotations, coach team members, manage supplier performance, and communicate with the business.
- **Create a foundation for progression to higher-level credentials:** building on CITOA™ and preparing for IT operations management roles.

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Core Competencies — CITOL™ (IT Operations Lead)



1. ITSM Process Ownership & Continual Improvement

- Define process goals, roles, and responsibilities, for example by using a RACI matrix.
- Run change governance, including risk assessment, change advisory review, and post-implementation review.
- Use metrics and feedback to drive continual service improvement.

2. Major Incident & Problem Leadership

- Lead a major incident response, including roles, communication cadence, and escalation.
- Apply root cause analysis techniques such as 5 Whys and cause-and-effect diagrams.
- Run blameless post-incident reviews and track corrective actions to completion.

3. Service Levels, Capacity & Availability Management

- Distinguish service level agreements (SLAs), operational level agreements (OLAs), and underpinning contracts.
- Track KPIs such as MTTR, MTBF, availability, and SLA compliance.
- Plan capacity using trends and forecasts to prevent performance issues.

4. Infrastructure, Cloud & Monitoring Operations

- Design useful monitoring and alerting based on logs, metrics, and traces.
- Manage patching, backup, and disaster recovery testing against RTO and RPO targets.
- Understand cloud operations, including shared responsibility and cost control.

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5. Automation, DevOps & Operational Efficiency

- Identify repetitive work (toil) that is suitable for automation.
- Explain infrastructure as code and the basics of CI/CD pipelines.
- Describe how DevOps and site reliability engineering (SRE) ideas improve reliability.

6. Security, Risk & Compliance in Operations

- Support vulnerability and patch management based on risk.
- Run access reviews and apply least privilege and segregation of duties.
- Prepare audit evidence and understand controls from standards such as ISO/IEC 27001.

7. Team Leadership, Vendor & Stakeholder Management

- Plan shifts, on-call rotations, and workload to prevent burnout.
- Coach team members, give feedback, and build skills through knowledge sharing.
- Manage vendor performance against contracts and communicate clearly with business stakeholders.

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Who Should Take This Certification

- IT operations team leads, shift leads, and supervisors.
- Senior service desk, system, network, and support engineers moving into lead roles.
- Holders of the CITOA™ certification who want to progress to team leadership.
- Incident, problem, and change coordinators and process owners.
- Cloud and infrastructure engineers who coordinate operational work.
- Professionals preparing for IT operations management roles.

Exam Information

Exam Name	IT Operations Lead
Exam Code	CITOL™
Exam Format	Multiple Choice Questions (MCQ), including scenario-based questions
Duration	120 minutes
Number of Questions	75
Passing Score	70%
Mode of Exam	Test Center Based Testing / Online Testing
Language	English
Validity	Lifetime
Open Book	No

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Examination Domain & Weightage

Domain	Weightage
ITSM Process Ownership & Continual Improvement	16%
Major Incident & Problem Leadership	16%
Service Levels, Capacity & Availability Management	16%
Infrastructure, Cloud & Monitoring Operations	16%
Automation, DevOps & Operational Efficiency	12%
Security, Risk & Compliance in Operations	12%
Team Leadership, Vendor & Stakeholder Management	12%
Total	**100%**

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Topics to Prepare

The topics below represent the core areas candidates should focus on for each domain, reflecting the practical, intermediate depth expected at the CITOL™ level.

1. ITSM Process Ownership & Continual Improvement (16%)

- **Process Ownership:** Process goals, roles, RACI, and accountability.
- **Incident and Request Processes:** Assignment, escalation, categorization, and fulfillment models.
- **Change and Release Governance:** Risk assessment, change advisory review, and post-implementation review.
- **Continual Service Improvement:** Using metrics, feedback, and ticket analysis to improve services.

2. Major Incident & Problem Leadership (16%)

- **Major Incident Management:** Declaring, coordinating, communicating, and closing a major incident.
- **Incident Command Roles:** Incident commander, communications lead, and technical leads.
- **Root Cause Analysis:** 5 Whys, fishbone diagrams, and structured investigation.
- **Post-Incident Reviews:** Blameless reviews and tracking of corrective actions.
- **Problem Management:** Problem records, known errors, workarounds, and permanent fixes.

3. Service Levels, Capacity & Availability Management (16%)

- **Service Agreements:** SLAs, OLAs, and underpinning contracts.
- **Operational Metrics:** MTTA, MTTR, MTBF, availability, and SLA compliance.
- **Capacity Planning:** Trends, forecasts, and thresholds for resource growth.
- **Availability and Resilience:** Availability targets, redundancy, and single points of failure.
- **Service Reporting:** Reports that show performance, trends, and user satisfaction.

4. Infrastructure, Cloud & Monitoring Operations (16%)

- **Monitoring and Observability:** Logs, metrics, traces, and actionable alerting.
- **Patching and Maintenance:** Testing, scheduling, and rollback planning.
- **Backup and Disaster Recovery:** The 3-2-1 rule, RTO, RPO, and recovery testing.
- **Cloud Operations:** Shared responsibility, cost control, and resource tagging.
- **Configuration Management:** Accurate configuration data to support change and incident work.

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5. Automation, DevOps & Operational Efficiency (12%)

- **Toil and Automation:** Finding repetitive work that is suitable for automation.
- **Infrastructure as Code:** Defining and creating infrastructure from code and templates.
- **CI/CD Basics:** Continuous integration and continuous delivery pipelines.
- **SRE Concepts:** Reliability targets, error budgets, and blameless culture.

6. Security, Risk & Compliance in Operations (12%)

- **Vulnerability Management:** Risk-based prioritization of vulnerabilities and patches.
- **Access Control:** Least privilege, access reviews, and segregation of duties.
- **Security Incidents:** Escalation, containment, and evidence preservation.
- **Audit and Compliance:** Audit evidence and awareness of ISO/IEC 27001 controls.

7. Team Leadership, Vendor & Stakeholder Management (12%)

- **Team Planning:** Shift planning, on-call rotations, and workload balance.
- **Coaching and Feedback:** Developing skills and giving timely, specific feedback.
- **Conflict Resolution:** Handling disagreements and keeping the team focused.
- **Vendor Management:** Monitoring supplier performance against contracts.
- **Stakeholder Communication:** Updates in business terms, with clear status and next steps.

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