

CCNA Exam News update from N+S – 29th June 2007

Important changes to CCNA Exams and Certifications from 1st August

On Saturday 23rd June 2007, Cisco announced changes to the existing CCNA (Cisco Certified Network Associate) certification and the creation of a new entry-level networking certification, CCENT (Cisco Certified Entry Network Technician).

The new exams for these certifications will be introduced on 1st August 2007, and the existing exams for the CCNA certification will be withdrawn on 6th November, 2007.

Owing to the short notice, students taking courses leading to the CCNA certification should be advised of the changes and the options that they have.

We have produced this brief guide to the changes so that you can offer your students the appropriate guidance. While we have made every effort to ensure that this material is accurate, you should also check the Cisco website for the latest information by [clicking here](#).

We have also included details of our plans to produce courseware which prepares students studying for the new certifications.

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Existing Certification Paths

There are currently two certification paths leading to the CCNA certification.

Single-exam path

A student can take the CCNA exam (640-801). By passing this exam they qualify as a CCNA. The exam comprises 55-65 questions and the time allotted is 90 minutes. **This exam will not be available after 6th November 2007.**

Our *Introduction to Cisco Network Device Configuration* course manual (7302) prepares students for this exam.

Two-exam path

A student can take the CCNA INTRO exam (640-821) and the ICND (Interconnecting Cisco Network Devices) exam (640-811). *Students are advised to take the exams in the order given, but this is not mandatory.* When they have passed both exams they qualify as a CCNA.

The CCNA INTRO exam comprises 45-55 questions and the time allotted is 75 minutes. **This exam will not be available after 6th November 2007.** Our *CCNA Intro* course manual (7303) prepares students for this exam.

The ICND exam comprises 40-50 questions and the time allotted is 60 minutes. **This exam will not be available after 6th November 2007.** Our *CCNA ICND* course manual (7304) prepares students for this exam

The New Certifications

Cisco has announced 3 new exams leading to the CCNA certification. One of which also qualifies students for the new CCENT certification.

Reasons for the changes

The main changes in the content of the exams include

The addition of newer technologies and protocols, such as Wireless;

The removal of older technologies and protocols, such as ISDN and RIP v1;

More emphasis on switching, including RSTP;

More emphasis on security;

More emphasis on troubleshooting networks rather than simply configuring them.

There has also been an implicit acknowledgment that candidates have found the existing exams too short, so that the average time allotted per question has been increased for students taking the two-exam path.

The other major change has been the introduction of a new entry-level certification CCENT. This can be achieved by passing one of the exams in the two-exam path to CCNA certification. It validates the expertise gained by students who are studying towards a CCNA but who have not yet achieved the full certification.

The New Exams

As before, there is a single-exam path and a two-exam path to CCNA certification.

Single-exam path

A student can take the CCNA exam (640-802). By passing this exam they qualify as a CCNA. The exam comprises 50-60 questions and the time allotted is 90 minutes. **This exam will be available from 1st August 2007.**

Our *CCNA Complete* course manual (7306) will prepare students for this exam. Review copies will be available from 1st October 2007.

Two-exam path

A student can take the ICND1 exam (640-822) and the ICND2 exam (640-816). *Students are advised to take the exams in the order given, but this is not mandatory.* When they have passed both exams they qualify as a CCNA.

By passing the ICND1 exam the student will qualify as a CCENT.

The ICND1 exam will comprise 50-60 questions and the time allotted will be 90 minutes. **This exam will be available from 1st August 2007.**

Our *CCNA ICND1 - CCENT* course manual (7307) will prepare students for this exam. Review copies will be available from 1st October 2007.

The ICND2 exam will comprise 45-55 questions and the time allotted will be 75 minutes. **This exam will be available from 1st August 2007.**

Our *CCNA ICND2* course manual (7308) will prepare students for this exam. Review copies will be available from 1st October 2007.

Questions and Answers

We have included some typical questions that may arise regarding the new certifications and exams.

Q If I qualify as a CCNA by passing the old exams before 6th November 2007, will I need to re-certify by taking the new exams?

A No, as before, the CCNA qualification will be valid for 3 years from when it was obtained. After 3 years, you will need to re-certify by taking whatever exams are required at that time.

Q If I pass the new single CCNA exam (640-802), will I also be qualified as a CCENT?

A No, in order to qualify as a CCENT, you need to pass the ICND1 exam.

Q I was aiming to take the existing CCNA INTRO exam (640-821) in a month or two, but I do not think I will be able to take the existing ICND exam (640-811) before it expires on 6th November 2007. Will my CCNA INTRO exam still count towards the new CCNA certification after 6th November 2007?

A Yes, if you have already passed the CCNA INTRO exam you can qualify as a CCNA by passing the ICND2 (640-816) exam. Your passing score for the CCNA INTRO exam will be valid for three years after you pass the exam.

However, the ICND2 exam assumes knowledge of the new material covered in the ICND1 exam but not in the existing CCNA INTRO exam. You will need to familiarise yourself with the new material in the ICND1 exam before taking the ICND2 exam.

Q I have passed the existing ICND (640-811) exam. Will I be able to take the new ICND1 (640-822) exam instead of the existing CCNA INTRO exam in order to qualify as a CCNA?

A Yes if you have already passed the current ICND exam you can qualify as a CCNA by passing the ICND1 exam. Again, your ICND passing score will be valid for three years after you pass the exam.

Q If I pass the CCNA INTRO exam will that also qualify me as a CCENT?

A No, in order to qualify as a CCENT, you need to pass the ICND1 exam (640-822), as this covers material not covered in the CCNA INTRO exam.

Q Will the new ICND1 exam be similar to the existing CCNA INTRO exam, covering mainly background networking theory?

A No, it will have a much greater practical content (approximately 40%), involving configuration and troubleshooting.

Q What are the pass marks for the new exams?

A As before, Cisco do not reveal how the exams are marked or publish pass marks.

Q In the simulation questions, is it necessary to complete the entire simulation correctly in order to be awarded any marks for the question?

A Again, Cisco do not reveal how questions are marked. You should do your best to answer all questions fully.

Q Our training centre offers Instructor-led training preparing students for the CCNA exams. Our classrooms are equipped with 2500 series routers and 2600 series routers, as well as 2950 series switches. Will we still be able to use this equipment to prepare our students for the new exams?

A The new exams are based on 2800 series routers and 2960 series switches. Cisco has not said that this equipment will not be adequate, nor have they said that it will be. You should test the practical lab exercises once study materials become available. You might also consider using simulation software.

Q Are Cisco Press materials available for preparing for the new exams?

A Cisco has said that Cisco Press materials will be released in August 2007, but have not given a precise date.

N+S Online Learning Options

We provide a number of online services which you can use to deliver training to your students. These include online testing, mentoring, live interactive tutorials and access to a virtual lab environment.

Currently, we provide a two-exam, online learning path to CCNA certification – *CCNA ONE*, leading to the CCNA INTRO exam, and *CCNA TWO*, leading to the ICND exam.

These will be replaced by *CCNA ICND ONE – CCENT* and *CCNA ICND TWO*, and will be offered from October 2007.

If you have any other questions regarding the new exams and certifications, please call us on +44 20 7820 8220 or e-mail integrated.learning@nands.com.