



Overview

Demand for Trained and Experienced Data Center Professionals

IT data center professionals are facing more challenges from business owners within their companies. Corporate initiatives for innovation, business agility, the proliferation of devices, and increased energy efficiency are all demands that data center professionals are trying to solve. A company's ability to solve these issues directly affects its bottom line and can put it ahead of the competition. Solving these complex issues requires data center professionals who are trained not just on the latest products but on industry best practices and who have a strong foundation in data center technologies. Cisco's data center certification programs provide training in industry-leading solutions and offer hands-on experience solving real problems.

Job-Ready Practical Skills

The Cisco CCNA® Data Center, CCNP® Data Center, and CCIE® Data Center certification programs are practical, relevant, and job-ready certification curricula aligned closely with the specific tasks expected of these in-demand data center professionals. Cisco realizes that the data center professional must increasingly focus on design, implementation, and support responsibilities

as the technical consultant and device specialist or expert. Therefore, the Cisco data center curriculum is specific to the best practices of data center administrators, engineers, and experts based on the latest skills, technologies, and data center solutions.

Data Center Best Practices

The CCNA Data Center, CCNP Data Center, and CCIE Data Center certification programs validate basic through advanced knowledge of the skills required to design, implement, and troubleshoot data centers using the latest Cisco data center solutions and technologies. The curricula emphasize the real-world best practices of unified computing and unified fabric architectures using the features of the Cisco MDS 9222i Multiservice Modular Switch, Cisco Nexus 7009 Switch, Cisco Nexus 5548 Switch, Cisco Nexus 2232 Fabric Extenders, Cisco Nexus 1000V Series Switches, the Cisco Unified Computing System (UCS), and the Cisco Application Control Engine (ACE) Appliance.

Achieving CCNA Data Center Certification

CCNA Data Center certification offers professionals job-ready training and skills. The certification lays the foundation for job roles such as a data center network administrator. Candidates gain foundational knowledge in installing, configuring, and maintaining data centers.

Requirements

The CCNA Data Center program is an associate-level certification program that is valid for three years. This certification is a job-role-based certification for data center administrators. The exams and courses cover foundational data center concepts in the unified computing and unified fabric areas. The CCNA Data Center certification program allows you to maximize your investment in your education and increase the value of your data center network.

Prerequisite Skills

There are no prerequisites for the CCNA Data Center certification. Completion of the CCNA Data Center certification requires the exams and recommended training shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Required Exams	Training
640-911 DCICN	Introducing Cisco Data Center Networking (DCICN)
640-916 DCICT	Introducing Cisco Data Center Technologies (DCICT)

Achieving CCNP Data Center Certification

CCNP Data Center certification offers professionals job-ready training and skills. The certification lays the foundation for job roles such as a data center technical architect or engineer. Candidates gain knowledge in designing, implementing, and troubleshooting data centers in all their components. The certification builds on your technical foundation in installing, configuring, and maintaining data centers. Once you complete your CCNP Data Center certification, you can expand your expertise in data centers with the CCIE Data Center certification, and grow your career.

Requirements

The CCNP Data Center certification is a three-year job-role-based professional-level certification for technology architects, presales engineers, design engineers, and implementation engineers. The exams and courses cover advanced data center concepts within the areas of unified computing and unified fabric. The certification is for data center professionals who want to optimize moderate to large scale data center operations spanning design, installation, and ongoing maintenance. The CCNP Data Center certification program allows you to maximize your investment in your education and increase the value of your data center network.

Prerequisite Skills

CCNA Data Center certification is a prerequisite to achieving your CCNP Data Center certification. (Completion of the CCNA Data Center certification requires the prerequisite exams that are shown in Table 1.) The CCNP Data Center curriculum requires the exams and recommended training shown in Table 2. In addition, three to five years of hands-on experience are recommended before starting the CCNP Data Center program.

Table 2

Required Exams	Recommended Training
642-997 (DCUFI)	Implementing Cisco Data Center Unified Fabric (DCUFI)
642-999 (DCUCI)	Implementing Cisco Data Center Unified Computing (DCUCI)

and

642-996 (DCUFD)	Designing Cisco Data Center Unified Fabric (DCUFD)
642-998 (DCUCD)	Designing Cisco Data Center Unified Computing (DCUCD)

or

642-980 (DCUFT)	Troubleshooting Cisco Data Center Unified Fabric (DCUFT)
642-035 (DCUCT)	Troubleshooting Cisco Data Center Unified Computing (DCUCT)

Note: All candidates must take and pass both implementation exams and then can choose either both of the design or both troubleshooting exams.

Achieving CCIE Data Center Certification

The CCIE Data Center program is an expert-level certification that validates a candidate's expert knowledge and skills to take advantage of emerging technologies and deep technical skills required to plan, implement, and manage data center solutions. The program offers candidates the knowledge and skills required to independently design, implement, operate, monitor, and troubleshoot complex data center networks while ensuring network-wide quality of service. This program is quickly becoming the industry benchmark for recognition and rewards for data center engineers who have demonstrated expert-level abilities for architecture, deployment, implementation, operational models and considerations for evolving technologies enabling students to take a leadership role in harnessing emerging technologies and deep domain expertise with business requirements.

Requirements

The CCIE Data Center program is an expert-level certification that is valid for two years. The certification program is intended to recognize IT professionals who have expert-level skills to plan, design, implement, and maintain complex data centers based on Cisco solutions. Attaining and maintaining this performance-based, practical certification proves skills that are achievable only by distinct experts in the data center field. This certification carries prestige in that it is increasingly sought after by data center professionals as well as hiring managers worldwide. To gain CCIE Data Center certification, candidates not only must prove their theoretical knowledge of data center best practices but also must demonstrate them in a lab environment with real equipment, using real-world scenarios.

Prerequisite Skills and Language

There are no formal prerequisites for Cisco CCIE certification. Candidates must first pass a written qualification exam and then pass the corresponding hands-on lab exam. Candidates are expected to have an in-depth understanding of the exam topics and are strongly encouraged to have seven to eight years of job experience before attempting certification.

The CCIE Data Center certification requires the exams shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Required Exams	Recommended Training
350-080 Written Exam or 400-151 Written Exam	NA
CCIE Data Center Lab Exam v1.0 or CCIE Data Center Lab Exam v2.0	NA

Achieving Data Center Specialist Certification

Within the CCNP Data Center curriculum are several data center specialist certifications that cover topics that are more in-depth and can be used for cross-training and staff development, as well as an intermediate step toward your CCNP Data Center certification. Intended for individuals who specialize in one or more technologies or products that make up the data center expertise, these specialist certifications offer a convenient validation of skills and competency in unified computing design and support, and unified fabric design and support. The following data center specialist certifications are included in the CCNP Data Center curriculum.

Cisco Data Center Unified Computing Design Specialist

The Cisco Data Center Unified Computing Design Specialist certification validates an engineer's ability to design scalable, reliable, and intelligent data center virtualization solutions.

The following products are covered in the learning materials:

- Cisco Unified Computing System B-Series and C-Series servers
- Server virtualization software
- Additional Cisco data center products

Table 4

Required Exams	Recommended Training
642-994 or 642-999	Implementing Cisco Data Center Unified Computing (DCUCI)
642-993 or 642-998	Designing Cisco Data Center Unified Computing (DCUCD)

Cisco Data Center Unified Computing Support Specialist

The Cisco Data Center Unified Computing Support Specialist certification is designed to test a learner's knowledge of the fundamentals of the Cisco Unified Computing System and the ability to implement a virtualized data center environment. Cisco Data Center Unified Computing Support Specialist professionals will also be tested on the following components:

- Implementing the Cisco Unified Computing System B-Series and C-Series servers
- Knowledge of the Cisco Unified Computing System in an enterprise data center routing and switching infrastructure
- Knowledge of the next-generation Cisco Nexus product family

Table 5

Required Exams	Recommended Training
642-035	Troubleshooting Cisco Data Center Unified Computing (DCUCT)
642-994 or 642-999	Implementing Cisco Data Center Unified Computing (DCUCI)

Cisco Data Center Unified Fabric Design Specialist

The Cisco Data Center Unified Fabric Design Specialist certification is for network virtualization and unified I/O design and presales engineers who are seeking to validate their skills and knowledge in data center technology design and implementation.

The following products are covered in the learning materials:

- Cisco Nexus 1000V, 5000, and 7000 Series Switches
- Cisco UCS B-Series and C-Series servers
- Cisco UCS Manager
- Cisco Data Center Network Manager (DCNM)
- Cisco Virtual Network Management Center
- Cisco MDS 9000 Series Multilayer Switches

Table 6

Required Exams	Recommended Training
642-991 or 642-996	Designing Cisco Data Center Unified Fabric (DCUFD)
642-992 or 642-997	Implementing Cisco Data Center Unified Fabric (DCUFI)

Cisco Data Center Unified Fabric Support Specialist

The Cisco Data Center Unified Fabric Support Specialist certification is for network virtualization and unified I/O implementation, support, and field engineers who are seeking to validate their skills and knowledge in data center technology implementation and support.

The following products are covered in the learning materials:

- Cisco Nexus 1000V, 5000, and 7000 Series Switches
- Cisco UCS B-Series and C-Series servers
- Cisco UCS Manager
- Cisco Data Center Network Manager (DCNM)
- Cisco Virtual Network Management Center
- Cisco MDS 9000 Series Multilayer Switches

Table 7

Required Exams	Recommended Training
642-992 or 642-997	Implementing Cisco Data Center Unified Fabric (DCUFI)
642-980	Troubleshooting Cisco Data Center Unified Fabric (DCUFT)

Recertification

Cisco CCNP Data Center exams can be used to recertify your associate, professional, and data center specialist certifications. Achieving or recertifying any of the certifications that are detailed in Tables 2 through 7 automatically extends active associate-, specialist-, and professional-level certifications up to the point of expiration of the last certification achieved. Cisco professional-level certifications are valid for three years, and specialist-level certifications are valid for two years. To recertify, certificate holders should pass one of the following before the certification expiration date:

- Any 642 exam that is part of the professional-level curriculum
- Any Cisco CCIE written exam
- The Cisco CCDE® written exam
- The current CCDE practical exam
- The Cisco CCAr® interview
- The CCAr board review

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