



8430 West Bryn Mawr Avenue
 Suite 1000
 Chicago, IL 60631 USA
 Tel: (773) 867-1777
 (800) 444-2742
 Fax: (773) 639-3000
 apics.org

2011 APICS Certification Exam Pass Rate Report

I. 2011 Pass Rate Results

The following table of information details the final 2011 pass rate results by exam module broken down between North American, International and global totals. For historical purposes, six years of previous data is also included.

2006																		
Pass rate	BCSM			DSP			ECO			MPR			SMR			CSCP		
	N.A.	Int'l	Global	N.A.	Int'l	Global	N.A.	Int'l	Global	N.A.	Int'l	Global	N.A.	Int'l	Global	N.A.	Int'l	Global
	73%	73%	73%	78%	73%	76%	68%	66%	67%	73%	73%	73%	66%	61%	63%	77%	75%	77%

2007																		
Pass rate	BCSM			DSP			ECO			MPR			SMR			CSCP		
	N.A.	Int'l	Global	N.A.	Int'l	Global	N.A.	Int'l	Global	N.A.	Int'l	Global	N.A.	Int'l	Global	N.A.	Int'l	Global
	74%	72%	73%	71%	73%	72%	73%	63%	68%	72%	74%	73%	63%	57%	60%	68%	70%	68%

2008																		
Pass rate	BCSM			DSP			ECO			MPR			SMR			CSCP		
	N.A.	Int'l	Global	N.A.	Int'l	Global	N.A.	Int'l	Global	N.A.	Int'l	Global	N.A.	Int'l	Global	N.A.	Int'l	Global
	72%	73%	73%	74%	75%	75%	66%	65%	66%	68%	74%	71%	63%	59%	61%	66%	66%	66%

2009																		
Pass rate	BCSM			DSP			ECO			MPR			SMR			CSCP		
	N.A.	Int'l	Global	N.A.	Int'l	Global	N.A.	Int'l	Global	N.A.	Int'l	Global	N.A.	Int'l	Global	N.A.	Int'l	Global
	74%	73%	73%	69%	72%	71%	63%	61%	62%	72%	73%	73%	61%	58%	60%	65%	60%	63%

2010																		
Pass rate	BCSM			DSP			ECO			MPR			SMR			CSCP		
	N.A.	Int'l	Global	N.A.	Int'l	Global	N.A.	Int'l	Global	N.A.	Int'l	Global	N.A.	Int'l	Global	N.A.	Int'l	Global
	77%	76%	76%	61%	67%	64%	60%	65%	63%	67%	72%	70%	55%	47%	51%	68%	57%	63%

2011																		
Pass rate	BCSM			DSP			ECO			MPR			SMR			CSCP		
	N.A.	Int'l	Global	N.A.	Int'l	Global	N.A.	Int'l	Global	N.A.	Int'l	Global	N.A.	Int'l	Global	N.A.	Int'l	Global
	72%	72%	72%	64%	62%	63%	76%	73%	75%	72%	72%	72%	54%	49%	51%	59%	54%	57%



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Pass rates based on order in which SMR is taken as part of the 5 module series:

SMR	First	33%
SMR	Second	38%
SMR	Third	53%
SMR	Fourth	57%
SMR	Fifth	72%

II. Pass Rate Monitoring and Management

Exam pass rates are regularly monitored by the Certification Committee, ACT, and APICS staff throughout a given year during a variety of exam management events:

- a) Exam pass rate reports are reviewed monthly by APICS staff and the Certification Exam Committees.
- b) Item pools are monitored on an on-going basis throughout the year for question performance by ACT's Psychometrician.
- c) Bi-annual test development activity between the Certification Exam Committee and ACT includes a review of item pool performance on individual forms and corrective action may be taken to modify items that have performance anomalies.
- d) Question performance is reviewed bi-annually during the Certification Exam Committee comprehensive item pool reviews and corrective action may be taken to modify items that have performance anomalies

III. Cut Score Process Overview

A Cut Score study distinguishes examinees that are minimally successful from those who do not have sufficient knowledge to pass the exam. Because the focus on the exam is on competence and not on advanced or expert skill levels and knowledge, the purpose of this activity is to determine the performance of the "borderline" test taker and where that border between pass and fail should be set. Every exam module includes a section within the Exam Content Manual defining the criteria for the successful candidate as guidance to the candidate on where that border is set.

A Cut Score event is necessary for establishing a baseline minimal passing raw score for an exam when one of the following conditions occurs:

- a) When there are significant changes to the exam content outline
- b) When there has been a significant shift in the exam's body of knowledge resulting in more than 10% of new question content
- c) When a combination of statistical anomalies occur through periodic psychometric reviews
- d) When launching a new Certification exam such as the 2010 launch of the new CPIM Recertification exam



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The cut score event is performed with a group of 12-15 individuals that demographically mirror the types of candidates who are likely to take the exam. To participate in the event, individuals must have the certification represented by the exam and be current in their certification. In addition, the group should be evenly balanced among the following demographics:

- a) Varied professional experience from less than 10 years to over 25 years
- b) Individuals with English as a second language for an International perspective
- c) Instructors
- d) Varied experience in manufacturing verticals such as healthcare, chemicals, auto
- e) Instructors
- f) Up to two exam committee members
- g) PhD Psychometrician facilitator

Two best practice psychometric approaches are used to derive the raw passing score, the modified Angoff method and the Hofstee approach. The Angoff method specifically addresses the issue of borderline performance by requiring participants to retake the exam and estimate the performance of a minimally successful candidate on each question of the test form. The Hofstee approach requires participants to provide their input on a number of parameters for the exam including the minimum and maximum acceptable percentage of passing candidates, and the minimum and maximum acceptable percentage of items that should be required to pass the exam. The results of both approaches are combined to yield a final raw score which is reviewed by the Certification Committee as a final quality check.

IV. Scaled Score Explanation

Exam scores are based on the number of questions answered correctly which corresponds to the raw score set in the Cut Score event. However, each module uses multiple exam forms which all have different levels of difficulty because different questions are used. To provide a standard range for test takers and allow direct comparison of results from one administration to another, a scaled score approach is used to report final scores. The statistical process of converting the raw score into a scaled score table uses an equating technique to ensure an equivalent passing standard is maintained across all forms of the exam. For more information on this topic, please refer to the following white paper located in the Certification FAQ section of the APICS website:

<http://www.apics.org/NR/rdonlyres/84866357-8A21-4BC6-A837-6C7F838E1E51/0/ScaledScoreDocument.pdf>

V. Relationship Between Exams and Courseware

a) Job Task Analysis

In order to ensure that the content of APICS exams reflects current industry trends, a Job Task Analysis (JTA) is conducted once every few years as a global industry research project for the profession in which the certification represents. The purpose of the JTA is to determine whether a change is necessary in the existing domains and associated tasks, knowledge and/or skills required for the certification. A survey is distributed to individuals working



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in the field and information obtained from the survey includes the ranking of tasks based on frequency and importance to their jobs. This data is analyzed by the Certification Committee as input for decisions around exam content changes and updates to the associated body of knowledge which further impacts development of courseware.

b) Exam and Courseware Committee Communication Process

Using the best practices of the certification community as recommended by ANSI/ISO/IEC standard 17024 for Certification Programs, APICS operates with two distinct and separate groups of committees – one that develops and manages certification exams and the Exam Content Manual (ECM) and one that develops and manages courseware. This separation ensures that the focus of courseware and training is on teaching the body of knowledge and not just on “passing the exam” while also maintaining the integrity and proprietary nature of APICS’ high stakes exams.

Although the Exam and Courseware committees are separate, there is an established communication process between the two groups to ensure that the exam and the courseware match the ECM – the standard to which Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) on both committees look to ensure they are in compliance. The table of exam diagnostic areas, the exam content outline, key terminology and references all serve as a means of communication between the committees during the content development interval and define the subset of the greater body of knowledge that may be tested.