

**CON 3990V DOD CONTRACTING CERTIFICATION EXAM
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

1) What is the passing score?

Candidates must obtain a score of 70% or higher to pass the Contracting Certification Exam, CON 3990V.

2) How many questions are on the exam?

There are 150 questions, each randomly pulled from a robust database ensuring each exam delivered is slightly different from the next. DAU employs a common industry practice of periodically reviewing exam item performance to determine whether adjustments are needed to any exam questions, or to the passing score.

3) Is the CON 3990V Certification Exam open or closed book?

The CON 3990V Contracting Certification Exam is completely **closed book**. Examinees will not be able to use or reference any subject material during the exam, to include but not limited to notes, books, computers, personal devices, etc.

4) Where can an individual take the exam?

The exam is delivered by Pearson VUE, a commercial test service provider under contract with the Department of Defense (DoD).

Examinees may choose one of two ways to take the exam, either virtually on a personal computer using OnVUE--a Pearson VUE software client application, or in person at a Pearson VUE test center. The following link provides excellent information to exam candidates for both options:

<https://home.pearsonvue.com/Test-takers/Resources.aspx>

If a candidate decides to take the exam using the OnVUE application, they will have to be able to download a software add-on. Please check this link for system requirements for the OnVUE application:

<https://home.pearsonvue.com/Test-takers/OnVUE-online-proctoring.aspx>

5) Are there any advantages to taking the exam in-person (at a Pearson VUE test center) vs. virtually (OnVUE)?

Although the exam is the same regardless of delivery method, historical data reflects an apparent advantage to taking the exam in-person vs. virtually. Statistically speaking, the passing rate is ~5% higher for tests taken at a test facility.

There are several factors that may contribute to the delta in the rates, i.e., IT/connectivity issues, increased test anxiety in the virtual environment, early termination due to examinee test environment compromise, etc. As such, it is recommended that examinees take exams at a physical Pearson VUE test location, and only choose the OnVUE virtual option by exception.

6) How much time is allotted to take the exam?

Candidates will have 3 hours to take the exam. This exam duration encompasses all “seat time” at the Pearson VUE test facility, and includes the exam intro, tutorial, 150-question exam, breaks, and any pre-submission review.

7) How many times can an individual take the exam?

DoD allows for the exam to be taken no more than three times in a 12-month period, with a minimum of 30 days between attempts. Agencies may set local policy for the number of times the exam can be taken within the grace period allowed for achieving certification (to include extensions obtained through waivers).

8) What material is covered in the exam, what is being tested?

Candidates will need to be able to demonstrate a foundational understanding of the Contracting Common Technical Competencies (and related job tasks) found in the DoD Contracting Competency Model, which is accessible at the following link:

[CONCompetencies.pdf \(dau.edu\)](#)

The questions in the exam, and more importantly, the correct answers, are derived from the policy and guidance in the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) and the Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement (DFARS) as it relates to the competencies and job tasks in the DoD Contracting Competency Model.

Additionally, candidates should be familiar with the titles of the following FAR Parts: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 13, 15, 16, 19, 31, 33, 42, 44, 46, and 49.

9) How many questions are on the exam for each of the competencies in the DoD Contracting Competency Model?

The table below depicts the distribution of questions in the exam per competency:

Life Cycle Phase		Domain		Competency	* Number of Q's on Exam
1	Guiding Principles	1.1	Skills and Roles		6
		1.2	Contract Principles		18
		1.3	Standards of Conduct		6
		1.5	Situational Assessment		3
		1.6	Team Dynamics		3
		1.7	Communication and Documentation		6
2	Pre-Award	2.1	Develop Solicitation	2.1.1 Plan Solicitation	12
				2.1.2 Request Offer	12
		2.2	Develop Offer	2.2.1 Plan Sales	3
				2.2.2 Prepare Offer	3
3	Award	3.1	Form Contract	3.1.1 Price or Cost Analysis	10
				3.1.2 Plan Negotiation	10
				3.1.3 Select Source	10
				3.1.4 Manage Disagreements	10
4	Post-Award	4.1	Perform Contract	4.1.1 Administer Contract	10
				4.1.2 Ensure Quality	10
				4.1.3 Manage Subcontracts	4
				4.1.4 Manage Changes	10
		4.2	Close Contract	4.2.1 Close Out Contract	4
				Total	150

10) Is there any TDY or travel required to take the Exam?

It is anticipated all candidates will be able to take the CON 3990V Exam at a Pearson Vue test location within commuting distance from their home of record. In the event there is not a Pearson Vue test site available within commuting distance, and if testing virtually is not a viable option, then the candidate must ensure travel authorization is received prior to scheduling their exam. More information regarding travel may be found in the DAU Student Policy Handbook link on the following webpage:

[Student Policies & Information \(dau.edu\)](http://dau.edu)

11) Is there anything an individual can do to increase chances of success on the exam?

All exam candidates are highly encouraged to take CON 3910, Online Contracting Certification Exam Prep. CON 3910 is an online, self-paced course. This course was developed to help examinees achieve success on the exam. This self-paced course is available immediately upon registration. Taking CON 3910 has proven to be very effective in preparing candidates to be successful on the exam.

Additionally, *select candidates may also take CON 3900V, the Virtual Instructor-Led (VILT) Contracting Certification Exam Prep Course. Under the guidance of a live instructor, CON 3900V helps to reinforce a learner's studies and experience to date through a series of learner-led exercises and activities. As of 01 October 2023, any candidate wishing to take CON 3900V must have completed CON 3910 as a prerequisite prior to taking CON 3900V.

As of 30 August 2023

*CON 3900V is prioritized for those candidates who were unsuccessful on their 1st exam attempt. However, any candidate who desires a live instructor-led experience to adequately prepare for the exam may register. Due to high demand, candidates who have not already attempted the exam may be waitlisted for prioritization purposes.

Information for both can be found in the DAU iCatalog.

CON 3910 (Self-Paced) - https://icatalog.dau.edu/onlinecatalog/courses.aspx?crs_id=12833

CON 3900V (VILT) - https://icatalog.dau.edu/onlinecatalog/courses.aspx?crs_id=12539

In addition to taking a prep course for the certification exam, learners are encouraged to take advantage of instructor office hours, ask questions, and proactively participate in the certification courses.

12) If I pass the CON 3990V exam, can I avoid taking the CON 1100V through 1400V certification courses?

No. Completion or fulfillment of the certification courses, CON 1100V, 1200V, 1300V, and 1400V, are required for certification. CON 3990V is a separate and distinct DAWIA contracting certification requirement from the four courses.

13) If an individual does not pass the exam, do they have to retake any training?

After each unsuccessful exam attempt, the individual and their **Agency will be notified of the results. The Agency will determine any required remedial actions to include retaking training, mandatory time between subsequent attempts, and Agency “counseling.”

If an individual's first attempt at the exam is unsuccessful, the DoD Components require that individual take CON 3900V before attempting the exam again. If that individual has already taken CON 3900V, they need not retake it to fulfill this requirement.

NOTE: As of 1 Oct 2023, CON 3910 is a required prerequisite for CON 3900V.

At each unsuccessful attempt, DoD recommends individuals to review their exam performance feedback in detail.

After the third unsuccessful attempt to take the exam in a 12-month period, individuals must review their exam performance feedback and the CON 3910 and CON 3900V materials obtained from the course. All remedial steps the individual took should be validated and endorsed by their Agency before they are permitted to attempt the exam again.

**The term “Agency” includes the individual’s supervisor and the applicable Acquisition Training Office (ATO) lead for the Army, Navy, Air Force, and 4th Estate.

The requirements are reiterated below for illustration purposes:

Unsuccessful attempt #	Take CON 3910 & CON 3900V	Review exam performance feedback
1	Required (if both not taken previously)	Recommended
2	Recommended	Recommended
3	Recommended	Recommended

14) What happens when an employee exhausts all their options? Is there a potential an employee could be removed from the AWF or Federal government if they fail the exam and have exceeded their certification grace period?

Yes. Achievement of the DoD Contracting Professional Certification is a condition of employment for contracting coded acquisition workforce positions. Individuals unable to meet their conditions of employment may be subject to employment actions in accordance with Agency procedures and as defined in the position description.

15) Will promotions be withheld if employees fail the exam and are still within their grace period?

Agencies will determine eligibility for promotion based on organization policies and position requirements (i.e., Key Leadership Position requiring certification upon hire). However, the Agency must consider the following:

- a. Certification grace period (3 years) will not reset if individual is promoted into a role within the contracting functional area.
- b. If an individual leaves a contracting coded position and then returns, their grace period would reset.
- c. Any waiver for certification grace period must be submitted in accordance with DoDI 5000.66 policy in order for an individual to maintain position compliance if they fall outside of the prescribed grace period.