

Certification Testing

Practical Skills Assessment



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Certification Program Overview

The IntelTechniques certification program provides participants with an opportunity to work through a real-world scenario and demonstrate that they can produce an intelligence product that meets a high professional standard. It is an extension of the IntelTechniques Open-Source Intelligence live and online courses and is for those practitioners who require a documented metric establishing their capabilities. The testing process involves completing an intelligence assignment, from mission briefing all the way through to delivering a completed case file. Participants whose final work product reflects a high standard of execution will be recognized as an **IntelTechniques Certified Open Source Intelligence Professional**.

It is important to understand that this is not a traditional academic testing process. You will be required to conduct an investigation and/or intelligence operation from beginning to end. A passing grade will only be awarded if the final submission is accurate, well organized, comprehensive, and displays a recognizable degree of professionalism. An IntelTechniques certified Open Source Intelligence Professional is someone who can be assigned a target individual, organization, or other entity and deliver an exceptionally well-constructed, substantiated, and articulated intelligence report.

Prerequisites & Participation Requirements

This assessment program is an addition to the existing live and online IntelTechniques OSINT training programs. As such, there are prerequisites for participation as well as some resource requirements. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have met these criteria prior to applying for the assessment program. It is also your responsibility to establish the tools and investigative environment necessary to successfully complete the testing process. The following are minimum requirements for participation:

1. You must have completed the IntelTechniques.net online training curriculum OR have completed a live IntelTechniques OSINT session within 1-year of testing. Note: The former IntelTechniques.com online video training does not qualify for this requirement as there is no way for us to verify completion of that program. OSINT changes rapidly and there is a high demand for this intensive testing process, so we must limit entry to recent students who are trained on the current curriculum.
2. You are responsible for providing your own equipment and resources. You are acting as a freelance investigator and the expectation is that you have built up a sufficient arsenal of tools and techniques to conduct a proper investigation.
3. The assessment fee is currently \$300 USD (credit card, PayPal, or BTC accepted). This cost will increase as we adjust for demand and the time required to maintain and support the program. Assessment slots will be awarded to *qualified* applicants in the order they are received.

Process, Rules, & Grading Criteria

This assessment is being run as a live simulation. Participants will receive a request from a “client” detailing the target(s) and mission requirements. These are live, innocuous targets that reflect realistic operational asks in the investigative and intelligence fields. Successful completion will require delivery of a complete, thorough, and very professional case file. The expectation is that all participants will exercise a high degree of discretion and operational security throughout the exercise.

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Process, Rules, & Grading Criteria (cont.)

- This is a solo assignment. You are to complete all stages yourself. This is not a team exercise.
- Once your engagement begins, consider all communication and mission details as being strictly confidential, just as you would when working a sensitive case in the private or public sectors.
- Do not share or post your work product online during or at any time after completing your certification testing. There are a finite number of assigned targets and we need to maintain the integrity of the test by keeping mission details private.
- Integrity – Intelligence and investigations work requires integrity and a reputation as someone who can be trusted to keep details in confidence. Any dishonest, illegal, or unethical behavior is grounds for disqualification.
- Grading – All casework will be reviewed by Jason personally. This is not an automated academic test. The baseline for a passing grade is: Would a company or other professional organization pay for this work product? The case work that you submit must be accurate and professional. That means no typos, no messy formatting, no overlooked key intelligence, and no blatantly false findings. Any conjecture must be clearly stated as such. A good report will also convey a confidence level in the key findings – how certain are you that X did Y and lives at Z.
- Format – You may use whatever format you choose if it is well organized and effectively communicates and supports your findings. Some of the more advanced templates from the training course would be acceptable for the foundation of your report. Your report should be in PDF format and any digital evidence or other assets should be consolidated within a well-organized zip file.
- You must deliver your report and any supporting materials by a secure means. Problem solving secure communications is an important part of the intelligence process, so it is the participant’s responsibility to establish any communication or delivery of materials beyond the initial Protonmail exchange with the “client”.
- You will have 10 days, from the time of receiving your assignment, to deliver a completed case-file meeting the requirements set forth by your “client”. Deadlines are a reality in this line of work, and we all have busy lives so please schedule your assessment for a date range where you will have a significant amount of time to devote to the task. There will be no extensions. I cannot emphasize this enough: plan wisely and allow for a considerable time investment.
- We review every submission thoroughly and measure the final report against a high professional standard. *Could we deliver this as the final work product to a paying client?* Within 14 days you will receive a pass/fail grade along with a written evaluation. Passing grades will include a PDF certificate memorializing a successfully earned certification.
- Retesting – Although in the real world we do not typically receive “do overs”, you *may* be allowed one retest if you fail your first assessment. This will only be offered in cases where submissions were of high quality but needed fine tuning to meet our standard. If a request for reassessment is granted you will participate again 60-days later with no additional fee. Do not rely on being granted a second assessment--put 100% effort in the first time.
- Additional questions regarding the assessment may be directed to Jason via the Matrix/Element Training channels which are linked in your training materials and the monthly training newsletter.
- Certificates of Completion vs. Certification – Completing the IntelTechniques.net online training results in a Certificate of Completion which documents hours of training received. A “certification” is different in that it indicates that you have met a testing/performance standard.

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Support

Again, this is an assessment, not training. There will be limited support for participants. However, we are providing some resources for those who wish to take advantage of them.

- Once accepted you will receive access to a resource page which includes a sample case file. This is to give you a clear idea of the minimum acceptable submission. This sample represents the baseline expectation, the bare minimum to pass. Please do not aim low and hope to squeak by. Create and submit a superior work product that would impress any client.
- You will also receive access to an Element support channel for the assessment. This is an optional, private space, where you can share advice and talk shop with other participants. You are not allowed to share case specifics, but process and resource tips are fair game. “Here is a template that worked very well for my casefile” or “this is an outline for my approach to completing my assignment” would be appropriate topics to share. We will be monitoring this channel as well for any technical questions/issues that may arise regarding the testing. Remember, participants are expected to be experienced practitioners who have completed our training courses. If you still have many questions about the basics, you would be wise to hold off on testing until you have a solid foundation of OSINT knowledge.

Application Process

If after reading this, you feel this practical skills assessment is a good fit, you will need to enroll in the certification program on the IntelTechniques.net training site. The testing process is time intensive for the instructors, so we must limit the number of participants to members of the IntelTechniques.net Online Video Training program. The process is slightly different depending on whether you are a new or current member.

New Members - If you are not currently a member of the IntelTechniques.net Online Video Training program, you will need to complete that training prior to becoming eligible to schedule a certification assessment. Completion of the video training is a prerequisite for testing and therefore if you are not a current member you must purchase access to both the training and the certification assessment at <https://www.inteltechniques.net/bundles/video-training-certification>.

Current Members - Current members of our online training may request entry into the certification program by emailing training@inteltechniques.net with a subject line of *Request Certification*. Include in the body of the email the email address associated with your IntelTechniques.net video training membership. You will receive an acknowledgment email that your request has been received and if accepted you will receive a payment link which will provide you with access to the assessment materials once payment is submitted.

Requesting Testing Dates - Once enrolled in the Certification Program you will be able to request three testing dates, in order of preference. Assessment start date options are the 1st, 11th, or 21st of each month (i.e., December 21st, 2021). The earliest date that you may request is at least 30-days out from the date of joining the assessment program.

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How to Succeed

This certification is not for everyone. In fact, it may be inappropriate or unnecessary for most investigators. This is for a limited number of you who want or need to establish a formal professional credibility around your open-source intelligence skill-set. If the details of this assessment seem daunting or even harsh, it is because we are testing based on our experience with client expectations. It is one thing to show that someone has received a certain number of hours of training and another to test their ability to competently carry out a real-world mission. Above all else, please consider:

- Are you confident in your foundational research/analysis skills?
- Have you previously prepared case documentation or otherwise have strong writing skills?
- Do you have the necessary time to invest towards building a sufficient work product? Most successful participants invest dozens of hours during their 10-day assessment period.

If the answer to any of those questions is “no”, please consider taking more time to shore up your experience and preparation prior to committing to an assessment. We want everyone to be successful, but we will not pass people who fail to meet the standards. The live sessions and video training program are the places to receive help and guidance. The assessment is you, on your own, demonstrating your capabilities and proficiency. Successful participants will receive a certificate acknowledging their status as an IntelTechniques Certified Open Source Intelligence Professional. Remember, if you are only looking for “practice”, all online training members have access to the new online practicals at no additional cost. That is a particularly good option for anyone who does not need the status of having passed the certification assessment.

