

AWS Certified Sysops Administrator– Associate (SOA-C02)

Earning AWS Certified SysOps Administrator - Associate demonstrates experience deploying, managing, and operating workloads on AWS. This credential helps organisations identify and develop talent with critical skills for implementing cloud initiatives. Preparing for AWS Certified SysOps Administrator - Associate also boosts confidence, ability, efficiency and quality of troubleshooting and administration on AWS of the certified individual.

1. Who should take this exam?

AWS Certified SysOps Administrator - Associate is a great starting point on the AWS Certification path for individuals who may have any of the following:

- Experience working in a systems administrator role
- Experience in AWS technology
- Strong on-premises IT experience and understanding of mapping on-premises to cloud
- Experience working in other cloud services like microsoft azure, GCP, IBM cloud, etc

2. What you'll learn

Preparing for and attaining this certification will showcase:

- Your hands-on experience deploying, managing, and operating workloads on AWS as well as implementing security controls and compliance requirements
- Familiarity with using both the AWS Management Console and the AWS Command Line Interface (CLI)
- Understanding of the AWS Well-Architected Framework as well as AWS networking and security services

3. Why to get AWS Systems Administrator certified?

Cloud is one of the rapidly growing technologies around the world, many small and big firms and enterprises are moving their applications or workloads on the cloud. Many companies have already migrated to cloud either partially or fully recognising the benefits of cloud earlier than others. That is why people

with cloud proficiency and certifications are highly valued and handsomely paid these days. Now, these applications running on the cloud always need someone to monitor, troubleshoot and make modifications as and when required to the cloud part of the picture. This is when an AWS certified systems administrator is required !

With the ever increasing YoY and QoQ growth seen and forecasted in the cloud domain with AWS as the leading cloud service provider in the industry, there is a constant growth in system administrator and other cloud positions. Being an AWS certified individual obviously gives you more edge and credit as a person working or willing to work in the cloud domain.

4. How to prepare for the AWS SOA exam?

As we are clear with why one should take up this certification and the benefits of it, let me also suggest some things for your preparation.

One of the expected requirements for taking a certification of AWS associate level exam is for the candidate to have at least 1 year of hands-on experience. Unlike other two associate level exams (Solutions Architect & Developer) this one also has 3 hands-on labs to be performed during the exam. So it is of paramount importance for you to perform exercises in hands-on lectures as suggested in the exam course below if you don't have the prescribed experience. Even if you have the desired experience, it never hurts to get a refresher!

For the exam only one learning course and one practice test course are enough which are mentioned below-

- Ultimate AWS Certified Sysops Administrator Associate 2022 (Udemy)

Instructor - Stephane Maarek

This is one of the best solutions if you want to get AWS sysops administrator certified. The course covers every topic expected in the exam + a few extra details that will help you enhance your AWS knowledge and make you understand things better. There are hands-on lectures as well which you can practise along (recommended) if you don't have working experience with AWS. This course also has a short quiz after the end of each module which will help you verify your understanding of that specific module.

The course is neatly distributed into sections based on exam syllabus. The concepts are explained with the help of visual representations and PPTs and in a proper flow which makes it easy for you to sail through the course. There are introduction to related concepts for the concerned AWS resources also like introduction to docker for AWS ECS & introduction to YAML for AWS cloudformation.

The course includes one practice test and a few lectures at the end that tell you everything about how to register for the exam and other details on getting extra time and discounts for the exam. One of these lectures in the last module also explains very well about the 3 lab questions that come in the exam.

Course link - [Ultimate AWS Certified SysOps Administrator Associate 2022](#)

This course has more than 350 videos and about 25 hrs content, it might feel overwhelming to go through all this stuff at first view. To help you with planning and getting through the course to prepare for the AWS SOA exam I have added some tips below in this article.

- Practice Exams: AWS Certified Sysops Administrator Associate 2022 (Udemy)

This course has 4 exam sets(with 65 questions each) which are based on the real exam pattern and it is a great way to see if you are ready for the exam. It also helps you identify your weak spots so you can revisit those topics. If you pass the practice exams with 90%+ score then there are high chances you will pass the exam for sure!

I will recommend you to take these practice exams when you are less than 10 days away from giving your AWS SOA certificate exam and after completing your learning course. If you solve these practice exams before this timeframe you might forget the question patterns and will be more prone to repeat the same mistakes.

Note - You can skip the practice exam in “Ultimate AWS Certified Sysops Administrator Associate 2022” if you are giving the practice exams in this course as those same questions will be covered in this one as well.

Course links - [Practice Exams: AWS Certified SysOps Administrator Associate](#)

- AWS official tests

AWS has its own official sample and practice tests which you must go through before taking the exam. Combined these both have 20+10 = 30 questions which will help you better understand the scenarios that might appear in the exam. Below are the links-

AWS official practice test (SOA) - [Practice-tests](#)

AWS official Sample questions (SOA) - [Sample Questions](#)

- Practice Hands-On Lab

As discussed earlier too, this certification exam is unique from other AWS exams as this one has a hands-on lab as the part of the exam too. So to make yourself acquainted with the lab environment at the exam and understand the kind of lab questions that can appear at the exam, you can give the practice lab test, the link for this you will receive individually on your email-id when you register for the exam. The link is shared by “Pearson Vue” (AWS exam vendor) along with your exam confirmation mail.

5.Tips

- Don't be afraid of the lab questions

Personally I think the easiest and fun part of the exam is the lab section. This exam has 51 MCQ and Multi choice questions which you need to solve first. After that you will be solving labs and you can't revisit the MCQ part again. AWS suggests you to keep at least 20 minutes aside per lab, that is one hour for the lab section.

Lab questions are easy, everything that is required for the successful completion of the lab is very clearly mentioned. Even if some service that you have never used comes up in the lab, don't worry, just follow the instructions in the question. Just as in your regular console you can click on info buttons and get clarity on any service or service attribute that you don't understand or are confused about.

- Set a deadline

I have completed 5 certifications in the past 9 months (Including AWS DVA, AWS SOA & AWS SAA). Many people tell me that they were struggling with their first certification itself! I always suggest people to have deadlines set for their certification exam also. Depending on your level of preparation for the exam you can schedule your exam max up to 3 months later(in case you are yet to start!). Schedule your exam, pay your fees and promise yourself to not reschedule it! Deadline forces you to commit yourself more strongly!

- Plan milestones to meet the deadline

Let us consider the course suggested above, it has 25 sections and 350+ lectures of approx 25 hrs of content. Now that you have set your deadline after 90 days from today, assuming that you are going to start from the scratch. You can decide to have weekly milestones so that you will be exam ready before the 90th day. So you break the course as -

$350/10 = \sim 35$ lectures per week for 10 weeks

(You can divide by sections/number of hours per week as well)

Remaining 2 weeks can be utilised to solve the practice exam sets and revising the weak topics.

I have followed the same practice for every certification or for other tasks as well. It helps you get things done and to have a track of it.

- Don't just get the certificate get the proficiency as well

If you are a student, a fresher or a working professional willing to change roles/job it is very important for you to "Know" the stuff. If you are AWS SOA certified and you are mentioning it in your resume then you should expect the interviewer to ask you the questions based on the administration & monitoring part of aws services as well. You should be prepared with the answers to these questions because you get an edge over non-certified candidates if you answer correctly but if you are not able to answer the interviewer's questions correctly your credibility is lost and your chances of selection are reduced.

Hence, I sincerely request you to not just learn for the exam but to get the true knowledge as well. It will help you everywhere and everytime in your cloud journey.

- Lookout for discounts/reimbursements(for working professionals)

If you are a working professional check with your HR or concerned Talent development authorities about certification policies for employees. Many companies provide training/ coupons/ reimbursements (partial or full) to their employees. Also, AWS provides 50% off on your second certification enrolment if you have passed your first one.

- Making list of weak topics and playing with it

It might happen that you struggle with a particular or a set of AWS resources or that you are completely new to them. I will recommend that you list them and play(practice) with them until you get comfortable with them. Go through the lectures again if you make mistakes about a particular AWS resource in practice exams or you are confused about them.

- The most simple solution is generally the correct one

The exam has few trick questions, most of them are very straightforward. In cases where multiple solutions look correct, choose the one which is easiest to implement unless another criteria like “choose the most cost effective option” is mentioned in the question because the least complex one is generally the correct one.

Final words -

The AWS certified sysops administrator - associate exam is more credible compared to the other AWS Associate level exams in my opinion because of the practical labs included as a part of the exam which has 18% weightage in the exam. It requires greater knowledge of monitoring and troubleshooting aspects of AWS. But it covers other aspects fairly well too.

I will suggest you to follow the above mentioned courses thoroughly, follow the tips mentioned in the article, they will be helpful for your AWS SOA certification journey.

Wishing you best of luck for your certification journey!

