How to Prepare for the Confluent Certified Developer for Apache Kafka (CCDAK) exam

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Getting the Apache Kafka certification from Confluent is a great way of making sure to have your skills recognized by your current and future employees. But how do you prepare for that certification?

Certification

I personally find the CCDAK certification of **medium difficulty**, and if you have seriously used Apache Kafka in the past year, many questions shouldn't be surprising. Nonetheless, **it is best to be as prepared as you can**, as the certification cost of **150 USD** is not something you'd rather pay for twice.

I was part of the beta testers :) https://www.credential.net/6ar0r04w

I have created a practice exam course with 3 practice tests of 50 questions each... so 150 sample questions. Check it out here (discount coupon included!). Completing those is a great first step to assess where you stand today. **You will find five sample questions in this blog, read on !**

Please also read the CCDK certification FAQ at: https://www.confluent.io/certification/.

Important points are:

- You can currently take the certification straight from your computer, you don't need to go to an exam center
- The certification exam is 55 multiple choice questions in 90 minutes
- The certification is valid for two years
- Read the exam details at: https://www.confluent.io/wp-content/uploads/CCDAF.pdf

Studying for the Certification

If you find lacking the knowledge, you may already know I have plenty of online content with the Apache Kafka Series to help you learn Kafka at your own pace and with over 35 hours of videos. **Countless number of my students did successfully pass the CCDAK certification exam after studying with my online courses.**

Let's deep dive into what you need to know for each exam topic:

Apache Kafka Fundamentals

You need to know everything about brokers, topics, partitions, offsets, producers and message keys, consumers and consumer groups, delivery semantics, Zookeeper, Java programming, and more. My Apache Kafka for Beginners course will help you get there

Kafka Connect

You'll need to know the basics of Kafka Connect includes Workers, Source Connectors and Sink Connectors, as well as converters. Check out my Kafka Connect Course

Kafka Streams

You will need to know how Kafka Streams works, reading high level DSL topologies and understanding the difference between stateless and stateful operations. Check out my Kafka Streams course

Confluent Schema Registry / REST Proxy / KSQL

You will need to know the basics of the Confluent components (it is, after all, a Confluent certification), especially the Confluent Schema Registry and how Avro works. Check out my Confluent Schema Registry course. For KSQL, reading a few recipes ahead of time may help: https://www.confluent.io/stream-processing-cookbook/. You'll quickly get the idea, it looks like SQL. Reading the FAQ may help too: https://docs.confluent.io/current/ksql/docs/faq.html

Kafka Setup

Surprising as it seems, you will get questions about Kafka heap sizing, and setup questions, so you will need to acquire knowledge there too. Check out my Kafka Setup course

Kafka Security and Kafka Monitoring?

For now, these aren't covered at the exam in depth. My blog on Introduction to Apache Kafka Security will do.

Sample questions

The following questions are an extract of my Practice Exam course (responses at the bottom of the blog):

Q1: You want to perform table lookups against a KTable every time a new record is received from a KStream. What is the output of KStream-KTable join?

- A: KStream
- B: KTable
- C: GlobalKTable
- D: You choose between KStream or KTable

Q2: In Kafka, every broker... (select three)

- A: contains all the topics and all the partitions
- B: contains only a subset of the topics and the partitions
- C: knows all the metadata for all topics and partitions
- D: knows the metadata for the topics and partitions it has on its disk
- E: is a bootstrap broker
- F: is a controller

Q3: If a topic has a replication factor of 3...

- A: Each partition will live on 3 different brokers
- B: Each partition will live on 2 different brokers
- C: Each partition will live on 4 different brokers
- D: 3 replicas of the same data will live on 1 broker

Q4: Your manager would like to have topic availability over consistency. Which setting do you need to change in order to enable that?

- A: min.insync.replicas
- B: compression.type
- C: unclean.leader.election.enable

Q5: Using the Confluent Schema Registry, where are Avro schema stored?

- A: In the Schema Registry embedded SQL database
- B: In the _schemas topic
- C: In the message bytes themselves
- D: In the Zookeeper node /schemas

Closing Comments

Don't rush your certification, especially if you're just getting started with Apache Kafka, as I find the exam really great at testing your actual experience using Apache Kafka. Take your time to learn and practice, and answering the questions will seam natural.

If I have helped you get the certification, leave a comment here or a review on my Udemy course!

Happy learning, and I wish you good luck for the CCDAK certification!

Quiz answers: 1A, 2BCE, 3A, 4C, 5B.