

Chapter 9. Certification Overview

As you approach the final stage of your certification journey, it's time to prepare for the exam. In this chapter, we will provide a comprehensive overview of the certification exam, detailing its format, structure, and the key topics you need to focus on. We'll also offer a practical guide on how to register and what to expect on exam day. To further enhance your preparation, we will share valuable resources for practice exams, enabling you to assess your knowledge and skills effectively.

Exploring the Exam Format

Before taking the Databricks Data Engineer Associate exam, it's important to familiarize yourself with the exam layout. The exam typically consists of 45 questions that you are required to complete within a 90-minute timeframe. However, depending on the difficulty of specific questions, you may occasionally encounter an additional 4 to 5 questions, bringing the total number to approximately 50 questions.

The passing score has been established through rigorous statistical analysis, considering the varying levels of difficulty among the questions. Currently, the passing mark is approximately set at 75%. However, to increase your chances of certification, it's advisable to aim for at least 80%, which means correctly answering a minimum of 40 questions out of the potential 50.

Key Topics Covered

The questions expected during the exam are distributed across several core topics, ensuring comprehensive coverage of the platform's capabilities. The distribution is as follows:

1. Databricks Lakehouse Platform—24%

11 questions out of 45 will focus on the use and benefits of the Databricks Data Intelligence Platform. This includes understanding its architecture and core components, particularly Delta Lake.

2. Building ETL Pipelines—29%

13 questions will cover the creation of ETL pipelines using Apache Spark SQL and Python. This section emphasizes practical knowledge of

transforming and processing batch datasets and working with higher-order functions and user-defined functions (UDFs) in Spark.

3. Incremental Data Processing—22%

10 questions will delve into processing data incrementally. This topic involves understanding how to manage streaming data and design incremental medallion architectures.

4. Production Pipelines—16%

7 questions will explore topics on constructing production pipelines and performing Databricks SQL analytics. This involves implementing DLT pipelines, creating end-to-end workflows, and visualizing data using Databricks Dashboards.

5. Data Governance and Security—9%

4 questions will assess knowledge of data governance and security practices. This includes understanding access controls in Hive and Unity Catalog to ensure secure and compliant data management.

Figure 9-1 visually represents the distribution of exam questions across these essential topics.

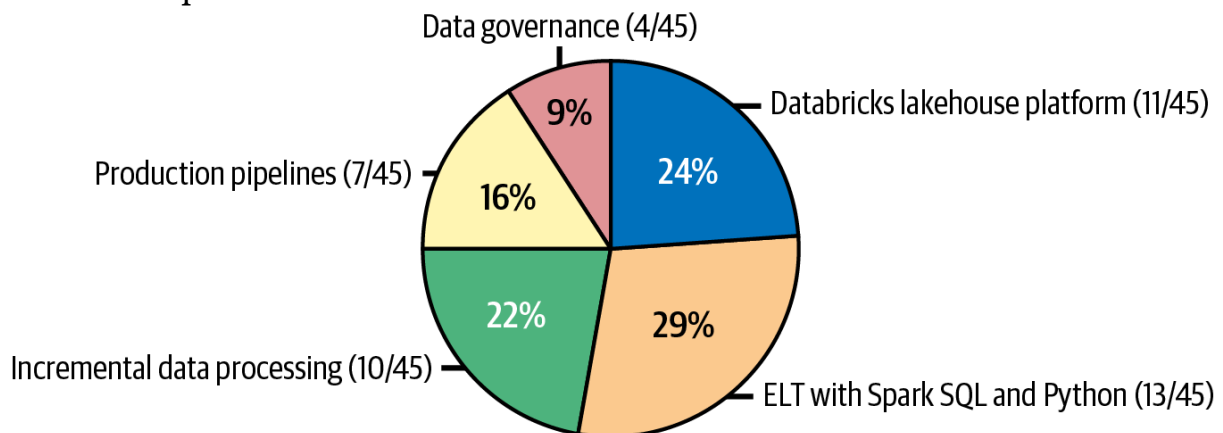


Figure 9-1. Distribution of the Databricks Data Engineer Associate exam questions
Rest assured, all these topics have been covered in depth throughout this book. The chapters are carefully designed to align with the exam topics, ensuring that you're fully prepared for the assessment.

Out-of-Scope Topics

While focusing on the key areas is crucial, it's equally important to recognize which topics will not appear on this Associate-level Data Engineer exam. The following subjects are considered out of scope:

Apache Spark internals

Detailed mechanisms and underlying architecture of Apache Spark will not be tested.

Databricks CLI and REST API

Knowledge related to the Databricks command-line interface and RESTful API is not required.

Data modeling concepts

Questions concerning data modeling principles are excluded from the exam content.

GDPR/CCPA

Regulations like the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA) will not be assessed.

Monitoring and logging production jobs

Practical aspects of tracking and logging in production environments are not included.

Dependency management and testing

Topics related to managing dependencies in projects and testing methodologies are also not part of this exam.

By understanding both the key topics and those that are out of scope, you can tailor your study plan effectively, focusing on the areas that will enhance your chances of success in the certification exam.

Code Snippet Language

In code-based questions, data manipulation will primarily be demonstrated using SQL whenever applicable. If SQL is not suitable—such as in Spark Structured Streaming—code snippets will be provided in Python. Familiarity with both SQL and Python will be essential, as it will enable you to navigate and understand the code effectively, ensuring you can correctly answer any code-based question.

Registering for the Exam

Before scheduling your exam, it's essential to understand the associated costs and policies. Understanding these details can help ensure a smoother registration process and better preparation for your exam experience.

Registration Fee

Each attempt at the certification exam requires a fee of \$200, excluding applicable taxes. Candidates may retake the exam as many times as necessary to achieve a passing score. However, a fee of \$200 is required for each attempt, and there is a mandatory 14-day waiting period between retakes. This policy is designed to allow sufficient time for review and preparation before retesting.

Exam Platform Overview

Databricks exams are conducted online through the Kryterion Webassessor platform, a globally recognized and secure online exam portal. The platform can be accessed directly via this link: <https://www.webassessor.com/databricks>. To register for the exam, you need first to create an account on the platform by clicking the Create New Account link, as displayed in [Figure 9-2](#).

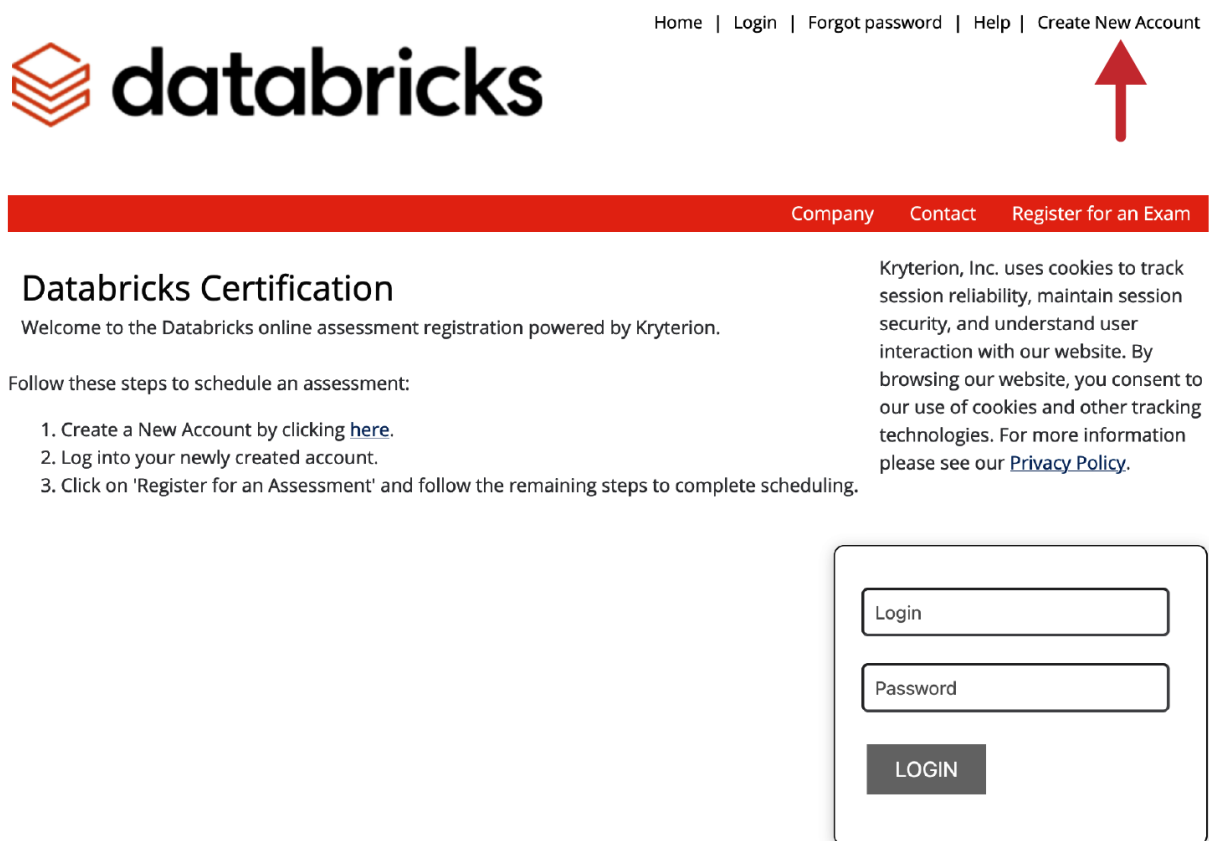


Figure 9-2. Webassessor platform sign-in page

You will be required to provide basic personal information, including your name, email address, and contact details. Once your account is set up, log in to your account to access the main dashboard of the Webassessor platform.

Scheduling the Exam

Once logged into your account, follow these steps to scheduling your exam:

1. Navigate to the exam registration page: Access the “Register for an Exam” option on the top bar of the Webassessor platform. This will open the page where you can view the available Databricks certification exams, as shown in [Figure 9-3](#).



Figure 9-3. Register for the exam on the Webassessor platform

From this list, locate the Databricks Certified Data Engineer Associate certification and click Continue next to it to proceed to the scheduling page.

2. Select date and time: Next, you will be presented with a calendar where you can choose the most suitable date and time for your exam, as displayed in [Figure 9-4](#).

Databricks Certified Data Engineer Associate | Online

The screenshot displays the exam scheduling interface. On the left is a calendar for August 2025, with the date 13th highlighted. On the right is a 'Filter By' section with four time period options: Early Morning (12:00am - 4:59am), Morning (5:00am - 11:59am), Afternoon (12:00pm - 5:59pm), and Evening (6:00pm - 11:59pm). Below these is a 24-hour time slot grid. The 'Afternoon' filter and the 1:30 PM slot are selected. A 'Show More' link is visible below the grid. At the bottom is a large blue 'Schedule' button.

August 2025						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Filter By				24 Hour Time
Early Morning (12:00am - 4:59am)	Morning (5:00am - 11:59am)	Afternoon (12:00pm - 5:59pm)	Evening (6:00pm - 11:59pm)	
12:00 PM	12:15 PM	12:30 PM	12:45 PM	
1:00 PM	1:15 PM	1:30 PM	1:45 PM	
2:00 PM	2:15 PM	2:30 PM	2:45 PM	

Show More ▾

Schedule

Figure 9-4. Exam date and time selection

Available slots will vary based on demand, so it is advisable to book your exam well in advance. After selecting the date and time, click the Schedule button to proceed to payment.

3. Completing payment: Follow the prompts on the payment page to enter your payment details and complete the transaction. Once payment is processed, you will receive an email confirmation with the details of your exam booking.

Troubleshooting and Support

The Kryterion support team offers assistance through a live chat feature, which allows for prompt resolution of any issues that arise before or during the exam. In the event of any technical problems, you can quickly contact the support team through the Kryterion Support Center, which can be accessed via this link: <https://kryterion.force.com/support>.

Once you have navigated to the support page, you will find a chat icon located at the bottom-right corner of the page. Clicking this icon will open a chat window where you can communicate with a support representative in real time.

This feature is particularly useful for resolving urgent issues that occur just before or during your exam. Whether you're experiencing difficulty with the exam scheduling or having trouble launching the exam, the live chat allows for immediate assistance without the need for email exchanges or long wait times.

Getting Ready for the Assessment

Before the day of your exam, review the instructions sent to you via a reminder email, and take the necessary steps to prepare your testing environment. On the day of your scheduled exam, it is recommended that you log in to your Webassessor account 15 minutes before your exam start time. This extra time will allow you to finalize your setup and ensure that your computer is ready for the assessment.

Once logged in, navigate to the My Assessments page from the top bar of the Webassessor platform. Here, you will find your scheduled exam listed, along with the date and time, as shown in [Figure 9-5](#). From this page, you can launch your exam or, if necessary, reschedule or cancel it.

databricks

Company Receipts Register for an Exam **My Assessments** Home

For Online Proctored Exams

Before you can launch your exam, you must complete the following steps:

Step 1 [Install secure browser](#)

If you have not installed the secure browser or you are unsure, click the button above and run the installation program.

Step 2 [Enroll in biometrics](#)

Create your Biometric Profile - If you have not completed your Biometric Enrollment, a button will appear above. You must complete the Biometric Profile prior to taking an OLP test.

Scheduled Exams

Exam	Exam Details	Date Scheduled	Date Registered	Launch	Details
Databricks Certified Data Engineer Associate	Online	13 August 2025 1330H Europe/Paris	10 August 2025	Launch	Reschedule/Cancel

Figure 9-5. My Assessments page on the Webassessor platform

Before launching your exam, make sure to complete the following prerequisites if you haven't done so already:

- Installing the assessment software: Click the “Install secure browser” button to download and install the required assessment software.

This program manages your exam environment and runs in full-screen mode, preventing access to other applications or files on your computer during the exam. Please note that some common corporate software may not function optimally within the secure test environment. Therefore, it is advisable to use a personal computer with a camera to avoid potential issues.

- Enroll in biometrics: Next, click the “Enroll in biometrics” button to verify your identity, a crucial step to ensure you are the person taking the exam.

Once these steps are completed, you can proceed by clicking the Launch button to start your exam.

Exam Proctoring

Databricks exams incorporate a strict proctoring process to ensure the integrity and security of the assessment. Understanding what to expect during the proctoring process will help you prepare appropriately and avoid any issues during the exam.

Webcam monitoring

Throughout the duration of the exam, you will be monitored in real time by a Webassessor Proctor via your computer’s webcam. So, it is important to ensure that your webcam is fully functional prior to the exam.

Microphone and audio restrictions

In addition to webcam monitoring, your microphone must be operational for the entire duration of the exam. Please be aware that reading the exam questions aloud is strictly prohibited.

Testing environment requirements

No test aids are permitted during the exam. This means you will not be allowed to use notes, textbooks, or any other external resources. Your physical testing environment must be clean and free from any such materials. The proctor may inspect your testing area via the webcam before the exam begins to ensure it meets these requirements.

It is essential to understand that the proctor’s role is to maintain fairness and security. While the proctor can assist with technical issues that may arise during the exam, they will not provide any assistance regarding the content of the exam. For example, if you encounter a problem with your computer or internet connection, the proctor can guide you through resolving the issue; however, they are not allowed to clarify or explain any of the exam questions.

Exam Result

Upon completing the certification exam, the grading process is both immediate and automated. As soon as you finish your test and submit your answers, the assessment software will instantly display your pass or fail result.

Although you receive your exam result immediately, the formal credentials—your badge and certificate—are not delivered instantaneously. If you pass the exam, your official certification will be sent to you via email within 24 hours. The email you receive will contain a link directing you to the Databricks Credentials platform, accessible at <https://credentials.databricks.com>. From this platform, you can manage, share, and verify all your certifications, as displayed in [Figure 9-6](#).



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8 Credentials | 1 Issuer

Wallet

Transcript



Figure 9-6. Databricks Credentials platform

This digital certification confirms your achievement and can be easily shared on social platforms or added to your professional profiles, such as LinkedIn.

Practice Exams

When preparing for certification, practice exams offer valuable opportunities to familiarize yourself with the exam format and types of questions, providing you with a solid foundation before taking the actual exam. To assist with your preparation for this certification, two valuable sources of practice exams are available: an official static practice exam from Databricks and interactive practice tests on various third-party learning platforms.

Official Databricks Practice Exam

One of the primary resources for exam preparation is the official Databricks practice test, which is accessible in PDF format. This static practice exam can be [downloaded directly](#).

This document contains 45 questions that are representative of the kinds of questions you will encounter in the real exam. However, these questions are no longer part of the current exam. Upon completing this practice exam, you can evaluate your performance by reviewing the answer key provided at the end of the document.

Interactive Practice Exams

For a more dynamic and immersive exam preparation experience, interactive practice exams are available on some popular learning platforms. One such resource is the Udemy course provided by the author, which offers a series of practice exams tailored to this certification. The course can be accessed here: <https://oreil.ly/Udemy-alhussein>.

These interactive practice exams simulate the live exam environment, providing a timed and structured approach to exam preparation. They allow you to experience the pressure and time constraints that come with the real exam. After completing a practice exam, you receive immediate feedback, including a pass or fail result. This feedback is invaluable, as it comes with detailed explanations for each question, helping you understand your mistakes and reinforce your knowledge.

To maximize your chances of success on the actual certification exam, it is recommended to aim for 100% accuracy in practice exams. By repeatedly taking these tests until you achieve a perfect score, you'll ensure that you are well prepared for the questions and scenarios presented in the real exam.

Seeking Assistance

If you have any concerns specific to Databricks certifications, such as exam content, registration issues, or credential inquiries, the best course of action is to reach out directly to the Databricks support team. You can contact them through their [support page](#). This channel is specifically designed for certification-related inquiries and ensures that your questions are addressed by official support staff.

Final Thoughts

Congratulations on making it this far! This study guide was designed to help you on your journey to becoming a Databricks Certified Data Engineer Associate. You've now covered all the topics and skills needed for this certification exam. With a solid understanding of Databricks and data engineering concepts, you're ready to take the next step.

As you prepare for the big day, keep in mind that the secret to passing the exam is consistent practice. It's not enough to just read and understand the concepts; you need to put them into action. Take the time to review all the hands-on exercises in this book and apply them in your Databricks workspace to reinforce your understanding. Lastly, utilize the practice exams mentioned in this chapter to assess your knowledge and adjust your study plan accordingly.

It's often said that success is just 1% inspiration and 99% hard work. This is especially true when it comes to preparing for an exam. Your dedication and consistent effort will pay off, not only in passing the exam but in equipping you with valuable skills for your career. Stay focused, practice consistently, and trust in the work you've put in.

I wish you all the best in obtaining your Databricks Data Engineer Associate certification. I'd love to hear about your exam results, so feel free to share them with me on [LinkedIn](#)!