

AWS SAA-02 Certification Study Guide

Exam Date - January 20rd 715AM PST - PearsonVue Remote Proctored Exam

Flow Chart

1. Cover free AWS resources to get a big picture overview.
2. Start A Cloud Guru's free trial of personal basic plan on Monday December 21st 2020 morning deep work session.
3. Start A Cloud Guru personal basic monthly subscription Monday December 28th 2020.
4. Complete A Cloud Guru core material and accompanying practice exam, practice exam #1.
5. Purchase Whizlabs practice exams on Wednesday December 30th 2020.
6. Purchase Udemy practice exams. January 2nd 2021.
7. Review steps and deep dive into other topics mentioned in <https://www.toptal.com/aws-cloud-engineers/aws-certified-solutions-architect-exam-tips>.
8. Start doing Whizlabs practice exams.
9. Take supplemental courses as needed.
10. Do Whizlabs labs.
11. Do the Udemy practice exams.
12. Go/no-go on Saturday January 16th 2021.
13. Wrap up Whizlabs labs.
14. Review practice exam solutions the day before the exam.
15. Pass the exam on Wednesday January 20th 2021.
16. Make Youtube Video :D

Notes

- Certification exam costs a lot more than what I'm spending on preparation materials.
 - Err on the side of spending more for resources and don't go in without 85% certainty of passing.
- Choose Pearson VUE as your test provider.
 - PSI has a bad rep as per my research.
- Take the exam in location with secure internet connection with no one interrupting you for the entire duration.
- Perform a system check for the onVUE application at least a day before the exam and before you check in time for your exam.
- For Mac users with screen time enabled, make sure you allow the onVUE app (along with the secure browser) or disable screen time before the exam.
 - Once the check in process starts, it is impossible for you to override your check in process.
- **You are allowed to use the webcam built into your laptop, I can confirm this or Pearson VUE.**

Materials

Name	Use Case	Cost (USD)	Time	What I Actually Did
Official exam guide	Guideline, what to expect, what to study for	Free	20 minutes	Completed
Well architected system module	Foundational understanding of principles	Free	1.5 hours	Completed
Official sample questions	Guideline, what to expect	Free	30 minutes	Skipped
Official exam readiness guide	Official reference	Free	2 hours	Skipped
A Cloud Guru's prep course and supplemental courses	Core curriculum, hands on labs, deep dive into topics with supplemental courses	\$49/month: 1 week trial and 1 month, 12/28/2020	35 hours: core curriculum and labs. Could spend up to 70 hours here.	Consumed AWS SAA-02 course and cloud practitioner course. Ended up spending upwards of 50 hours here. Completed the accompanying practice exam.
Whizlabs practice exams	For practice exams, and leverage the lab environment exercise	\$9.95, 12/30/2020	21 hours — 7 practice exams, 14 section tests.	Completed the first 4 practice exams and 39 labs.
Udemy practice exams	Difficult exams to gauge readiness for actual exam	\$9.99, 1/2/2021	14 hours — 6 exams, assuming 130 minutes each.	Completed the first practice exam.
Jayendra's blog	Cheat sheets, overviews of concepts and white papers	Free	On a need to know basis, if there are gaps in knowledge.	Went through certain topics briefly.
Official practice exam	As name	\$20	130 minutes	Skipped
Udemy gap closer course	Supplemental curriculum to fill in gaps of knowledge	\$12.99, depends on Udemy promotion	24 hours — in material, but search for specific use cases.	Skipped
Official AWS Certification Prep Resource Guide	Use course and FAQs sections to fill in gaps in knowledge on a need to know basis	Free	8 hours — could easily spend an infinite amount of time here.	Skipped

Cost Projection

Best case — **\$218.94**

- Certification exam attempt — \$150
- Cloud Guru 'Personal Basic' subscription — 1 month & free trial — \$49
- Whizlabs practice exams — \$9.95
- Udemy practice exams — \$9.99*

Worst case **Additional** costs — **\$221.99**

- Certification exam attempt — failed first attempt — \$150
- Cloud Guru subscription — another month — \$39 — price lowered as of this writing
- Udemy fill in course — \$12.99* — depends
- AWS official practice exam — \$20

Time Projection

- Initial Projection
 - Best case — 75 hours / 2.5 hour days = 30 days = 6 weeks — January 30th
 - Official overview — 5 hours
 - A cloud guru subscription — 35 hours
 - Practice exams — 35 hours
 - Worst case — double the time — 150 hours
- Actual
 - 27 days * 5 hours/day = **135 hours**

Silver Bullet — Manufacture Consequences

Step 1 — Define what you want done.

The project that I desire to complete is to fill in the gaps of knowledge from my certification prep course. I want to address the following areas: VPCs, storage, database, compute, and miscellaneous within the next 7 days. I want to complete 4 practice exams in 7 days, with the last exam being a stretch goal. I'm aiming for around the 85% mark.

Step 2 & 3 & 4 — Brain dump all tasks, order them, and add deadlines.

Task	Deadline (PST)
Coverage: ACG cloud practitioner course	1/2 1PM
Practice Exam 1	1/2 630PM
VPC P1: diagram	1/4 630PM
VPC Quizzes	1/4 630PM
VPC P2: practice	1/5 8AM
Practice Exam 2	1/5 630PM
Storage: S3, Snowball, Snowmobile, data transfers, Storage gateway	1/6 6PM
Database: RDS, Redshift, DynamoDB, Aurora	1/7 630PM
Practice Exam 3	1/7 630PM
Compute: EC2, Lambda, Auto Scaling Process, Restrictions	1/8 630PM
Other: Kinesis, SQS, SNS	1/9 330PM
Practice Exam 4	1/9 330PM

Step 5 — Set a consequence with a person to hold you accountable.

Hello Renzo, I need you to hold me accountable to completing **3 practice exams** this following week. The project is considered complete when I have sent you the **screenshots of the three practice exam scores as proof** of completion. If I do not send you this proof by **Saturday 1/9 330PM PST**, I will PayPal you **\$200 USD!**

Step 6 — Take massive action.