

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Please read this FAQ and review the courseware before contacting the OpenEDG Python Institute staff. Thank you.

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Who is sponsoring the course?

The Python Institute has developed the course PCAP: Programming Essentials in Python (short: Python Essentials) to enhance, develop and support professional careers in Python programming and related network technologies.

The Python Institute is offering this course to all institutions participating in the Cisco Networking Academy program for Instructor-Led Training and Self-Paced Training. The course is offered free of charge. To learn more about the OpenEDG Python Institute, please visit www.pythoninstitute.org.

What are the main features of the course curriculum?

The course will prepare you for jobs and careers connected with widely understood software development, which includes not only creating the code itself as a junior developer, but also computer systems design and software testing.

During the course you will have access to hands-on practice materials, labs, quizzes, assessments, and tests to learn how to utilize the skills and knowledge gained from studying the resources and performing coding tasks, and interact with some real-life programming challenges and situations.

Completing our course can be a stepping-stone to learning any other programming language, and to explore technologies using Python as a foundation (e.g., Django). Our introductory course is distinguished by its affordability, friendliness, and openness to the student. The first part starts from the absolute basics, guiding you step by step to complex problems explained in part 2, making you a responsible software creator able to take different challenges in many positions in the IT industry.

Students who complete the course will be able to accomplish coding tasks related to the basics of programming in the Python language, and to understand the fundamental notions and techniques used in object-oriented programming. Furthermore, they will be ready to attempt the qualifications PCEP - Certified Entry-Level Python Programmer (aligned with Python Essentials 1), and PCAP - Certified Associate in Python Programming (aligned with Python Essentials 1 & 2) certifications from the Python Institute.

Why should I learn Python?

It is omnipresent, people use numerous Python-powered devices on a daily basis, whether they realize it or not. There have been millions (well, actually billions) of lines of code written in Python, which means almost unlimited opportunities for code reuse and learning from well-crafted examples. What's more, there is a large and very active Python community, always happy to help.

There are also a couple of factors that make Python great for learning:

It is easy to learn - the time needed to learn Python is shorter than for many other languages; this means that it's possible to start the actual programming faster;

It is easy to use for writing new software - it's often possible to write code faster when using Python;

It is easy to obtain, install and deploy - Python is free, open and multiplatform; not all languages can boast that.

If you're not familiar with any other languages, Python is great to begin with, because it will give you a solid foundation and allow you to learn other programming languages (e.g., C++, Java, or C) much easier and much faster. Learning Python is fun and trendy!

What is Python actually used for?

Do you remember Battlefield 2, Battlefield 2142 and Battlefield Heroes - strategy and first person shooter games from EA DICE? All the games use Python for logic and server controls. Python is frequently used for creating open-source, free games, e.g., OpenRTS, PySol, Metin 2, or Frets On Fire - famous Guitar Hero-like games written in pygame.

And what about the major websites and services? Dropbox? UBER? Spotify? Pinterest? BuzzFeed? Yes. They were all written, to a greater or lesser extent, in Python. Other examples?

Internet Applications (BitTorrent, Jogger Publishing Assistant, TheCircle, TwistedMatrix)
3D CAD/CAM (FreeCAD, Fandango, Blender, Vintech RCAM)
Enterprise Applications (Odo, Tryton, Picalo, LinOTP 2, RESTx)
Image Applications (Gnofract 4D, Gogh, imgSeek, MayaVi, VPython)
Mobile Applications (Aarlogic C05/3, AppBackup, Pyroutel)
Office Applications (calibre, faces, Notalon, pyspread)
Personal Information Managers (BitPim, Narval, Prioritise, Task Coach, WikidPad) [Source:
<https://wiki.python.org/moin/PythonProjects>]

Generally, Python is a great choice for:

Web and Internet development (e.g., Django and Pyramid frameworks, Flask and Bottle micro-frameworks)
Scientific and numeric computing (e.g., SciPy - a collection of packages for the purposes of mathematics, science, and engineering; Ipython - an interactive shell that features editing and recording of work sessions)
Education (it's a brilliant language for teaching programming! And that's why we're offering this course to you!)
Desktop GUIs (e.g., wxWidgets, Kivy, Qt)
Software Development (build control, management, and testing - Scons, Buildbot, Apache Gump, Roundup, Trac)
Business applications (ERP and e-commerce systems - Odo, Tryton) [Source:
<https://www.python.org/about/apps>]
And many, many other projects and development tools.

How long will it take to complete the course?

The course is designed to be completed within approximately 70-80 hours (35-40 hours to complete Python Essentials 1, and 35-40 hours to complete Python Essentials 2). Recommended study time: 7-10 weeks, 7-10 hours per week.

Does the course align with any industry-recognized certification?

Yes, this course aligns with the Python Institute PCEP - Certified Entry-Level Python Programmer (Python Essentials 1, Modules 1-4, PCEP-30-01 exam), and PCAP - Certified Associate in Python Programming (Python Essentials 2, Modules 5-6, PCAP-31-03 exam | Python Essentials 1, Modules 1-4 and Python Essentials 2, Modules 5-6, PCAP-31-02) certifications. They are both a good starting point for individuals who want to become professional (Python) developers.

What is the value of the OpenEDG Python Institute certifications?

With the growing need for Python programmers, it is important to gain recognition for your programming expertise and be able to prove your skills. An employer does not only look at your portfolio, but also searches for different ways to validate your knowledge. A certificate is frequently the first screening tool used by a recruiter to help select those candidates who will have a chance to show off their skills during an interview. Failing to get through the very first selection process makes it impossible for even a great programmer to be noticed, and this is a strong argument for getting certified and paying particular attention to your self-development.

OpenEDG Python Institute certification can be a powerful weapon in the race for better employment, first-rate expertise and greater competitiveness.

The certification can open doors to a better job and a better salary. It is a great motivator for self-improvement and self-development. It is one of the key requirements set by an increasing number of IT managers and, frequently, a standard criterion for candidates among recruiters.

OpenEDG Python Institute certification is proof to the employer that you possess the expertise necessary to fulfil certain duties. At the same time, it is a sign for them that you are willing to expand your knowledge. And because certified individuals directly contribute to an increase in a company's efficiency, productivity and profit-making capacity, Python Institute certification is an asset for every organization.

Where do test candidates work?

The candidates who take Python Institute exams work for such companies as Accenture, Capgemini, IBM, HP, Craftworkz, Deloitte, Fujitsu, Garmin, HSBC, Innovative, Kaiser, NetApp, PricewaterhouseCoopers, Tata Consultancy Services, Rockall Technologies, Cisco, Global Logic, Tieto, Apptimia, Appen, Globant, Continental, and many more. This list is growing!

Is there any discount for the PCAP-31-02/PCAP-31-03 certification exam?

The Python Institute offers participants of the Cisco Networking Academy program who successfully complete the PCAP: Programming Essentials in Python course Part 1 and Part 2 a 50% discount on the list price for the PCAP - Certified Associate in Python Programming certification exam (PCAP-31-02/PCAP-31-03) taken at Pearson VUE Testing Centers and/or OnVUE Online Proctoring Service from Pearson VUE.

Students who successfully complete the course, i.e.:

pass Python Essentials 1 - Summary Test (score at least 70%) and Python Essentials 2 - Summary Test (score at least 70%)

pass the Final Test (score at least 70%)

complete the Satisfaction Survey

will be eligible for a discount voucher that reduces the exam fee by 50%. Students who qualify for the discount will be able to fill out the Voucher Request Form located at the bottom of the main interface, just under the FINAL TEST section.

To request the discount voucher, the student must click the Voucher Request Form link, fill out the form, accept the Voucher Policy, and submit the application. Students who qualify for the discounts will receive their exam vouchers immediately after submitting the form.

Do I need any additional equipment for the course?

The course can be accessed online through any Internet browser, on computers with Linux, Windows, or Mac OS.

For the best learning experience, we recommend having the Python 3 standard installation on your computer. A copy of Python 3 can be downloaded from <https://www.python.org/downloads>. The installation contains a software application called IDLE (Integrated Development and Learning Environment), which will enable you to execute simple Python commands and see the effects of executing your programs. Linux users most probably have Python already installed, as Python's infrastructure is intensively used by many Linux OS components.

Full information about how to get Python, how to install it, and how to use it is available in PE 1 Module 1 of the course.

Who should I contact if I have questions about the content of the course?

You can direct all questions about the course content to our Support Team at support@openedg.org. You can also use the Report a Bug button, available from the course interface, to submit feedback to the Python Institute for bugs, suggested edits, content typos, etc., and the Discussion feature to follow and/or contribute to the conversation threads regarding specific course-related topics.

ENJOY THE COURSE!