

Fundamentals of Business Analysis including BCS Requirements Engineering

Course Overview

This 5-day course focuses on learning practical business analysis skills that can be used in the workplace. Course delegates should be able to return to their working environments and work as an effective Business Analyst, immediately adding value and building relationships with project stakeholders.

The course focuses on learning how to do business analysis in the real world in both agile and formal/waterfall environments. It also covers the whole of the syllabus for the BCS certificate in Requirements Engineering, meaning delegates have the option of taking this exam at the end of the course.

The course is very practical with around 50% of training time devoted to individual and team exercises. During the course, delegates will attend daily stand-ups, produce a product vision and user stories, perform poker planning and interview product owners and other stakeholders. A simple case study is used throughout the course enabling attendees to experience the lifecycle of a project and the deliverables produced. At each stage delegates will learn how more traditional project approaches may work and the factors which may influence the level of agility or formality required in the approach taken.

Delegates work in teams simulating a real project, and are encouraged to make short informal presentations at the end of some exercises to build their confidence and develop the skills of peer review.

Intended Audience

Our Fundamentals of Business Analysis course is suited to Business Analysts and Product Owners recently placed in the role or those who have been performing the role for some time but have never received any formal training.

It is suitable as an introduction for anyone thinking about moving into the Business Analysis role or for other change management professionals wanting to gain a more in-depth understanding of the role and responsibilities of the business analyst. This includes scrum masters, testers, developers and project managers.

The course is also suitable for experienced business analysts as it:

- Provides a reinforcement session for those business analysts who have been doing the job for many years but have never received formal training
- Introduces consistent language and tools that can be adopted by teams who might currently be using a mix of different techniques and deliverables
- Introduces Agile as a project lifecycle and contrasts with more formal (Waterfall) approaches
- Covers the BCS Requirements Engineering syllabus in full so is the start point for the BCS International Diploma in Business Analysis

Course Objectives

By the end of the course the attendee will be able to:

- Integrate into a project or team environment with an understanding of their role, key responsibilities and relationship with fellow project members
- Apply 80:20 and end-to-end thinking to deliver early business value and right first time solutions
- Work with business stakeholders to define vision and scope for a project
- Work with business stakeholders to gather and document different types and levels of requirement
- Understand how Agile and Waterfall approaches affect the BA's work
- Break-down complex business scenarios or problems into process and data models
- Document business change needs as requirements, epics, user stories, features or catalogue entries
- Validate user stories or requirements against defined quality criteria such as INVEST
- Support prioritising, estimating and planning processes for an effective transition from requirements to solution
- Confidently present findings to business stakeholders and their project team

Course Structure

The course covers a number of different modules. The course is run in the style of a project taking delegates from start-up through to delivery with elements of each module being covered when relevant, and also contrasting agile and formal approaches at each stage. Exam based topics are covered in more depth towards the end of the course.

Module 1 - Introduction to the Business Analyst Role

The first section of the course introduces the role of the business analyst and positions them within agile and waterfall projects.

- What is a business analyst?
- The role of the business analyst
- The key principles and rules of business analysis
- Project approaches – Waterfall, Agile, Incremental

Exercise 1.1 – Delegates work in teams to define requirements for a 'simple' project

Module 2 – Starting a Project

The second section of the course introduces pre-project concepts of objectives, vision, scope and development of a business case. The different internal and external stakeholders involved in project work are introduced.

- The importance of understanding and defining objectives, vision and scope
- Project stakeholders – scrum master, product owner, project sponsor, end-user, developer, UX (User Experience) expert
- Business case basics
- Sprint Zero in agile

Exercise 2.1 – Delegates define a list of measurable project objectives and initial scoping questions

Module 3 – Agile Principles and Terminology

This section starts to explore the principles of agile in more depth. In particular it attempts to create an agile mindset, introduces important terminology and techniques used, and starts to produce agile deliverables.

- Agile manifesto
- Agile methods – overview of Scrum, XP
- Reviews and retrospectives
- MVP – Minimum Viable Product
- Architectural and Functional Risk
- Technical Debt
- User role modelling and Personas

Module 4 – Requirements, User Stories and Features

This section looks at the need for capturing and documenting requirements and the different formats that can be used. Delegates develop an understanding of the different levels of requirement and techniques used to identify them.

- What are requirements and why they need to be defined
- Writing epics, user stories and features
- Defining acceptance criteria
- Requirements catalogues
- Functional and Non-Functional requirements
- Defining requirements at high and low level
- How to find the missing requirements
- Requirements quality criteria

Exercise 4.1 – delegates review a set of user statements to categorise them into different types of requirement

Exercise 4.2 – delegates are asked to identify and define a set of functional requirements and non-functional requirements using different techniques including user stories

Exercise 4.3 – delegates review a set of user stories against the INVEST criteria

Module 5 – Interviewing, Workshops and Elicitation Techniques

This section looks at techniques for effective stakeholder interviewing. Additional elicitation techniques are introduced and related to knowledge types and how different techniques might be used at different stages of the project.

- Interviewing tips and techniques
- Knowledge types
- Other elicitation techniques (including workshops, scenarios, prototyping and protocol analysis)

Exercise 5.1 – delegates decide on the elicitation techniques to use in a number of business situations

Exercise 5.2 – elicitation techniques (exam practice exercise)

Module 6 – Delivering the requirements

This section of the course explores how the requirements eventually become part of a solution and how the BA is involved in supporting this transition.

- Getting to solutions - the role of the BA beyond defining the requirements
- Defining detailed requirements – how much detail do you need?
- Identifying business impact
- Supporting business implementation
- Estimating using planning poker
- Prioritising features - based on business value, functional and architectural risk
- Defining the MVP
- Drawing a burn-up chart

Exercise 6.1 – delegates perform poker planning on user stories/requirements

Exercise 6.2 – delegates develop some detailed requirements using different formats/styles

Exercise 6.3 – delegates evaluate requirement priorities and discuss potential MVP

Module 7 – Business Analysis Tools and Techniques

This section of the course is explored at relevant points during the course when specific techniques that can support the business analyst come into play.

- Seeing the bigger picture - the importance of process modelling
- Documenting a process using BPMN
- Understanding and documenting data requirements using entity/class diagrams
- Prototyping
- Use cases

Exercise 7.1 – delegates practise BPMN techniques using a simple scenario

Exercise 7.2 – delegates work in teams to produce an 'as-is' swim-lane diagram from the case study

Exercise 7.3 – delegates work in teams to prototype screens from the case study

Exercise 7.4 – delegates work with the instructor to develop a data model for the case study

Exercise 7.5 – delegates identify and define attributes for the case study entities/classes

Module 8 – Requirements Engineering Techniques

This section formalises the components of requirements engineering and prepares delegates for the BCS Requirements Engineering exam.

- Production of a Requirements Catalogue
- Requirements management – traceability and change control
- Requirements management tools – CASE and packages that support agile development (e.g. Jira)
- Exam based revision exercises

Course Preparation

This course does not require any pre-work.

Examination & Accreditation Details

Delegates interested in achieving a formal qualification can sit the BCS Requirements Engineering exam on the final afternoon of this course. The format for the exam is a one hour written (open book)

examination based on a business scenario with 15 minutes reading time. Delegates must achieve a mark of 50% or more to pass the exam and obtain the BCS certificate.

Requirements Engineering is one of four modules required for the BCS International Diploma in Business Analysis.

15 minutes extra time is permitted for delegates who are not native English speakers.

Timetable

Monday – Thursday

9:00 am to 5:00 pm – tutor led course delivery

5:00 pm to 5:30 pm – tutor supported exam preparation

Friday

9:00 am to 11:30 am – tutor led course delivery

11:30 am to 1:15 pm – exam preparation and lunch

1:15 pm to 2:30 pm (approx) - BCS Requirements Engineering Exam