


FITSI Candidate Handbook



Exam Process for The
Federal IT Security
Institute (FITSI)
Sponsored
Certifications

Version 2.1

Published 4/14/2020



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1. Overview

Welcome to the Federal IT Security Professional (FITSP) Certification Program. *The Federal IT Security Institute (FITSI) Candidate Handbook* provides important logistical and procedural information for those wishing to pursue a FITSP certification. This handbook is updated as needed and provides an overview of the processes and procedures that candidates must follow to apply for and attempt this exam.

Provided by FITSI, candidates can obtain this *FITSI Candidate Handbook* at <http://www.fitsi.org/documents.html>.

This handbook may be forwarded to professional colleagues but must be kept in its original form.

2. Applicability

This handbook applies to all candidates who desire to pursue a FITSP certification and provides the process to register for and take the certification exam.

3. Statement of Purpose and Impartiality

A. Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the FITSP Certification Program is to validate the skills of Information Technology (IT) security professionals, according to the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) standards and documentation. The certification allows the individual to demonstrate knowledge of IT standards established in NIST publications, thus making a minimum level of competency easily identifiable to those in the IT industry. The FITSP Certification Program consists of four certifications based on roles: Auditor, Designer, Manager, and Operator. Application for certification in one or more of the roles is open to all information security persons.

FITSI does not restrict candidacy based on membership to any society, undue financial conditions, or other conditions not relevant to the scope of this certification. FITSI is a non-discriminatory certification body and is compliant with Federal and State Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations.

B. Statement of Impartiality

FITSI adheres to the principles of fairness and due process and endorses the principles of equal opportunity in aspects of employment and certification. In administering the FITSP Certification Program, FITSI does not discriminate or deny an opportunity to anyone on the grounds of gender, age, employment status, religion, national or ethnic origin, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation, or disability.

4. Overview of the FITSP Certification

A. FITSP-Auditor

The FITSP-Auditor certification is designed to demonstrate the federal workforce member (civilian personnel, military, and contractors) possess the knowledge of federal information technology (IT) security requirements necessary to successfully *audit and assess* the management, operational, and technical IT security controls for systems owned by or operated on behalf of, the federal government of the United States.

The following list highlights, but may not comprehensively capture, the commonly articulated roles characterized within federal statutory, regulatory, standards, and guidance documents that relate to the FITSP-Auditor certification.

- Assessor
- External IT auditor
- Evaluator
- Internal IT auditor
- Reviewer
- Risk/Vulnerability Analyst

B. FITSP-Designer

The FITSP-Designer certification is designed to demonstrate the federal workforce member (civilian personnel, military, and contractors) possess the knowledge of federal information technology (IT) security requirements necessary to successfully *design and develop* the management, operational, and technical IT security controls for systems owned by or operated on behalf of, the federal government of the United States.

The following list highlights, but may not comprehensively capture, the commonly articulated roles characterized within federal statutory, regulatory, standards, and guidance documents that relate to the FITSP-Designer certification.

- IT Security Engineer
- Programmer
- Security Engineer
- System Designer
- System Developer

C. FITSP-Manager

The FITSP-Manager certification is designed to demonstrate the federal workforce member (civilian personnel, military, and contractors) possess the knowledge of federal information technology (IT) security requirements necessary to successfully *manage and oversee* the management, operational, and technical IT security controls for systems owned by or operated on behalf of, the federal government of the United States.

The following list highlights, but may not comprehensively capture, the commonly articulated roles characterized within federal statutory, regulatory, standards, and guidance documents that relate to the FITSP-Manager certification.

-
- Authorizing Official
 - Chief Information Officer
 - Senior Agency Information Security Officer
 - Chief Information Security Officer
 - Chief Technology Officer
 - Freedom of Information Act Official
 - Information Resource Manager
 - Information Assurance Manager
 - Information Security Manager
 - Information Security Program Manager
 - Information Systems Security Officers
 - IT Security Compliance Officer
 - Privacy Act Official (Privacy Officers)
 - Program and Functional Managers
 - Procurement Officers
 - Risk Executive
 - Senior/Executive Agency Leader
 - System Owner

D. FITSP-Operator

The FITSP-Operator certification is designed to demonstrate the federal workforce member (civilian personnel, military, and contractors) possess the knowledge of federal IT security requirements necessary to successfully *implement and operate* the management, operational, and technical IT security controls for systems owned by or operated on behalf of, the federal government of the United States.

The following list highlights, but may not comprehensively capture, the commonly articulated roles characterized within federal statutory, regulatory, standards, and guidance documents that relate to the FITSP-Operator certification.

- Data Center Manager
- Database Administrator
- IT Security Operations
- Maintenance Professional
- Network Administrator
- Network Security Specialists
- Security Administrator
- System Administrators
- System Operations Personnel
- Technical Support Professionals
- Telecommunications Personnel

5. Scope of the FITSP Certification

A. Overview

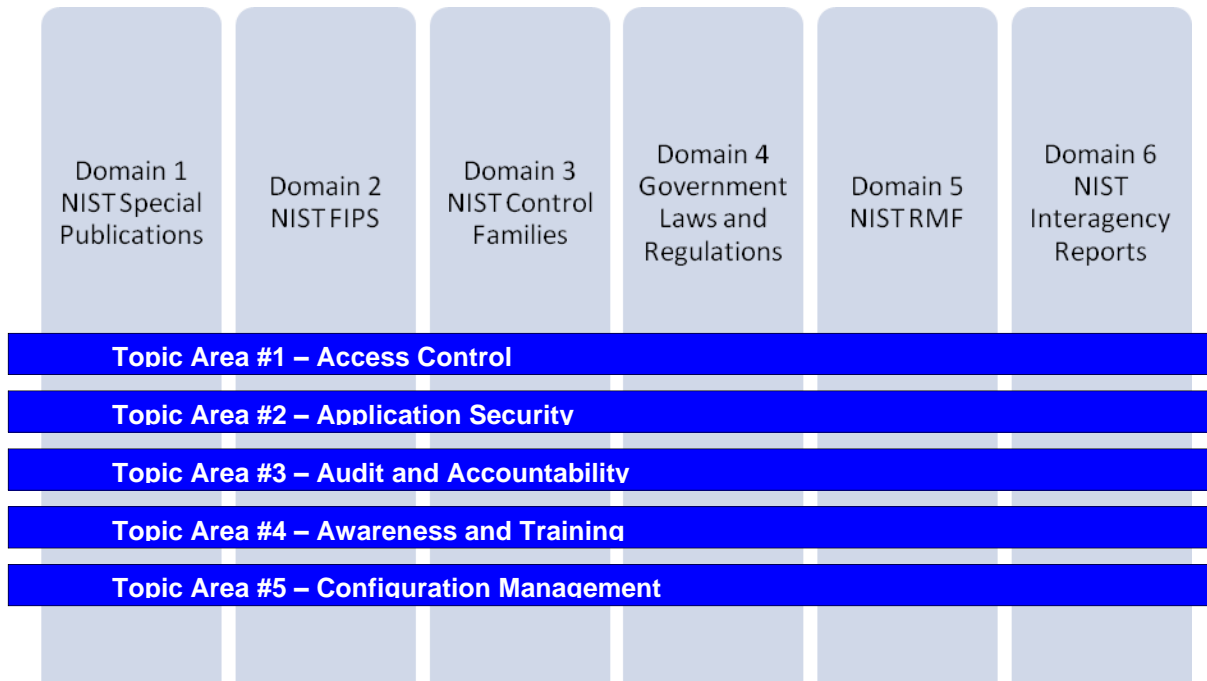
Candidates of all four certification roles (Auditor, Designer, Manager, and Operator) are tested on a comprehensive Federal Body of Knowledge (FBK), which consists of a library of federal statutes, regulations, standards, and guidelines. The FBK consists of 6 domains and 18 IT security topic areas.

1. Domains
 - b. Domain 1 – NIST Special Publications (SPs)
 - c. Domain 2 – NIST Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS)
 - d. Domain 3 – NIST Control Families (CFs)
 - e. Domain 4 – Governmental Laws and Regulations
 - f. Domain 5 – NIST Risk Management Framework (RMF)
 - g. Domain 6 – NIST Interagency Reports (NISTIRs)
2. IT security topic areas
 - a. Access Control
 - b. Audit and Accountability
 - c. Awareness and Training
 - d. Configuration Management
 - e. Contingency Planning
 - f. Identification and Authentication
 - g. Incident Response
 - h. Maintenance
 - i. Media Protection
 - j. Personnel Security
 - k. Physical and Environmental Protection
 - l. Planning
 - m. Program Management
 - n. Risk Assessment
 - o. Security Assessment and Authorization
 - p. System and Communications Protection
 - q. System and Information Integrity
 - r. System and Services Acquisition

The domains are the boundaries of knowledge that are applicable within the federal government. The IT security topic areas include themes and skills that IT security professionals are expected to understand. ***The FITSP certification exams include questions that cover the intersection between the six domains and the 18 IT security topic areas (see illustration below).***

Seventeen of the 18 IT security topic areas are derived directly from the minimum control requirements defined in FIPS 200, and one is defined in NIST SP 800-53, Appendix G (Program Management).

The interwoven nature of the domains and topic areas is represented below. Five of the 18 topic areas are listed for illustration purposes.



The following are the approximate areas of focus on which candidates for the four certification roles are tested:

Role	NIST SPs	NIST FIPS	NIST CFs	Laws and Regulations	NIST RMF	NISTIRs
Auditor	31-33%	6-8%	30-32%	14-16%	12-14%	1-3%
Designer	23-25%	11-13%	24-26%	20-22%	15-17%	1-3%
Manager	26-28%	10-12%	23-25%	16-18%	17-19%	2-4%
Operator	33-35%	17-19%	24-26%	9-11%	10-12%	1-3%

B. Domains

The FITSP Certification Program is represented by the FITSI FBK. The FBK contains six domains, and a domain is considered an area of knowledge.

- NIST SPs. This domain focuses on the full range of NIST 800 series SPs.
- NIST FIPS. This domain focuses on roughly 13 FIPS depending upon the role-based certification pursued (i.e., FIPS 140-2, FIPS 180-3, FIPS 197, etc.).
- NIST CFs. This domain focuses on the 18 CFs as defined in NIST SP 800-53. Candidates are expected to be familiar with the 18 CFs and corresponding controls from each family.

-
- Government Laws and Regulations. This domain focuses on the memorandums, circulars, executive orders, and laws that are established by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), Congress, and Presidential Directives. Examples include the Federal Information Security Modernization Act (FISMA), OMB Circular Number A-130 Appendix III, Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD)-12, etc.
 - NIST RMF. This domain focuses on the NIST RMF in support of system authorization. Documents such as NIST SP 800-37 Revision 2 and supporting documents are tested.
 - NISTIRs. This domain focuses on several key published NISTIRs.

The *FITSI Federal Body of Knowledge Guide* contains applicable reference material and can be found at <http://www.fitsi.org/documents.html>.

C. Exam Objectives

The exam objectives for each of the four roles can be found at <http://www.fitsi.org/documents.html>. The *FITSI Exam Objectives* include representative task and knowledge statements, as well as the objectives of each of the 18 IT security topic areas that a candidate is expected to understand and to be able to apply.

6. Process for Obtaining FITSP Certification

The process for obtaining a FITSP certification begins with registering for and passing the exam. After passing the exam, the candidate has five years to submit the completed *FITSI Certification Application*. The FITSI Certification Committee will review candidate eligibility and, once confirmed, FITSI issues the Certification Packet.

A. Exam Registration Process

Candidates complete the following steps to register for FITSP exams:

1. Submit an online registration at <http://www.fitsi.org> before the desired exam date. During the registration process, the candidate will be asked to provide name, mailing address, email address, and telephone number. Candidates also select the certification role applying for, exam location, exam date, and provide electronic payment information. Electronic submission of credit card information is preferred; however, for those not wishing to submit electronic payment information online may contact the FITSI Corporate Office to facilitate payment. Contact Information is provided in Appendix A of this document.
2. The electronic payment fee will be processed the same day as the electronic registration occurs. Once the registration is complete, the candidate will receive an email verifying exam date, time, and location. Candidates must bring a copy of the verification email to the exam.

B. The Exam

FITSP certification exams are computer-based multiple-choice exams. The exam may include trial items which will not be identified or scored.

Exams are offered at a FITSI designated location. Candidates have three hours from the start time of the exam to complete the exam. Exams are offered in English only. A FITSI Exam Proctor, and possibly an Exam Administrator, will set up the exam and distribute and collect any necessary paperwork. The Exam Proctor or the Exam Administrator may not answer any questions about the exam content before, during, or after the exam.

After completing the FITSP certification exam, the candidate is immediately provided exam results. The candidates who successfully pass the certification exam are required to submit the *FITSI Certification Application* to be considered for certification. The *FITSI Certification Application* can be found at <http://www.fitsi.org/documents.html>. At the end of the exam event, each candidate who successfully passes the certification exam will be given a *FITSI Certification Application Card*, which will provide the location for the candidate where to obtain the *FITSI Certification Application* for easy download. Below is an example of the card which is provided.



Figure 1: Example of a FITSI Certification Application Card

C. Application Process

Candidates who successfully pass the certification exam have five years to submit a *FITSI Certification Application*. Certification Eligibility Requirements are listed in Section 5.D. below. The application can be found at <http://www.fitsi.org/documents.html>. Candidates should email the completed *FITSI Certification Application* to applications@fitsi.org.

As part of the certification application, candidates must submit two endorsement forms from professional colleagues who can verify the stated work experience. The professional endorsement forms are available for download the same site as the *FITSI Certification Application*: <http://www.fitsi.org/documents.html>.

A current professional resume is also required from each FITSI certification candidate.

Candidates will be notified of the decision of certification within 60 days of submitting all required documentation.

D. FITSP Certification Eligibility Requirements

A minimum of five years of information security experience is required to qualify for any FITSP certification. This experience can be in the role of a practitioner, a manager, an instructor, an implementer, an auditor, etc. The candidate must demonstrate the required five years of relevant work experience in the *FITSI Certification Application* submission and provide two endorsement forms from professional colleagues to validate the stated work experience.

Candidates who successfully pass the certification exam but do not have the required five years of information security experience or cannot validate the experience, will not be granted certification. No refund of the examination fee will occur in this case. Denial of certification can be appealed by the candidate.

FITSP candidates are eligible to waive portions of the experience requirements if the candidate possesses other complimentary security certifications or education. Candidates may waive one year of experience for a bachelor's degree and a second year with a master's degree with an IT or information assurance focus. Each degree allows for one year of experience to be waived. Degrees must be issued by a fully accredited institution. Candidates may not waive more than three years of experience with any combination of education and complimentary security certifications.

Candidates are eligible to waive one year of experience by possessing one or more of the following IT security certifications:

- Certified Information Security Manager (CISM)
- Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP)
- Certified Information Systems Auditor (CISA)
- Global Information Assurance Certified (GIAC)
- Certified Ethical Hacker Security+ (CEH)
- System Security Certified Practitioner (SSCP)
- Certified Authorization Professional (CAP)
- Security+
- Cybersecurity Analyst (CySA+)
- CompTIA Advanced Security Practitioner (CASP+)

FITSP Certification Program candidates will be fairly judged by the Certification Committee as to their eligibility for certification. Eligibility is determined solely on the criteria established above and will not be influenced by behavior outside of the scope of the requirements and the certification exam. The eligibility decision will be made by the Certification Committee, who does not participate in the training or on-site evaluation of candidates.

E. Certification Fees

The certification fees are listed in the *FITSI Fee Schedule* and can be found at <http://www.fitsi.org/documents.html>. Any adjustment in certification fees will be posted on the FITSI website.

F. FITSI Code of Ethics

All candidates who pursue a FITSP certification must agree to abide by the FITSI Code of Ethics, which can be found in the *FITSI Code of Ethics Handbook* at <http://www.fitsi.org/documents.html>. Violations of any tenet of the FITSI Code of Ethics may be grounds for revocation of a certification holder's FITSP certification(s) and possibly FITSI membership (where applicable).

G. FITSP Certification Packet

FITSI certification candidate will receive a Certification Packet within 30 days after notification of the award of certification. The Certification Packet will contain the following:

- Welcome letter
- FITSP Certification

- FITSI Identification (ID)/Certification Card
- FITSI Certification Holder Handbook
- FITSP Challenge Coin
- *Earning CPE Units for FITSI Certification* whitepaper

The Certification Packet will be sent via US mail to the address provided at registration. All contents of the Certification Packet remain the property of FITSI. FITSI may withdraw, cancel, revoke, or otherwise annul the certification for just cause as outlined in the *FITSI Certification Holder Handbook*.

Each certified candidate will be assigned a unique FITSI ID number and a unique Certification Number.

Examples of a FITSP-Manager Certification, the FITSI ID/Certification Card, and the FITSP Challenge Coin are provided below. Material is similar for Designer, Operator, and Auditor.



Figure 2: Example of a FITSP-Manager Certification



Figure 3: Example of a FITSI ID/Certification Card



Figure 4: Example of a FITSP Challenge Coin

H. Certification Maintenance Requirements

FITSP Certification Holders must earn a minimum of 20 Continuing Professional Education (CPE) units each year. A FITSP Certification Holder records annual CPE units using their individual private portal login information at <http://www.fitsi.org>.

In addition to earning 20 CPE units per year for each year of the three-year certification period, FITSP Certification Holders are required to pay an annual maintenance fee (AMF). A FITSP candidate who earns more than one FITSP certification must earn 20 CPE units each year for each certification role.

FITSI has published a whitepaper titled *Earning CPE Units for FITSI Certification*. This paper is available at <http://www.fitsi.org/documents.html> and provides detailed guidance on how a certification holder should record CPE units. This document is also provided to new certification holders as part of the Certification Packet.

All FITSP certifications are valid for three years but can be revoked by FITSI for violations of the FITSI Code of Ethics or other egregious acts that undermine the good character that must be demonstrated by a holder of a FITSP certification. The FITSI

Code of Ethics can be found in the *FITSI Code of Ethics Handbook* at <http://www.fitsi.org/documents.html>.

I. Recertification Requirements

A FITSP certification is valid for three years. Certifications will automatically renew if the certification holder meets the following requirements:

- Candidates must have earned and reported a total of at least 60 CPE units (per certification role) over that certification's three-year life cycle.
- Candidates must have passed the FITSI internal CPE audit (if chosen).
- Candidates must not violate any part of the FITSI Code of Ethics or have an active complaint filed in his or her name.
- Candidates must be current with their AMF.

J. Other Associated Fees

Other associated certification fees or membership fees are listed in the *FITSI Fee Schedule* and can be found at <http://www.fitsi.org/documents.html>.

K. Certification Suspension and Certification Withdrawal (Revocation)

FITSI certification holders must keep their certifications in good standing for the current three-year cycle. A FITSI certification can be suspended or withdrawn (revoked) for a certification holder due to non-compliance with the certification maintenance requirements.

A certification may be put into a suspended state for the following reasons:

- Failure to stay current with Annual Maintenance Fees (AMFs)
- Failure to report of necessary CPEs.
- Having a complaint against a certification holder for violation of the FITSI Code of Ethics.

The suspension period can last for up to 90 days. During this time, the certification holder must refrain from further promotion of the certification while it is suspended. To remove the certification from a suspended state, the certification holder will need to address the issue causing the suspension to occur.

If the certification holder does not address the issue causing the suspension to occur after 90 days, the certification will be withdrawn (revoked).

Reasons for withdrawal (revocation) of the certification are:

- Continued failure to bring outstanding AMFs current after 90 days
- Continued failure to report necessary CPEs after 90 days
- Having been found through the complaint process to violate the FITSI Code of Ethics.

In a case a certification is withdrawn (revoked), the certification holder must discontinue the use of all claims and references to the certification, and discontinue use of the FITSI Certification Logo.

L. Certification Reinstatement

A withdrawn (revoked) certification can be reinstated up to 18 months from the date of withdrawal by submitting a *FITSI Certification Reinstatement Application*. Additional fees and penalties apply. This form can be found at <http://www.fitsi.org/documents.html>.

A certification holder who has had their certification withdrawn for violation of the FITSI Code of Ethics cannot have their FITSI certification reinstated.

7. FITSP Examinations

A. Exam Sites

FITSP certification exams are administered at various locations. The most current listing of the exam locations and times can be found at <http://www.fitsi.org>.

Companies or groups wishing to hold an on-site certification exam should contact the FITSI Corporate Office. A minimum of 10 candidates is required for scheduling an on-site exam. FITSI contact information can be found in Appendix A.

B. Preparing for the Examination

FITSP certification candidates can expect a computer-based exam with a three-hour time limit. To successfully pass the FITSP exam, candidates must obtain the reported cut-score.

The exam contains multiple-choice questions covering all aspects of the FBK. The FBK domains are:

- NIST SPs
- NIST FIPS
- NIST CFs
- Government Laws and Regulations
- NIST RMF
- NISTIRs

The Authoritative Reference List provides a concise, yet detailed guide, to information relative to the FITSP certification exam. This list is intended for use as a study aid only. FITSI does not intend the list to imply endorsement of the specific references, nor are the test questions necessarily taken from these sources.

- Documents listed in the FBK. FITSI publishes an FBK that is used as the criteria in the exam. The FBK is updated as necessary and can be found at <http://www.fitsi.org/documents.html>.
- FITSI Authorized Courseware. Authorized courseware is available from FITSI Authorized Training Centers (FATC). Links to the courseware can be found at <http://www.fitsi.org/courseware.html>.

C. Day of the Exam

1. Exam Check-In

Candidates must report to the designated exam location at least 30 minutes before the posted exam start time. Candidates arriving after the exam start time must reschedule the exam and pay the rescheduling fee. Candidates must present a copy of the *Exam Confirmation Email* and two forms of ID (one must be a photo ID; both must contain a signature).

Candidates must sign a *FITSI Exam Regulations* form, which outlines the exam center rules and regulations. Candidates should read and understand all the stated rules and regulations. This form is provided to all exam candidates at the FITSI-

hosted exam event. Exam candidates will also be given a *Candidate Comment Form*. Any questions or comments related to the exam or exam center should be documented on the comment form. This form will be collected at the end of the exam whether or not the exam candidate has listed any comments or questions.

Candidates who arrive later than the posted exam start time, or do not have a copy of the *Exam Confirmation Email* or the required two forms of ID will not be permitted to enter the exam room. These candidates must reschedule the exam and pay the rescheduling fee if they wish to take the exam at another time. Otherwise, the candidate will forfeit the full exam fee.

2. Taking the Exam

Seating in the exam room is not assigned. Candidates are to be seated and store all personal items in the designated area prior to the exam start time. Such personal items include, but are not limited to: backpacks, briefcases, papers, computers, cell phones, calculators, drinks, and food. Candidates may only have a pen or pencil for use to complete the *Candidate Comment Form*. This form must be returned at the end of the exam whether or not the candidate made comments. No other notes may be taken. The Exam Protector will instruct the candidates on the exam format and will initiate the exam. The Exam Proctor may not answer any exam content-related questions before, during, or after the exam. All exam related questions should be annotated on the *Candidate Comment Form*. Comments or questions identified after leaving the test center should be emailed directly to the FITSI Corporate Office. FITSI contact information can be found in Appendix A.

Candidates have three hours from the start time of the exam to complete the exam. No additional time will be allotted. There are no scheduled breaks. Escorted bathroom breaks are permitted on an as-needed basis. Exam time will not be extended to accommodate bathroom breaks. Candidates may choose to end an exam early but will not be allowed to re-enter the exam room.

3. Exam Center Rules

The following rules are enforced at all exam locations:

- All candidates must show two forms of ID (one must be a photo ID; both must contain a signature) and a copy of the *Exam Confirmation Email* to be admitted to the exam room.
- Candidates must arrive at least 30 minutes prior to the posted exam start time.
- Candidates arriving after the posted exam start time will not be permitted in the exam room. These candidates must reschedule the exam and pay the rescheduling fee if they wish to take the exam at another time. Otherwise, the candidate will forfeit the full exam fee under Section 6.C.1. above.
- No guests are permitted in the exam room.
- All reference material, books, papers, or personal items must be stored in the designated area.
- Electronic devices must be turned off and stored in the designated area. Such items include but are not limited to cell phones, recording devices,

cameras, computers, calculators, music devices, pagers, or personal digital assistants.

- No weapons or instruments that may be reasonably used as weapons are permitted in the exam room.
- No test material, documents, etc. may be taken from the exam room. Candidates must return the *Candidate Comment Form* to the Exam Proctor. Failure to do so will result in an automatic failure of the exam.
- Candidates may not communicate with another exam candidate during the exam. Exam Proctors are authorized to maintain a secure and proper testing environment and are permitted to ask candidates to move to achieve such.
- No questions concerning the exam content may be asked before, during, or after the exam. The Exam Proctor will not, at any time, respond to questions regarding exam content. All exam related questions should be annotated on the *Candidate Comment Form*. Comments or questions identified after leaving the test center should be emailed directly to the FITSI Corporate Office.
- Food, drink, tobacco, or gum are not permitted in the exam room.
- There are no scheduled breaks during the three hours allowed for the exam. Candidates are permitted breaks on an individual basis, but no additional time will be allotted. Candidates who request a break must be escorted at all times.
- Candidates are not permitted to talk or communicate in any manner during an individual break. Those who do so will not be permitted back into the exam room and will forfeit any associated exam fees. The candidates' exams will not be scored.
- Candidates may not copy in writing or otherwise record for transmission to others any exam questions or answers or other aspects of the exam. A candidate is, however, allowed to comment on exam items on the *Candidate Comment Form*.
- Candidates may not offer, assist, or solicit assistance from other exam candidates, the Exam Proctor, or others responsible for the administration of the exam.
- Candidates may not engage in any other conduct or inappropriate behavior that is harmful to the integrity of the exam or the exam candidates.

Failure to abide by these exam rules will result in the candidate's dismissal from the exam. Such candidates may be banned from any future exam. Exam Proctors are authorized to take immediate and appropriate measures against candidates caught violating exam rules. The candidate is entitled to appeal the dismissal to the Appeals Committee under FITSI's appeals policy.

D. Notification of Results

Candidates who abide by all exam day rules and regulations and turn in the *Candidate Comment Form* (even if blank), will receive exam results upon completion of the exam.

Each candidate will be given a paper copy of the *Examination Score Report*, similar to the example shown here.

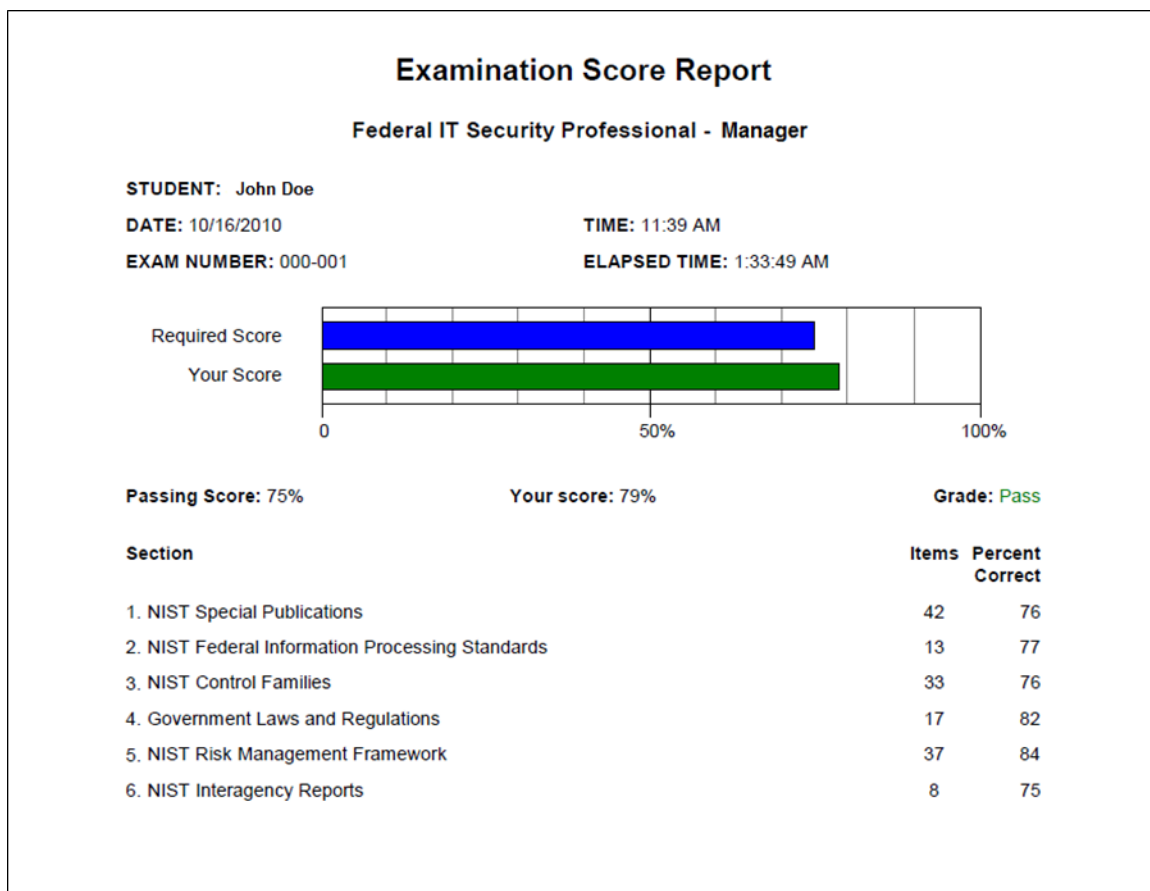


Figure 5: Example of Examination Score Report

1. Results – Pass

Candidates who achieve the minimum cut-score will be notified after the exam via the *Examination Score Report*. A candidate who successfully passes the examination and submits a *FITSI Certification Application* under Section 5.C. above will be awarded certification.

2. Results – Fail

Candidates who fail to achieve the minimum cut-score will be notified after the exam via the *Examination Score Report*. No other documentation will be provided.

E. Retesting

Candidates who fail to achieve the minimum cut-score will be eligible to retest, for a retesting fee, after a waiting period of 21 calendar days. This retesting fee is only available for one attempt at testing at a reduced rate. Candidates who fail to retest within one year of the initial exam date will be charged the initial exam rate. Candidates who wish to retest must notify FITSI via email at contactus@FITSI.org.

F. Exam Irregularities

The Exam Proctor will determine how best to proceed in the event an exam is interrupted for an unforeseen reason (power outage, an act of God, or other unforeseen events). The Exam Proctor has the option to cancel the exam, restart the exam, or continue the exam.

- **Canceling an Exam due to Weather or any Other Unforeseeable Event**
The Certification Manager has the authority to cancel an exam due to weather, issues at the exam location, or any other unforeseen event that would prohibit testing. In the event an exam is canceled, it will be rescheduled at the earliest time possible. The Certification Manager will make every attempt to notify exam candidates promptly of such cancellation. Candidates will not be required to pay a rescheduling fee in this instance. While the Certification Manager will make every attempt to reschedule the exam for the same location, this is not guaranteed.
- **Canceling an Exam that was Interrupted**
The Exam Proctor has the authority to cancel an exam in-progress if necessary (in the event of a power outage, an act of God, or other unforeseen events). Each candidate will be eligible to register for another exam for no additional fee. In this case, the candidates' answers and current scores will be erased.
- **Restarting an Exam that was Interrupted**
If time allows, the Exam Proctor has the authority to restart an exam that was interrupted for reasons stated above. Candidates will be allotted a total of three hours to complete the exam. If a candidate chooses not to restart the exam that was interrupted, the candidate may register for another scheduled exam for no additional fee. In this case, the candidate's answers and current score will be erased.
- **Continuing an Exam that was Interrupted**
If the Exam Proctor may continue an exam that was interrupted for reasons stated above, if conditions allow. The time of the interruption will not be counted towards exam time. Any individual who does not wish to continue the exam may register for another scheduled exam at no additional charge. In this case, the candidate's answers and current score will be erased.
- **Lost or Unreadable Exams**

FITSI takes all available precautions to ensure the appropriate and secure handling of completed exams. In the rare and extreme case in which a candidate's completed exam is lost or unreadable, the candidate will be required to undergo retesting. No additional exam fees will be charged in this case.

8. Appeals

Any decision rendered by a FITSI committee, staff member, or consultant that impacts a FITSI member, candidate, or FITSP Certification Holder may be appealed through the FITSI Appeals Committee. All appeals must be made within 30 calendar days of the receipt of the decision being appealed.

Appealable decisions include:

- Certification Denial
- Certification Revocation
- Refund Refusal
- Other decisions or issues

An appeal must be filed by submitting the *Appeals Form* in the *FITSI Appeals and Complaint Application*, which can be found at <http://www.fitsi.org/documents.html>. The completed form should be emailed to FITSI at contactus@fitsi.org.

Once an *Appeals Form* is received, FITSI will carry out the following steps:

1. **Initial Appeal Acknowledgement.** The Appeals Committee will acknowledge receipt of the appeal within 30 calendar days of receipt. The email acknowledgment will include:
 - Explanation of the appeals process for the issue at hand
 - The Appeals Committee member point of contact
 - A timeline for response and decision by the Appeals Committee
2. **Appeals Review.** The Appeals Committee will render a decision within 30 calendar days of receipt of the appeal unless additional information is required. In the event additional information is required, the Appeals Committee will render a decision within 30 calendar days of receipt of the required information. The decision will be provided via email to the appellant.
3. **Appeals Decision/Response.** The Appeals Committee response will be either appeal accepted or appeal denied. All responses will include a detailed explanation of the decision.
4. **Appeals Escalation.** All decisions made by the Appeals Committee are considered final.

The submission of the appeal and subsequent investigation and decision shall not result in any discriminatory actions against the appellant.

9. Special Circumstances and Related Fees

A. Requesting Special Needs Accommodations for Exams

Exam candidates who have special needs may request special accommodations for the exam. Examples of candidates who can request special accommodations are candidates with a documented disability (as defined by Title III of the ADA) or those who need to take an exam on an alternate date for religious purposes.

Candidates requiring special accommodations must email the *Exam Candidate Special Accommodation Request Form* to contactus@fitsi.org with SPECIAL ACCOMMODATION in the subject line. This form can be found at <http://www.fitsi.org/documents.html>. The request must be received by FITSI at least 14 calendar days before the desired exam date; otherwise, the candidate must register for a later exam date.

FITSI makes every attempt to honor special accommodation requests. However, because FITSI utilizes third-party locations for testing, a candidate's request may not be feasible at the exam location requested. If this is the case, the candidate may be allowed to choose a more appropriate testing location. The Certification Manager will notify the candidate of FITSI's decision within seven calendar days of the scheduled exam date.

B. Cancellation/Fee Refund

Fully processed exam fees are non-refundable. Failure to attend the exam will result in a forfeiture of the exam fee. For an additional fee, a candidate may reschedule the exam within six months from the originally scheduled exam date. Reschedule requests must be emailed to the FITSI Corporate Office a minimum of 24 hours before the originally scheduled exam date. See FITSI Corporate Information in Appendix A. The exam reschedule fee can be found in the *FITSI Fee Schedule* at <http://www.fitsi.org/documents.html>.

C. Extreme Circumstances

If a candidate has missed the exam due to an emergency or hardship, including, but not limited to: serious illness, death in the immediate family, traffic accident, court appearance, jury duty, or military duty, the candidate may be permitted to reschedule the exam at no additional charge. To avoid a penalty, the candidate must submit written verification and supporting documentation of the situation by email to FITSI Corporate Office within 30 calendar days of the original exam date. See FITSI Corporate Information in Appendix A. The Certification Manager will notify the candidate of FITSI's decision within 30 calendar days of the receipt of the required documentation.

If such a request is not made, the candidate will forfeit the full exam fee. To apply for a future exam date, the candidate must complete the entire registration process and pay the full exam fee.

10. Forms

The most current version of the forms referenced in this handbook can be found at <http://www.fitsi.org/documents.html>.

Appendix A, FITSI Contact Information

Certification Exam Registration web address:

<http://www.fitsi.org>

FITSI Corporate Office:

Federal IT Security Institute (FITSI)

3213 Duke St.

Suite 190

Alexandria, VA 22314

Phone: 703-828-1196

Fax: 703-754-8215

Web site: <http://www.fitsi.org>

General Email: contactus@fitsi.org