
FITSI FITSP Certification Scheme Details Handbook

Certification Scheme
Details for the Federal
IT Security Institute
(FITSI) Sponsored
Certifications

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1. Overview

This Handbook describes the certification scheme details for the FITSP Certification Program. This document covers the scheme of the four following certification roles:

- FITSP-Auditor-NG
- FITSP-Designer-NG
- FITSP-Manager-NG
- FITSP-Operator-NG

2. Applicability

FITSI has put together this Handbook to document the formal structure of the FITSP Certification Program scheme.

The most up-to-date *FITSI FITSP Certification Scheme Details Handbook* can be found at <https://www.fitsi.org/fitsidocuments.html>.

3. FITSP-Auditor-NG Certification Scheme Details

A. Scope of Certification

The FITSP-Auditor-NG 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.

B. Job Description

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-NG certification.

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

C. Task Description

The Federal Information Security Management Act of 2002 and the Federal Information Modernization Act of 2014 require federal agencies to follow NIST standards and guidance for cybersecurity. NIST defines minimum security standards for federal information and information systems (FIPS). FITSI will use FIPS 200, Minimum Security Requirements for Federal Information and Information Systems, as the basis for the FITSP Certification Program. The FITSP-Auditor-NG certification describes the auditor requirements of the FIPS 200 standard based upon the following descriptions: audit, review, inspect, evaluate, or assess.

FITSI develops a job analysis (JA) report, and the Scheme Committee reviews the report and approves it for usage by the FITSP Certification Program.

The FITSP-Auditor-NG certification as of 01/01/24 uses the *FITSI Job Analysis Report 2023*, published and approved on April 30th, 2023, to map job tasks to specific domain concentrations.

D. Required Competence

The most recent *FITSP-Auditor Certification Competence Breakdown* (version 3.0) defines the required competence for the FITSP-Auditor-NG certification. This version is approved for use with the current version of the FITSP Certification Scheme (version 1.3). The *FITSP-Auditor Certification Competence Breakdown* offers a comprehensive breakdown of tasks and the corresponding knowledge and skill statements pertinent to the Auditor certification role.

E. Body of Knowledge

Certification Candidates or Certification Applicants for 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
 - a. Domain 1 – National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Special Publications (SPs)
 - b. Domain 2 – NIST Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS)
 - c. Domain 3 – NIST Control Families (CFs)
 - d. Domain 4 – Governmental Laws and Regulations
 - e. Domain 5 – NIST Risk Management Framework (RMF)
 - f. 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

FITSI publishes a formal Federal Body of Knowledge (FBK) Guide. The most current version of the FBK Guide can be found at the following website:

<https://www.fitsi.org/fitsidocuments.html>.

F. Code of Conduct

Certification Applicants and Certification Holders must agree to abide by the FITSI Code of Ethics defined in the *FITSI Code of Ethics Handbook*.

G. Prerequisites

Five years of information security experience is required to qualify for any FITSP certification. This experience can be obtained from the federal government or civilian sector employment. FITSP-Auditor-NG Certification Candidates or Certification Applicants can waive portions of the experience requirements if the candidate possesses other complimentary security certifications or education.

- Educational waivers – Certification Candidates or Certification Applicants may waive one year of experience for a bachelor's degree in any discipline. Certification Candidates or Certification Applicants 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.
- Complimentary security certifications – Certification Candidates Certification Applicants are eligible to waive one year of experience by possessing one or more of the following IT security certifications:
 - CompTIA Advanced Security Practitioner (CASP+)
 - CompTIA Cybersecurity Analyst (CySA+)
 - CompTIA Security+
 - EC-Council Certified Ethical Hacker Security+ (CEH)
 - Global Information Assurance Certified (GIAC)
 - ISACA Certified Information Security Manager (CISM)
 - ISACA Certified Information Systems Auditor (CISA)
 - ISC2 Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP)
 - ISC2 Certified Authorization Professional (CAP)
 - ISC2 System Security Certified Practitioner (SSCP)

Certification Candidates or Certification Applicants may not waive more than three years of experience with any combination of education and complimentary security certifications. All FITSP-Auditor-NG Certification Applicants are required to provide documented details of experience after passing the exam through the *FITSI Certification Application Form*.

H. Criteria for Initial Certification

All FITSP Certification Candidates or Certification Applicants must meet the following criteria for certification:

- Take and pass the corresponding FITSP Certification Role examination
- Possess five years of experience as documented in the prerequisites section of this Handbook
- Submit a completed application with all necessary documentation requirements fulfilled (resume or CV, endorsements, signed agreement)

I. Criteria for Recertification

FITSP certifications are valid for three years. During those three years, Certification Holders must meet the following requirements to be eligible for recertification:

- Abide by the FITSI Code of Ethics
- Pay an Annual Maintenance Fee (AMF). The annual fee is listed on the *FITSI Fee Schedule* at <https://www.fitsi.org/fitsidocuments.html>.
- Earn 60 CPEs at the FITSI private portal over three years. Full details are provided in the *Earning CPE Units for FITSI Certifications Handbook*.

J. Assessment Methods for Initial Certification and Recertification

The initial assessment is done via the FITSI Certification Committee with a completed Certification Application Package for each Certification Applicant. This Certification Application Package includes the following:

- A completed *FITSI Certification Application*. This application will be a 15-page document completed by the Certification Applicant.
- Two separate third-party endorsements of the Certification Applicants.
- Certification Applicant's current resume or curriculum vitae (CV).
- *FITSI Certification Exam Results - Remote-Proctored Testing Form* or *FITSI Certification Exam Results - In-Person Testing Form*. This form will show the FITSP Certification Applicant's certification exam results.
- *FITSP Certification Application Checklist*. This checklist is used to score and evaluate the Certification Applicant and approve or deny the *FITSI Certification Application*.

Recertification is verified via the FITSI Certification Manager. The method for recertification is to verify the following has been met by the FITSI Certification Holder:

- Abide by the FITSI Code of Ethics
- Pay an Annual Maintenance Fee (AMF). The annual fee is listed on the *FITSI Fee Schedule* at <https://www.fitsi.org/fitsidocuments.html>.
- Earn 60 CPEs at the FITSI private portal over three years. Full details are provided in the *Earning CPE Units for FITSI Certifications Handbook*.

K. Surveillance Methods

Certification Holders are required to pay an annual maintenance fee (AMF). Failure to stay current on AMFs may result in suspension or withdrawal of a Certification Holder's certification.

L. Criteria for Suspending and Withdrawing Certification

Certification Holders must keep their certifications in good standing for the entire three-year cycle. A FITSP certification can be suspended or withdrawn (revoked) for a Certification Holder due to non-compliance with the certification maintenance requirements.

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

- Failure to stay current with AMF
- Having an active complaint 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 promoting the certification while suspended. To remove the certification from a suspended state, the Certification Holder must address the issue causing the suspension.

If the Certification Holder does not address the issue causing the suspension 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
- Substantiated violation of the FITSI Code of Ethics as determined through the FITSI complaint process

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

M. Job Analysis Requirements

An updated Job Analysis will be done at least every seven years.

N. Exam Blueprint Requirements

FITSI develops the FITSP-Auditor-NG blueprint, which maps the certification exam items (questions) to the tasks and the six domains. The item distribution for the domains is linked to domain concentrations identified in the *FITSI Job Analysis Report 2023*. The Scheme Committee reviews the exam blueprint and approves it for usage by the certification program.

O. Exam Format and Structure

The FITSP-Auditor-NG exam is comprised of 150 multiple-choice questions. Of these, 120 are scored items that contribute to the candidate's final score, while the remaining 30 are beta items intended for use in future exam iterations. Each candidate is given three hours to complete the examination. This format allows for a comprehensive assessment of the candidate's knowledge and skills across the required domains.

P. Cut-Score Requirements

FITSI employs professional psychometricians to ensure exam items perform correctly and help determine the necessary cut-score of the FITSP-Auditor-NG certification. The psychometrician conducts a cut-score study with FITSI recruited Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) using the Angoff method. The Scheme Committee reviews the recommended cut score and approves it for usage by the certification program.



4. FITSP-Designer-NG Certification Scheme Details

A. Scope of Certification

The FITSP-Designer-NG 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.

B. Job Description

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-NG certification.

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

C. Task Description

The Federal Information Security Management Act of 2002 and the Federal Information Modernization Act of 2014 require federal agencies to follow NIST standards and guidance for cybersecurity. NIST defines minimum security standards for federal information and information systems (FIPS). FITSI uses FIPS 200, Minimum Security Requirements for Federal Information and Information Systems, as the basis for the FITSP Certification Program. The FITSP-Designer-NG certification describes the designer requirements of the FIPS 200 standard based upon the following descriptions: design, develop, construct, or create.

FITSI develops a job analysis (JA) report, and the Scheme Committee reviews the report and approves it for usage by the FITSP Certification Program.

The FITSP-Designer-NG certification as of 01/01/24 uses the *FITSI Job Analysis Report 2023*, published and approved on April 30th, 2023, to map job tasks to specific domain concentrations.

D. Required Competence

The most recent *FITSP-Designer Certification Competence Breakdown* (version 3.0) defines the required competence for the FITSP-Designer-NG certification. This version is approved for use with the current version of the FITSP Certification Scheme (version 1.3). The *FITSP-Designer Certification Competence Breakdown* offers a comprehensive breakdown of tasks and the corresponding knowledge and skill statements pertinent to the Designer certification role.

E. Body of Knowledge

Certification Candidates or Certification Applicants for 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
 - a. Domain 1 – NIST Special Publications (SPs)
 - b. Domain 2 – NIST Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS)
 - c. Domain 3 – NIST Control Families (CFs)
 - d. Domain 4 – Governmental Laws and Regulations
 - e. Domain 5 – NIST Risk Management Framework (RMF)
 - f. 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

FITSI publishes a formal Federal Body of Knowledge (FBK) Guide. The most current version of the FBK Guide can be found at the following website:

<https://www.fitsi.org/fitsidocuments.html>.

F. Code of Conduct

Certification Applicants and Certification Holders must agree to abide by the FITSI Code of Ethics defined in the FITSI Code of Ethics Handbook.

G. Prerequisites

Five years of information security experience is required to qualify for any FITSP certification. This experience can be obtained from the federal government or civilian sector employment. FITSP-Designer-NG Certification Candidates or Certification Applicants can waive portions of the experience requirements if the candidate possesses other complimentary security certifications or education.

- Educational waivers – Certification Candidates or Certification Applicants may waive one year of experience for a bachelor's degree in any discipline. Certification Candidates or Certification Applicants 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.
- Complimentary security certifications – Certification Candidates or Certification Applicants are eligible to waive one year of experience by possessing one or more of the following IT security certifications:
 - CompTIA Advanced Security Practitioner (CASP+)
 - CompTIA Cybersecurity Analyst (CySA+)
 - CompTIA Security+
 - EC-Council Certified Ethical Hacker Security+ (CEH)
 - Global Information Assurance Certified (GIAC)
 - ISACA Certified Information Security Manager (CISM)
 - ISACA Certified Information Systems Auditor (CISA)
 - ISC2 Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP)
 - ISC2 Certified Authorization Professional (CAP)
 - ISC2 System Security Certified Practitioner (SSCP)

Certification Candidates or Certification Applicants may not waive more than three years of experience with any combination of education and complimentary security certifications. All FITSP-Designer-NG Certification Applicants are required to provide documented details of experience after passing the exam through the *FITSI Certification Application Form*.

H. Criteria for Initial Certification

All FITSP Certification Candidates or Certification Applicants must meet the following criteria for certification:

1. Take and pass the corresponding FITSP Certification Role examination
2. Possess five years of experience as documented in the prerequisites section of this Handbook
3. Submit a completed application with all necessary documentation requirements fulfilled (resume or CV, endorsements, signed agreement)

I. Criteria for Recertification

FITSP certifications are valid for three years. During those three years, Certification Holders must meet the following requirements to be eligible for recertification:

- Abide by the FITSI Code of Ethics
- Pay an Annual Maintenance Fee (AMF). The annual fee is listed on the *FITSI Fee Schedule* at <https://www.fitsi.org/fitsidocuments.html>.
- Earn 60 CPEs at the FITSI private portal over three years. Full details are provided in the *Earning CPE Units for FITSI Certifications Handbook*.

J. Assessment Methods for Initial Certification and Recertification

The initial assessment is done via the FITSI Certification Committee with a completed Certification Application Package for each Certification Applicant. This Certification Application Package includes the following:

- A completed *FITSI Certification Application*. This application will be a 15-page document completed by the Certification Applicant.
- Two separate third-party endorsements of the Certification Applicants.
- Certification Applicant's current resume or curriculum vitae (CV).
- *FITSI Certification Exam Results - Remote-Proctored Testing Form* or *FITSI Certification Exam Results - In-Person Testing Form*. This form will show the FITSP Certification Applicant's certification exam results.
- *FITSP Certification Application Checklist*. This checklist is used to score and evaluate the Certification Applicant and approve or deny the *FITSI Certification Application*.

Recertification is verified via the FITSI Certification Manager. The method for recertification is to verify the following has been met by the FITSI Certification Holder:

- Abide by the FITSI Code of Ethics
- Pay an Annual Maintenance Fee (AMF). The annual fee is listed on the *FITSI Fee Schedule* at <https://www.fitsi.org/fitsidocuments.html>.
- Earn 60 CPEs at the FITSI private portal over three years. Full details are provided in the *Earning CPE Units for FITSI Certifications Handbook*.

K. Surveillance Methods

Certification Holders are required to pay an annual maintenance fee (AMF). Failure to stay current on AMFs may result in suspension or withdrawal of a Certification Holder's certification.

L. Criteria for Suspending and Withdrawing Certification

Certification Holders must keep their certifications in good standing for the entire three-year cycle. A FITSP certification can be suspended or withdrawn (revoked) for a Certification Holder due to non-compliance with the certification maintenance requirements.

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

-
- Failure to stay current with AMF
 - Having an active complaint 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 promoting the certification while suspended. To remove the certification from a suspended state, the Certification Holder must address the issue causing the suspension.

If the Certification Holder does not address the issue causing the suspension 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
- Substantiated violation of the FITSI Code of Ethics as determined through the FITSI complaint process

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

M. Job Analysis Requirements

An updated Job Analysis will be done at least every seven years.

N. Exam Blueprint Requirements

FITSI develops the FITSP-Designer-NG blueprint, which maps the certification exam items (questions) to the tasks and the six domains. The item distribution for the domains is linked to domain concentrations identified in the *FITSI Job Analysis Report 2023*. The Scheme Committee reviews the exam blueprint and approves it for usage by the certification program.

Q. Exam Format and Structure

The FITSP-Designer-NG exam is comprised of 150 multiple-choice questions. Of these, 120 are scored items that contribute to the candidate's final score, while the remaining 30 are beta items intended for use in future exam iterations. Each candidate is given three hours to complete the examination. This format allows for a comprehensive assessment of the candidate's knowledge and skills across the required domains.

O. Cut-Score Requirements

FITSI employs professional psychometricians to ensure exam items perform correctly and help determine the necessary cut-score of the FITSP-Designer-NG certification. The psychometrician conducts a cut-score study with FITSI recruited Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) using the Angoff method. The Scheme Committee reviews the recommended cut score and approves it for usage by the certification program.

5. FITSP-Manager-NG Certification Scheme Details

A. Scope of Certification

The FITSP-Manager-NG 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.

B. Job Description

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-NG 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
- Mission or Business Owner
- Privacy Act Official (Privacy Officers)
- Program and Functional Managers
- Procurement Officers
- Risk Executive
- Senior Accountable Official for Risk Management
- Senior Agency Official for Privacy
- Senior/Executive Agency Leader
- System Owner

C. Task Description

The Federal Information Security Management Act of 2002 and the Federal Information Modernization Act of 2014 require federal agencies to follow NIST standards and guidance for cybersecurity. NIST defines minimum security standards for federal information and information systems (FIPS). FITSI uses FIPS 200, Minimum Security Requirements for Federal Information and Information Systems, as the basis for the FITSP Certification Program. The FITSP-Manager-NG certification uses the tasks in FIPS 200 and applies a managerial focus to these tasks. The following descriptions are used to provide managerial focus: manage, oversee, govern, supervise, direct, or administer.

FITSI develops a job analysis (JA) report, and the Scheme Committee reviews the report and approves it for usage by the FITSP Certification Program.

The FITSP-Manager-NG certification as of 01/01/24 uses the *FITSI Job Analysis Report 2023*, published and approved on April 30th, 2023, to map job tasks to specific domain concentrations.

D. Required Competence

The most recent *FITSP-Manager Certification Competence Breakdown* (version 3.0) defines the required competence for the FITSP-Manager-NG certification. This version is approved for use with the current version of the FITSP Certification Scheme (version 1.3). The *FITSP-Manager Certification Competence Breakdown* offers a comprehensive breakdown of tasks and the corresponding knowledge and skill statements pertinent to the Manager certification role.

E. Body of Knowledge

Certification Candidates or Certification Applicants for 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
 - a. Domain 1 – NIST Special Publications (SPs)
 - b. Domain 2 – NIST Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS)
 - c. Domain 3 – NIST Control Families (CFs)
 - d. Domain 4 – Governmental Laws and Regulations
 - e. Domain 5 – NIST Risk Management Framework (RMF)
 - f. 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

FITSI publishes a formal Federal Body of Knowledge (FBK) Guide. The most current version of the FBK Guide can be found at the following website:

<https://www.fitsi.org/fitsidocuments.html>.

F. Code of Conduct

Certification Applicants and Certification Holders must agree to abide by the FITSI Code of Ethics defined in the FITSI Code of Ethics Handbook.

G. Prerequisites

Five years of information security experience is required to qualify for any FITSP certification. This experience can be obtained from the federal government or civilian sector employment. FITSP-Manager-NG Certification Candidates or Certification Applicants can waive portions of the experience requirements if the candidate possesses other complimentary security certifications or education.

- Educational waivers – Certification Candidates or Certification Applicants may waive one year of experience for a bachelor's degree in any discipline. Certification Candidates or Certification Applicants 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.
- Complimentary security certifications – Certification Candidates or Certification Applicants are eligible to waive one year of experience by possessing one or more of the following IT security certifications:
 - CompTIA Advanced Security Practitioner (CASP+)
 - CompTIA Cybersecurity Analyst (CySA+)
 - CompTIA Security+
 - EC-Council Certified Ethical Hacker Security+ (CEH)
 - Global Information Assurance Certified (GIAC)
 - ISACA Certified Information Security Manager (CISM)
 - ISACA Certified Information Systems Auditor (CISA)
 - ISC2 Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP)
 - ISC2 Certified Authorization Professional (CAP)
 - ISC2 System Security Certified Practitioner (SSCP)

Certification Candidates or Certification Applicants may not waive more than three years of experience with any combination of education and complimentary security certifications. All FITSP-Manager-NG Certification Applicants are required to provide documented details of experience after passing the exam through the *FITSI Certification Application Form*.

H. Criteria for Initial Certification

All FITSP Certification Candidates or Certification Applicants must meet the following criteria for certification:

-
- Take and pass the corresponding FITSP Certification Role examination
 - Possess five years of experience as documented in the prerequisites section of this Handbook
 - Submit a completed application with all necessary documentation requirements fulfilled (resume or CV, endorsements, signed agreement)

I. Criteria for Recertification

FITSP certifications are valid for three years. During those three years, Certification Holders must meet the following requirements to be eligible for recertification:

- Abide by the FITSI Code of Ethics
- Pay an Annual Maintenance Fee (AMF). The annual fee is listed on the *FITSI Fee Schedule* at <https://www.fitsi.org/fitsidocuments.html>.
- Earn 60 CPEs at the FITSI private portal over three years. Full details are provided in the *Earning CPE Units for FITSI Certifications Handbook*.

J. Assessment Methods for Initial Certification and Recertification

The initial assessment is done via the FITSI Certification Committee with a completed Certification Application Package for each Certification Applicant. This Certification Application Package includes the following:

- A completed *FITSI Certification Application*. This application will be a 15-page document completed by the Certification Applicant.
- Two separate third-party endorsements of the Certification Applicants.
- Certification Applicant's current resume or curriculum vitae (CV).
- *FITSI Certification Exam Results - Remote-Proctored Testing Form* or *FITSI Certification Exam Results - In-Person Testing Form*. This form will show the FITSP Certification Applicant's certification exam results.
- *FITSP Certification Application Checklist*. This checklist is used to score and evaluate the Certification Applicant and approve or deny the *FITSI Certification Application*.

Recertification is verified via the FITSI Certification Manager. The method for recertification is to verify the following has been met by the FITSI Certification Holder:

- Abide by the FITSI Code of Ethics
- Pay an Annual Maintenance Fee (AMF). The annual fee is listed on the *FITSI Fee Schedule* at <https://www.fitsi.org/fitsidocuments.html>.
- Earn 60 CPEs at the FITSI private portal over three years. Full details are provided in the *Earning CPE Units for FITSI Certifications Handbook*.

K. Surveillance Methods

Certification Holders are required to pay an annual maintenance fee (AMF). Failure to stay current on AMFs may result in suspension or withdrawal of a Certification Holder's certification.

L. Criteria for Suspending and Withdrawing Certification

Certification Holders must keep their certifications in good standing for the entire three-year cycle. A FITSP certification can be suspended or withdrawn (revoked) for a Certification Holder due to non-compliance with the certification maintenance requirements.

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

- Failure to stay current with AMF
- Having an active complaint 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 promoting the certification while suspended. To remove the certification from a suspended state, the Certification Holder must address the issue causing the suspension.

If the Certification Holder does not address the issue causing the suspension 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
- Substantiated violation of the FITSI Code of Ethics as determined through the FITSI complaint process

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

M. Job Analysis Requirements

An updated Job Analysis will be done at least every seven years.

N. Exam Blueprint Requirements

FITSI develops the FITSP-Manager-NG blueprint, which maps the certification exam items (questions) to the tasks and the six domains. The item distribution for the domains is linked to domain concentrations identified in the *FITSI Job Analysis Report 2023*. The Scheme Committee reviews the exam blueprint and approves it for usage by the certification program.

R. Exam Format and Structure

The FITSP-Manager-NG exam is comprised of 150 multiple-choice questions. Of these, 120 are scored items that contribute to the candidate's final score, while the remaining 30 are beta items intended for use in future exam iterations. Each candidate is given three hours to complete the examination. This format allows for a comprehensive assessment of the candidate's knowledge and skills across the required domains.

O. Cut-Score Requirements

FITSI employs professional psychometricians to ensure exam items perform correctly and help determine the necessary cut-score of the FITSP-Manager-NG certification. The psychometrician conducts a cut-score study with FITSI recruited Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) using the Angoff method. The Scheme Committee reviews the recommended cut score and approves it for usage by the certification program.

6. FITSP-Operator-NG Certification Scheme Details

A. Scope of Certification

The FITSP-Operator-NG 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 *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.

B. Job Description

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-NG 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

C. Task Description

The Federal Information Security Management Act of 2002 and the Federal Information Modernization Act of 2014 require federal agencies to follow NIST standards and guidance for cybersecurity. NIST defines minimum security standards for federal information and information systems (FIPS). FITSI uses FIPS 200, Minimum Security Requirements for Federal Information and Information Systems, as the basis for the FITSP Certification Program. The FITSP-Operator-NG certification describes the operator requirements of the FIPS 200 standard based upon the following descriptions: implement, operate, configure, enable, facilitate, or execute.

FITSI develops a job analysis (JA) report, and the Scheme Committee reviews the report and approves it for usage by the FITSP Certification Program.

The FITSP-Operator-NG certification as of 01/01/24 uses the *FITSI Job Analysis Report 2023*, published and approved on April 30th, 2023, to map job tasks to specific domain concentrations.

D. Required Competence

The most recent *FITSP-Operator Certification Competence Breakdown* (version 3.0) defines the required competence for the FITSP-Operator-NG certification. This version is approved for use with the current version of the FITSP Certification Scheme (version 1.3). The *FITSP-Operator Certification Competence Breakdown* offers a comprehensive breakdown of tasks and the corresponding knowledge and skill statements pertinent to the Operator certification role.

E. Body of Knowledge

Certification Candidates or Certification Applicants for 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
 - a. Domain 1 – NIST Special Publications (SPs)
 - b. Domain 2 – NIST Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS)
 - c. Domain 3 – NIST Control Families (CFs)
 - d. Domain 4 – Governmental Laws and Regulations
 - e. Domain 5 – NIST Risk Management Framework (RMF)
 - f. 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

FITSI publishes a formal Federal Body of Knowledge (FBK) Guide. The most current version of the FBK Guide can be found at the following website:

<https://www.fitsi.org/fitsidocuments.html>.

F. Code of Conduct

Certification Applicants and Certification Holders must agree to abide by the FITSI Code of Ethics defined in the FITSI Code of Ethics Handbook.

G. Prerequisites

Five years of information security experience is required to qualify for any FITSP certification. This experience can be obtained from the federal government or civilian sector employment. FITSP-Operator-NG Certification Candidates or Certification Applicants can waive portions of the experience requirements if the candidate possesses other complimentary security certifications or education.

- Educational waivers – Certification Candidates or Certification Applicants may waive one year of experience for a bachelor's degree in any discipline. Certification Candidates or Certification Applicants 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.
- Complimentary security certifications – Certification Candidates or Certification Applicants are eligible to waive one year of experience by possessing one or more of the following IT security certifications:
 - CompTIA Advanced Security Practitioner (CASP+)
 - CompTIA Cybersecurity Analyst (CySA+)
 - CompTIA Security+
 - EC-Council Certified Ethical Hacker Security+ (CEH)
 - Global Information Assurance Certified (GIAC)
 - ISACA Certified Information Security Manager (CISM)
 - ISACA Certified Information Systems Auditor (CISA)
 - ISC2 Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP)
 - ISC2 Certified Authorization Professional (CAP)
 - ISC2 System Security Certified Practitioner (SSCP)

Certification Candidates or Certification Applicants may not waive more than three years of experience with any combination of education and complimentary security certifications. All FITSP-Operator-NG Certification Applicants are required to provide documented details of experience after passing the exam through the *FITSI Certification Application Form*.

H. Criteria for Initial Certification

All FITSP Certification Candidates or Certification Applicants must meet the following criteria for certification:

- Take and pass the corresponding FITSP Certification Role examination
- Possess five years of experience as documented in the prerequisites section of this Handbook
- Submit a completed application with all necessary documentation requirements fulfilled (resume or CV, endorsements, signed agreement)

I. Criteria for Recertification

FITSP certifications are valid for three years. During those three years, Certification Holders must meet the following requirements to be eligible for recertification:

- Abide by the FITSI Code of Ethics
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Revision History					
Version	Description of Change	Author	Approved By	Approval Date	Effective Date
1.0	Initial Release	Jim Wiggins	FITSI Scheme Committee and Board of Directors	12/19/19	12/19/19
1.1	<p>Added the following sections to each certification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required Competence • Code of Conduct • Criteria for Recertification • Assessment Methods for Initial Certification and Recertification • Surveillance Methods • Criteria for Suspending and Withdrawing Certification <p>Made the following changes to each certification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renamed "Scope Statement" to "Scope of Certification" • Separated "Scope Statement" and made part of it "Job Description" • Renamed "Job Task Analysis Requirements" to "Task Description" • Renamed "Candidate Eligibility" to "Criteria for Initial Certification" • Added the following roles to the Manager <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mission or Business Owner ○ Senior Accountable Official for Risk Management ○ Senior Agency 	Jim Wiggins and FITSI Scheme Committee	FITSI Scheme Committee	10/26/21	10/26/21

	Official for Privacy				
1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removed Next Generation Text and kept NG Renamed Eligibility Requirements as Prerequisites Added JTA Requirements section requiring a new one at least every seven years Reworked Initial and Recertification criteria Reworked Assessment Methods for Initial Certification and Recertification to be in alignment with FITSI assessment processes 	Jim Wiggins and FITSI Scheme Committee	FITSI Scheme Committee	05/06/22	05/06/22
1.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aligned to FITSI Job Analysis Report 2023 "Summary and Conclusions" Made Minor edits to document 	Jim Wiggins and FITSI Scheme Committee	FITSI Scheme Committee	06/01/23	01/01/24
1.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extended Effective Date to 04/01/24 to provide certification team more time to implement 	Jim Wiggins and FITSI Scheme Committee	FITSI Board of Directors	12/30/23	04/01/24
1.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extended Effective Date to 05/01/24 to provide certification team more time to implement 	Jim Wiggins and FITSI Scheme Committee	FITSI Board of Directors	03/31/24	05/01/24
1.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extended Effective Date to 06/01/24 to provide certification team more time to implement Added "Exam Format and Structure" section to each certification 	Jim Wiggins and FITSI Scheme Committee	FITSI Board of Directors	04/29/24	06/01/24