

SUSE Certified Instructor Program Guide

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SUSE Certified Instructor (SCI) Program Overview

What is the purpose of the SCI program?

The SCI program exists to ensure that instructors teaching official SUSE training courses are both technically skilled and competent instructors. The SCI program aims to provide instructors with the knowledge and resources necessary to deliver SUSE training via the SUSE Training Partner channel.

Partnerships

Working in conjunction with the SUSE Training Partner program, the Instructor Program is an indispensable piece of SUSE Training.



Together, SUSE, SUSE Certified Instructors and Training Partners ensure that customers acquire the knowledge they need to maximize the performance of their SUSE products.

Roles & Responsibilities

In this three-way partnership, each of the partners has certain responsibilities:

SUSE's Role

SUSE responsibilities in this partnership include:

- Ensuring customer satisfaction through the use of program compliance monitoring tools
- Developing and refining training programs - including the Instructor Program - to meet the needs of our partners and customers

- Ensuring Instructor Program quality after certification by implementing Continuing Certification Requirements (CCRs) that enable instructors to stay current on SUSE technologies
- Providing instructors with up-to-date instructor materials and necessary updates to training
- Providing student course materials for Training Partners to order
- Providing current and timely technical and program information to instructors
- Ensuring program quality by reviewing student course evaluations and auditing classes
- Setting reasonable and achievable requirements for course authorization that do not sacrifice the quality of delivery

The Partner's Role

A SUSE Training Partner is a training organization that is authorized to offer SUSE courses. Types of organizations that participate in the program include SUSE distributors and resellers and independent training organizations.

Partner responsibilities include:

- Ensuring customer satisfaction through the use of SUSE Authorized training materials
- Providing and maintaining training facilities, hardware, software, and audiovisual equipment needed for instruction
- Ensuring that only certified and current SUSE instructors who have proper course authorizations teach SUSE courses
- Scheduling and marketing SUSE courses
- Ordering student course materials
- Provide student access to post-event surveys

The Instructor's Role

The Instructor Agreement, together with this program guide, specifies an instructors responsibilities. Instructor responsibilities, as well as program and policy changes, are communicated through this guide and are updated in the SUSE Certified Instructor website (training.suse.com/instructors) and in regular Instructor Newsletters.

Instructor responsibilities include:

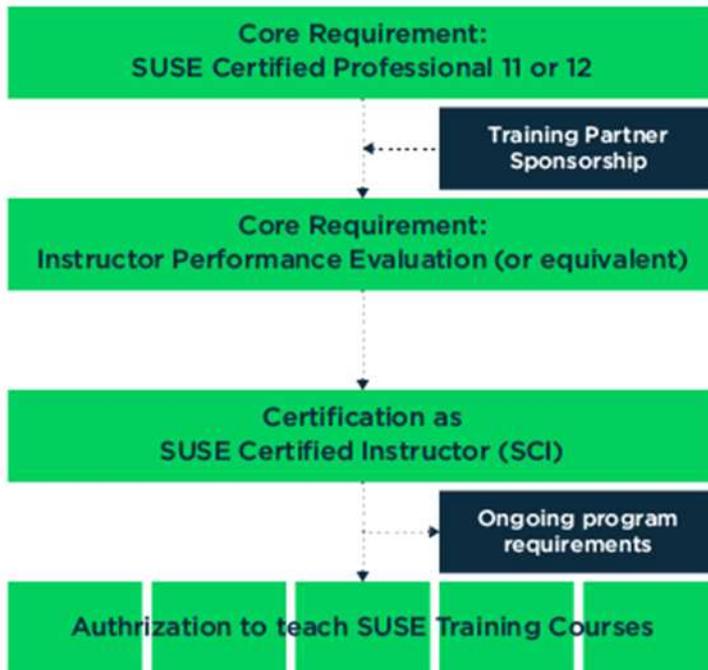
- Preparing classrooms, including hardware, and labs for each class
- Providing a quality training experience to ensure customer satisfaction
- Representing SUSE and SUSE products in a positive manner
- Staying updated on current technology and communicating this knowledge to students
- Only teaching the SUSE courses for which they are authorized

- Staying up to date on Instructor Program policies and requirements
- Meeting course authorization requirements prior to teaching any given course
- Informing SUSE of status or contact information changes.
- Assist attendees in submitting surveys

Instructors who do not update their status or contact information when it changes may not receive current information about the Instructor Program or important information about their certification status.

The SUSE Certified Instructor Program

When instructors want to specialize in teaching SUSE products in a commercial setting, they can earn the SUSE Certified Instructor (SCI) certification. SCI candidates must first possess a current SUSE CLP technical certification before they can apply to be accepted into the SCI program. SCIs are limited to teaching courses for which they have passed the course authorization requirements. SCIs may teach courses in all of SUSE's certification programs, as well as courses that are delivered through the training channel but are not part of a certification track.



**Teaching authorization per course for all available courses
(requirements vary by course)**

For candidates who are new to the SCI program, there are four requirements that must be met (in the order presented) in order to become SCI certified:

- The candidate must hold an accepted SUSE core Enterprise Linux technical certification
- Support/Sponsorship from a SUSE Training Partner
- The candidate must apply to enroll in the program by emailing sci@suse.com
- The candidate must meet the didactical requirement

Qualifying SUSE Technical Certifications

The SUSE Technical Certifications accepted for the SCI program are the following:

- SUSE Certified Linux Professional 12 (CLP12)
- SUSE Certified Linux Professional 11 (CLP11)

(Subject to change – see program website for currently accepted certifications. Correct at May 2016)

Partner Sponsorship

As Instructors must work with Training Partners in order to deliver SUSE training, candidates for the program must have the support of a Training Partner. There is no requirement for the Training Partner to be actively involved in the process of SCI certification; they simply need to confirm to SUSE that they intend to use the candidate as an instructor if the candidate successfully obtains the SCI certification.

Program Enrollment

The candidate must indicate they wish to enroll in the SCI program. To do this, the candidate follows these steps:

1. Email SCI program administration (sci@suse.com) providing the following details

Full name

Email address

Phone contact

Certification ID

Name of supporting/sponsoring SUSE Training Partner and contact details for partner

2. SCI program administration will review the application for enrollment and reply with either acceptance of the enrollment request, refusal of the request or seek further information to support the request.

Meeting the Didactical Requirement

The didactical requirement is a demonstration of a candidate's ability to teach. There are three ways in which a candidate can meet this requirement:

Complete a SUSE Instructor Performance Evaluation (IPE)

To start the process to complete the IPE, send an e-mail to Instructor Program Administration (sci@suse.com). The candidate will be given guidance about how to proceed.

Complete an accepted 3rd party vendor teaching certification

Candidates wishing to use this route should contact Instructor Program Administration (sci@suse.com) for further information. We will accept a range of third party teaching certificates but this is always subject to approval by SCI program administration.

Commonly accepted certificates include training certifications from the following vendors:

- Microsoft
- Citrix
- Red Hat
- VMWare

It is the responsibility of the candidate to provide any required proof of certification.

Work with a Training Partner to provide an IPE assessment

Training Partners may perform the IPE assessment for SCI candidates who they intend to use as instructors. The partner will be issued with an IPE document by SCI program administration which must be completed by the partner contact who is assessing the instructor. If a candidate successfully completes an IPE with a partner they will be given a 3 month provisional certification. During that 3 month period SUSE will require to see student feedback from at least 6 individual students which meets the required performance metrics for the SCI program. If suitable feedback is provided the SCI status will be made official, otherwise at the end of the 3 month provisional period SCI status will be revoked. Candidates may only use the Partner IPE option once. Future applications must be for an IPE directly performed by SUSE.

Ongoing Certification Requirements

For candidates who are presently in the SCI program, there are annual requirements to remain in the program:

- Maintain a SUSE technical certification which meets the SCI program requirements
- Have students submit course evaluations for every class taught
- Teach only courses they are authorized to teach
- Meet the performance levels set for the SCI program based on student feedback (see section on Quality Assurance)
- Teach at least one official SUSE class per program year (1st May to 30th April)

Course Authorization Requirements

In order to ensure quality instruction, it is necessary for the instructor be demonstrably familiar with the materials being presented. This is accomplished through the use of course authorization requirements.

Prior to teaching any class, it is the instructor's responsibility to meet the course authorization requirements.

Instructors in the program will want to become familiar with the SCI Course Authorization requirements which can be accessed via the instructor website. This web page lists the requirements for all SUSE courses that are currently in market. To evaluate whether they are authorized for a class, instructors can check if they are listed in the current instructor authorization matrix which is also available on the website. SUSE's Training Partners also have access to the authorization matrix to assist them in selecting the appropriate instructor to teach specific courses.

Authorization is NOT an automatic process. Instructors will not obtain course authorization simply by passing an exam or obtaining a certification. Each course authorization must be applied for and granted by SCI program administration. Instructors require to email sci@suse.com requesting authorization to teach each course for which they wish to be recognized as authorized instructors. While it is expected that any SCI who meets the course requirements will be granted authorization on application, SCI program administration reserves the right to refuse authorization to any instructor.

Provisional Authorizations

On occasion, it is necessary for SUSE to set a provisional authorization requirement for a course.

This is an authorization requirement that is set because an exam is not yet out of development when a course becomes available. Provisional authorizations have an expiration date associated with them; this date is listed in the SCI Course Authorization requirements web page.

If an instructor holds an authorization on a provisional basis, the instructor has until the date on which the provisional authorization expires to meet the final course authorization requirements.

Application for provisional authorization can be applied for by emailing sci@suse.com

Expiration and Decertification

The terms expiration and decertification are often used interchangeably by candidates in the program. However, they have two distinctly different meanings.

Expiration from the Program

Expiration from the SCI program means that the candidate has not met or maintained a program requirement:

- Failure to teach in a given program year
- Failure to meet the performance levels required by the program
- Failure to provide evaluations for courses delivered during the program year
- Not maintaining a suitable technical certification

SCIs that are expired from the program can be reinstated into the program by meeting the requirement that was missed. For example, if a candidate's technical certification expires, they can be reinstated by completing a current technical certification. Contact SCI program administration if you wish to request reinstatement.

Expiration that occurs from inactivity requires the candidate follow the procedure outlined below in the section *Reinstatement Into the Program*.

Decertification

Decertification from the SCI program is a rare occurrence, and happens only at SUSE's discretion after the program rules have been violated. Examples of things that cause decertification include (but are not limited to):

- Delivering SUSE Authorized training at an unauthorized site
- Teaching courses without first meeting authorization requirements
- Infringement or misuse of SUSE's copyrights or trademarks
- Claiming to be SUSE Employee or to have special status in the SCI program
- Decertification is generally considered to be an irreversible action, and is at the discretion of the Instructor Program Manager.

SUSE retains the right to issue up to three (3) warnings to an Instructor who is in violation of the program rules. The first contact may be written (email) or by telephone, depending on the nature of the violation. Warnings are not required prior to decertification.

Reinstatement into the Program

When expiration takes place due to a lack of teaching activity, SCIs have the ability to be reinstated into the program using the following process:

1. The SCI should look for an opportunity with a partner to deliver a course they would be authorized to teach
2. At least 2 weeks prior to the teach date, the SCI needs to contact Instructor Program Administration by email with the name of the partner, the course to be taught, and the date the course delivery is to take place.
3. SCI Administration will confirm (at their discretion) the SCI's authorization to deliver the course in question, as well as confirm that the partner is current in the SUSE Training Partner program.

If the verification in Step 3 is passed, the SCI will be provisioned with access to the course materials so they can obtain the materials to teach.

The partner must provide course evaluations for the class and notify Instructor Program administration by email when the course is completed.

IMPORTANT: These steps must be followed in the order presented above; attempts to go around this process will result in reinstatement being delayed or denied for that event. Repeated attempts to circumvent this process may result in permanent decertification.

Exceptions

The hallmark of a good program is the ability to be flexible. The Instructor Program Manager has the discretion to evaluate and make reasonable exceptions on a case-by-case basis.

The evaluation of an exception is guided by three principles:

What is fair to the person seeking the exception?

Viewed by other members of the instructor community, would the exception be viewed as reasonable given the circumstances?

Viewed by an unbiased outside observer, would that observer say that the exception is fair?

If, in the Instructor Program Manager's judgement, a request for an exception meets these three criteria, there is a good chance an exception would be made.

Any SCI who has a special circumstance that is not covered in this program guide is invited to contact SUSE to discuss their specific circumstances. SUSE will evaluate the specific circumstances on a case-by-case basis and determine whether an exception can be made.

SCI Status and Representation as SCI

Individuals who are certified in the SCI program and authorized to teach official SUSE courses must always represent themselves as independent from SUSE. SCI status does not allow Instructors to represent themselves as employed or contracted by SUSE. Any contractual relationship for teaching is entirely between the Training Partner and the individual SCI.

SCIs must not state or imply any specific recommendation from SUSE. The SCI certification ensures that all instructors meet a common set of minimum standards both technically and for instructional skills and therefore all SCIs authorized to teach a particular course have equal merit in the program. SCIs must not suggest special status by using terms such as 'Senior' or 'Preferred'.

SCI Program Benefits and Resources

In addition to the ability to teach SUSE Authorized Courseware, SUSE makes certain benefits

and resources available to the instructor community. This is not an exhaustive list, but rather is intended to cover the general benefits and resources that SUSE makes available to the instructor community. Benefits may be changed without notice at the discretion of SUSE.

Instructor Program Website

The primary source of all information for SCIs with regard to the program is the Instructor website (training.suse.com/instructors). This site provides links to course materials, program updates, news and other resources intended for use by the Instructor community. In order to access these resources, you must be a current SCI SUSE's program and have a valid SUSE Login account that is associated with your email address as provided in your certification records. If you are unable to access any resources on the page and believe that you should have access, please contact Program Administration (sci@suse.com)

Instructor Support

The primary means of receiving support for SCIs is via email to the sci@suse.com email address. The SCI program does not offer 'real time' support and replies are made on a best efforts basis depending on availability of SUSE training employees. Support is available for program issues, classroom setup questions and course feedback. It is not possible to provide support for all configuration related issues nor is it possible to provide support where Instructors need to improve their technical skills.

Course Material Downloads

From the Instructor website, instructors are able to download current course materials. This list is kept up to date with shipping courses. Course access is related to the technology areas which each SCI is authorized to teach – for example being authorized to teach Linux classes does not mean that an SCI can access and use Storage class content.

From time to time beta courseware is also available for download through the website, but the list is presented separately to make it clear which courses are currently able to be offered and which courses are currently in beta. Beta materials are typically made available around the time of the course public beta teach, and are provided to allow Instructors to become familiar with the content of new courses. The beta materials should never be used in class, or distributed in any way. Availability of beta content is at the discretion of SUSE Training.

SUSE Instructor Summits

Instructor Summits provide a useful opportunity to make information about program updates, future plans and news regarding SUSE Training available to the SUSE Instructor community. Summit events may be held online or as live events (usually at existing SUSE events such as SUSECon). All current SCIs are invited to participate in Summit events, and a portion of the time at Instructor Summits will be reserved specifically to allow instructors to provide feedback to SUSE on any issues or suggestions they may have which affect the Instructor Program.

Train The Trainer Sessions

As part of SUSE's ongoing commitment to its Instructor community and Training Partners, SUSE

Training offer regular Train The Trainer (TTT) events to help instructors keep current with new SUSE course offerings.

Train the trainer events take place in two different forms, either as online events or as in-person classroom training.

In-Person Train the Trainer events will usually be offered at a SUSE office location and are provided free of charge for instructors to attend. Due to the high cost of offering such an event and the limited number of places available there will be a nominal charge of \$500US for any SCI who registers for an in-person session but then does not attend the training session.

Online training allows for larger class sizes, and is more cost efficient for SCIs to attend as no travel or expenses are required. Typically SCIs will be expected to setup the classroom lab on their own hardware and the online TTT session will teach the course content and demonstrate labs with the SCIs attending following on their own hardware and software configurations.

For all TTT sessions instructors will require support from a SUSE Training Partner when registering to attend. Each partner may nominate a single SCI to attend, and if following an initial registration period there are additional places available, SUSE will accept additional nominations to fill the remaining places on the TTT session. It is the responsibility of the SCI to ensure that they have obtained the support of a Training Partner when registering for a TTT session. This process ensures that SUSE TTT events effectively prepare SCIs who will have teaching opportunities, and links directly to the concept of the three way partnership between SUSE, Training Partners and Instructors.

Quality Assurance

As part of the SUSE Training Partner Program, all partners are required to submit post-course evaluation surveys which should be completed by the students attending official SUSE classes.

SCIs teaching classes should ensure that students are made aware of how to access and complete the surveys as part of their course delivery. If an SCI is teaching at a partner who is not providing access to post-course surveys we ask that the SCI notify instructor administration (sci@suse.com) as the feedback is vital to ensuring that SUSE customers attending official course have the best possible experience.

Why is Quality Important?

The quality of course delivery affects everyone - SUSE, the partners, the instructors, and the students. In order to understand the student experience better, SUSE asks the customers what their experience was like.

If a student has a bad experience, it can spread throughout a classroom or the student's organization (often both), leading to reduced opportunities for the Training Partner & Instructor, and even to a lost customer for SUSE.

Connecting with the customer in the classroom through the use of course feedback is an integral and important part of SUSE's course development process, as well as providing us with some real-world guidance from the customer about where the courses and programs need to be developed so they continue to come back for more.

In short, happy customers are repeat customers.

Repeat business is relatively inexpensive to maintain (compared to getting new business); part of growing your business (and SUSE's) depends on repeat business not declining. Otherwise, that decline affects the overall growth SUSE is seeing, and impacts the business of our partners and instructors.

How does SUSE use the feedback data?

Feedback data is used by SUSE for a few different purposes:

- To ensure program requirements are being met
- To determine who special opportunities should be provided to
- To identify course materials that may be in need of an update
- To better understand our customers training needs
- To plan future course development

Post Course Surveys and the SCI Program

The metrics from the post-course feedback are used to monitor instructor quality – both good and bad! It is to the benefit of all instructors that student feedback is collected to help with the management and development of the SCI program.

Below are some comments on how SCIs should approach post-course feedback, and welcome the review process rather than viewing it as a negative, potentially critical experience.

Students tend to just enter scores of “9”; doesn’t this invalidate the data?

For small numbers of evaluations, this would create questions about the validity of the averages.

The more evaluations we receive for an instructor, the more accurate the averages become.

If an instructor only has a few scores in the system, we try to take that into account when reviewing the data.

How do I ask students to give me good (but also realistic) scores?

This is one of the most frequent questions asked. There will always be students who just mark “9” for everything, and put in comments like “great instructor” (if they comment at all). Similarly, there will always be students who will never give a “9” because nobody’s perfect, and a score of 9 represents perfection to some students.

One of the best practices we have seen is to start the week off by telling students that they will be receiving an online evaluation at the end of the class via e-mail; that you appreciate their honest and candid feedback on all aspects of the course. At the same time, if they have concerns about the class or are dissatisfied with it, they should not wait until the evaluation is sent out to express their concerns. Rather, they should talk to the instructor during a break/after class or talk to representatives of the training center.

This tells the students that the instructor cares that the students have a good experience and gives them an outlet for their frustrations other than the evaluation at the end of the class.

If the students feel that an instructor or center can fix a problem for them during the class, they will be more likely to give better scores. A bad evaluation means the issue doesn’t get addressed for them, but it may be addressed for the next class.

If my scores are low, will I be expired from the program?

Having acceptable feedback scores is a requirement of the program – and yes, it is potentially possible for a SCI to be expired due to consistent poor feedback. That is the fair and appropriate way to manage the program for the benefit of customers attending classes.

SCIs with poor scores will be contacted and the issue discussed, and if they continue to score poorly when they teach then they may be expired from the program. Instructors will only be evaluated on the specific instructor related data, not data relating to other aspects of the course evaluation.

Will I be expired without an opportunity to explain the circumstances which caused the low scores?

Before any instructor is expired from the program SUSE will make all reasonable attempts to contact the instructor using the contact details held in the certification database. SUSE understands that occasionally circumstances which are not in the control of the instructor cause lower scores to be given by training delegates, and SUSE will operate a flexible policy in these circumstances.

I'm working with a partner that does not collect feedback. What are my options?

Please contact SCI program administrations (<mailto:sci@suse.com>) with information about the partner. We will work with the partner to get them to collect feedback as required by the Training Partner program.

Useful Contact Information

Instructor Program Contacts

SCI Instructor website : <https://training.suse.com/instructors>

SCI Instructor Support email : sci@suse.com

SUSE Training Information

Training website : <https://training.suse.com>

Certification Information : <https://training.suse.com/certification>