International
Software Testing
Qualifications Board

Standard Glossary of Terms Used in Software Testing

Version 3.1

Introduction

International Software Testing Qualifications Board

Introduction to the ISTQB Glossary

Scope

The ISTQB Standard Glossary of Terms Used in Software Testing contains the definitions of testing terms used in the different ISTQB syllabi. This includes all terms stated as keywords in the ISTQB syllabi, as well as other terms of major importance.

The ISTQB Glossary focuses on terms that have a specific meaning in testing. Some related non-testing terms are also included if they play a major role in testing, such as terms used in software quality assurance and software lifecycle models. However, most terms of other software engineering disciplines are not covered in this document, even if they are used in various ISTQB syllabi.

Purpose of the ISTQB Glossary

The ISTQB Glossary has two main objectives:
- Support the ISTQB syllabi by defining the terms used in the various syllabi
- Support communication within the international testing community and with its stakeholders by providing a standard testing vocabulary

In compiling this Glossary, the ISTQB Glossary Working Group has sought the views and comments of a broad spectrum of opinion in industry, commerce and government bodies and organizations, with the aim of producing an international testing standard that would gain wide acceptance. Total agreement will rarely, if ever, be achieved in compiling a document of this nature. Contributions to this glossary have been received from testing communities from all over the world.

Being written in English, the current version of the Glossary is designed to also support other languages. ISTQB Member Boards are encouraged to incorporate their translations.

Glossary Structure

The glossary has been arranged in a single section of terms and their definitions, ordered alphabetically. For each term, the following additional attributes are shown where applicable:
- Synonyms: Some terms are preferred to other synonymous ones, in which case, the preferred term appears as an entry, with the synonyms indicated.
- See also: These entries contain cross-references to related terms. Such cross-references are indicated for relationships such as broader term to a narrower term, and overlapping meaning between two terms.
- Ref: without the addition of "after", e.g., ISO 9126, this means that the exact definition of the reference is used. In case of minor changes used to adapt the definition to the context of the ISTQB Glossary, the addition "after" is used, e.g., Ref: After ISO 9126. The complete list of references used in the ISTQB Glossary is listed below.

Acknowledgements

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At the time the Glossary version 3.1 was completed the Glossary Working Group had the following members (alphabetic order):
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Glossary

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Many more people, who are not mentioned here by name, have contributed to different versions of this Glossary. The editors would like to thank them all for their contributions.

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Revision History

Version	Date	Remarks
V1.3	31 May 2007	Maintenance version
V2.0	2 December 2007	Missing terms used in the Foundation Level and Advanced Level syllabi added. Maintenance based on change requests raised by users.
V2.1	1 April 2010	New keywords from the Expert Level syllabus Improving the Testing Process added. Missing terms used in the Advanced Level syllabus added. Some inconsistencies resolved.
V2.2	19 October 2012	New keywords from the Expert Level syllabus Test Management added. Updates to support the new version 2012 of the Advanced Level syllabi. Maintenance based on change requests raised by users.
V2.3	28 March 2014	New keywords from the Foundation Extension Agile Tester syllabus added. Maintenance based on change requests raised by users.
V2.4	4 July 2014	New keywords from the Expert Level Test Automation – Engineer syllabus added. Document reformatted to ISTQB standard format. Verbiage in 0.x sections clarified and edited.
V3.0	26 March 2015	Migration from paper-based to database storage for the Glossary. Implementation of syllabus-based reporting. Additional words for the ETM syllabus have been added and the keywords for the MBT syllabus have been added. Cleanup has been performed for consistency in hyphenation and formatting as well as spelling corrections.
V3.01	27 May 2015	Technical revision: Re-alignment with syllabus usage.
V3.1	18 March 2016	Additional terms supporting the new Advanced Security syllabus added. The definition of the term 'fault attack' has been generalized to include non-functional faults, e.g. security vulnerabilities, as well.

A list of terms changed in a specific release can be retrieved in the interactive presentation layer.