



# Usability Test Checklist

Checklist for the practical examination for the  
CPUX-UT certificate

Version 1.08, 31 August 2018



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## Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>3</b>
1.1	Legends.....	3
1.2	The most important reasons for failing the practical examination .....	4
1.3	Acknowledgments .....	5
<b>2</b>	<b>Formal requirements .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Test script.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>User profiles and test participants .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Test tasks .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Test session in general .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Briefing and pre-session interview.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Moderation.....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>Post-session interview .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>Usability test report – Layout and contents .....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>Usability test report – Executive summary.....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>Usability test report - Findings .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>13</b>	<b>Commendable aspects in the submission.....</b>	<b>26</b>
	<b>Appendix. Important changes compared to previous versions .....</b>	<b>27</b>

## 1 Introduction

This document contains the evaluation criteria for the practical test leading to the CPUX-UT certificate. The evaluation criteria are used by the evaluator to score deliverables from the usability test conducted by candidates seeking to achieve the CPUX-UT certificate. This document is also used to inform CPUX-UT candidates about how their CPUX-UT deliverables are scored.

The basic idea behind the rating is that each candidate starts out with 100 points. Points are deducted for each deviation from a good usability test as reflected by the evaluation criteria.

This usability test checklist serves as guidance for the examiner. The examiner is not limited to the items in the usability test checklist. The examiner may deduct points for serious or critical problems that are not covered by the checklist.

### 1.1 Legends

ID	The IDs are used for references.
Evaluation criterion	The criteria reflect key criteria in the CPUX-UT Curriculum.
E1	The maximum number of points that can be deducted if the criterion is violated.
E2	The actual rating (zero or points to be deducted) given by the assessor. If the rating is <i>OK</i> , <i>No problem</i> or <i>Good</i> , enter 0.
Evaluator's comment	Justification of the rating, if required. References like <i>V3-5.38</i> may be used to refer to a sequence in a video submitted by the candidate. The sample reference refers to the video for test participant 3. The referenced event starts approximately 5 minutes and 38 seconds after the start of the video.

## 1.2 The most important reasons for failing the practical examination

The examiners consider it essential that a usability professional is able to follow precise instructions, such as those provided in the task description for the practical examination, exactly.

1. One or more usability test tasks do not match the requirements in the task description for the practical examination, in particular the prescribed general task areas.  
See checklist item 5.1 to 5.4.
2. One or more usability test tasks are trivial or have hazy goals.  
Example: For a car rental website: “Find information about insurance”  
See checklist item 5.13 and 5.14
3. Usability test task descriptions are unclear or ambiguous for the test participant.  
See checklist item 5.11

The UXQB has made an optional exercise which addresses issue 1, 2 and 3 available for our recognised training providers.

4. Bad video quality.  
See checklist item 2.12 and 2.13
5. Bad audio quality.  
It is difficult to hear what the test participant or the moderator are saying  
See checklist item 2.10 and 2.11
6. The usability test report describes findings that do not match the issues test participant encountered according to the videos.  
See checklist item 12.16
7. The task set contains more than four tasks.  
Reserve tasks are often recommended in case additional time remains in a usability test session. They are not allowed in the practical examination.  
See checklist item 5.5
8. One or more videos are longer than 30 minutes, or a test session ends abruptly to keep it within 30 minutes.  
See checklist item 6.4

## 1.3 Acknowledgments

This document was created by the following persons:

Rolf Molich (Editor)

Bernard Rummel (Co-Editor)

## 2 Formal requirements

The examiner starts by checking that the formal requirements for the results in this section are fulfilled.

If one or more of the formal requirements 2.1, 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4 are not fulfilled, the candidate has failed the examination.

If one or more of the remaining formal requirements are not fulfilled, the examiner must stop their assessment and ask the candidate to submit the missing results or resubmit the unsatisfactory results as soon as possible. This resubmission is free of charge. Only one resubmission is allowed. Read more about this situation in the CPUX-UT Examination Regulations.

According to the CPUX-UT Examination regulations, the formal requirements are:

ID	Formal requirements, part 1 Inescapable	Yes/ No	Evaluator's comment
1	A usability test report must be available		
2	A usability test script must be available		
3	<p>The usability test script must describe the four usability test tasks that were used for the test</p> <p>Note: Describe exactly four usability test tasks. One or two or more than five usability test tasks will not be accepted; three or five tasks will be accepted but will cause points to be deducted.</p>		
4	The usability test report must contain at least 5 findings		

ID	Formal requirements, part 2 The candidate may get a second chance	Yes/ No	Evaluator's comment
5	A signed declaration where the candidate confirms that they have received no assistance from others in completing the assessment must be available		
6	A blank copy of the consent agreement that the test participants have signed must be available.  Note: Do not submit signed consent agreements. This would violate the data protection rules.		
7	Exactly 3 videos must be available		
8	The videos must be easily viewable on a Windows computer		
9	Each video must last at least 15 minutes and at most 30 minutes		
10	It must be easy to understand what the test participant says on the videos		
11	It must be easy to understand what the moderator says on the videos		
12	Both the test participant and the moderator must be clearly visible on the videos.  Note: It should be possible to see whether or not the moderator takes notes during the test session		
13	On the video it must be possible to read text that appears in reasonable size on the screen		

## 3 Test script

ID	Evaluation criterion	E1	E2	Evaluator's comment
1	Are the criteria used for selecting test participants available and reasonable?	5		
2	Does the test script include a suitable checklist for the briefing?	5		
3	Does the moderator adhere to the checklist for the briefing during the test sessions?	5		
4	Does the test script include a suitable checklist for the pre-session interview?	5		
5	Does the moderator adhere to the checklist for the pre-session interview during the test sessions?	5		
6	Does the test script include a suitable checklist for the post-session interview?	5		
7	Does the moderator adhere to the checklist for the post-session interview during the test sessions?	5		



## 4 User profiles and test participants

ID	Evaluation criterion	E1	E2	Evaluator's comment
1	<p>Do the test participants match the requirements in the assignment?</p> <p>Note 1: If a test participant turns out to be unqualified for the test, a replacement should be scheduled and the test session with the unqualified test participant should not be submitted</p> <p>Note 2: Lack of qualifications includes insufficient command of the language used in the usability test session as well as insufficient experience with the internet.</p> <p>Note 3: UX professionals, IT system administrators and people who develop or implement IT systems should be avoided as test participants.</p>	12		
2	Is brief but adequate information about each test participant available?	2		
3	Are the test participants sufficiently different to constitute an informative sample?	2		
4	<p>Does the usability test report include a reasonable user profile?</p> <p>Note: See the example in the sample usability test report, "Target group for the system"</p>	2		
5	On the basis of their appearance on the video, do test participants seem to match the information about test participants provided in the usability test report?	5		

# Usability Test Checklist



6	Is the anonymity of test participants preserved?	2		
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## 5 Test tasks

ID	Evaluation criterion	E1	E2	Evaluator's comment
1	Does test task 1 match the requirements in the assignment?  Note: Only use cases that are covered by the assignment – that is, the task description for the practical examination – may be tested.	5		
2	Does test task 2 match the requirements in the assignment?	5		
3	Does test task 3 match the requirements in the assignment?	5		
4	Does test task 4 match the requirements in the assignment?	5		
5	Are there exactly four usability test tasks?  Note: Five minus points for three or five usability test tasks. Less than 3 or more than 5 usability test tasks are not accepted.	5		
6	Does each usability test task include a precise success criterion or goal?  Note: This is particularly important for open-ended tasks. If the task set includes open-ended tasks, the usability test report should describe the goals that each test participant set for the task before they started on it.	5		
7	Does each test task address exactly one basic function of the interactive system?  Note: A test task that tests several use cases should be split.	2		

## Usability Test Checklist

8	<p>Are the test tasks sufficiently different?</p> <p>Note: Redundant tasks should be avoided. Seemingly small differences between usability test tasks should be carefully justified.</p>	5		
9	<p>Does each test task contain a test task description that can be handed out verbatim to the test participant?</p>	5		
10	<p>Is each test task description for the test participant short?</p>	2		
11	<p>Is each test task description for the test participant unambiguous and clear?</p>	5		
12	<p>Is each test task relevant from the test participants' point of view?</p> <p>Note: System-oriented tasks should be avoided</p>	2		
13	<p>Are test tasks non-trivial?</p>	5		
14	<p>Does each test task have a precisely defined goal?</p> <p>Note: An example of a test task that does not have a precisely defined goal for a car rental website is "Find information about insurance".</p>	5		
15	<p>Are test tasks free from clues?</p>	5		
16	<p>Is the purpose of each test task explained or self-evident?</p> <p>Note: A description of the purpose of each task should be included in the task description.</p>	5		
17	<p>Is the starting condition for each test task specified?</p>	2		

# Usability Test Checklist

18	Are test tasks serious – that is, not humorous?	2		
19	Are pretender tasks avoided? Note: Task must respect participants' political and religious attitudes	5		

## 6 Test session in general

ID	Evaluation criterion	E1	E2	Evaluator's comment
1	<p>Is each test session unaffected by previous test sessions?</p> <p>Note: This could happen, for example, if the cache is not cleared properly between sessions, so input suggestions from previous sessions appear.</p>	2		
2	<p>Are test sessions conducted in a suitable room? Is the room undisturbed?</p>	5		
3	<p>Does the moderator manage time well so as many test tasks as possible are addressed properly within the given time frame for the test session?</p> <p>Note: The maximum time for a test session is 30 minutes. The maximum time should be carefully observed even if this means that the test participant does not complete all 4 test tasks.</p> <p>Cutting off the video during a task or skipping the debriefing in order to keep the video shorter than 30 minutes is not acceptable.</p>	5		
4	<p>Is each test session longer than 15 minutes and shorter than 30 minutes?</p>	12		
5	<p>Are there no recurring hardware malfunctions during the test session?</p>	5		
6	<p>Are there no recurring software malfunctions during the test session?</p>	5		

# Usability Test Checklist



7	If there are hardware or software malfunctions during a test session, are they handled diplomatically and competently by the moderator?	5		
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## 7 Briefing and pre-session interview

ID	Evaluation criterion	E1	E2	Evaluator's comment
1	Does the moderator orally inform each test participant "We are not testing you"?	5		
2	At the end of the briefing, does the moderator ask "Do you have any questions?"	2		
3	Is the briefing efficient? For example, demonstrations of what think-aloud is are not considered efficient.	5		
4	Does the moderator enquire about the test participant's previous knowledge of the interactive system?	5		
5	Does the moderator enquire about the test participant's previous knowledge of comparable interactive systems?	5		
6	Does the moderator enquire about the test participant's knowledge of the subject matter?	2		
7	Does the moderator appear genuinely interested in the participant?	5		
8	Is the moderator sufficiently curious during the pre-session interview? When appropriate, does the moderator deviate from the pre-session interview checklist?  Note: Follow-up questions are appropriate for example if the test participant describes an important use case that has not yet been considered.	5		



## 8 Moderation

ID	Evaluation criterion	E1	E2	Evaluator's comment
1	Does the moderator say as little as possible while the test participant is solving test tasks?	5		
2	Does the moderator say as little as possible between test tasks?	5		
3	Are the moderator's remarks and body language free from clues? Note: Sample clues are "Don't worry about this", or the body language says "You have almost solved the task. The answer is on the screen."	5		
4	Does the moderator avoid premature confirmation – that is, confirming the solution before the test participant is certain?	2		
5	Does the moderator help or move on to the next task when the usability problem is clear, or the test participant is hopelessly stuck or goes around in circles?	5		
6	If the moderator provides help, is the help limited to the absolute minimum?	5		
7	Does the moderator keep quiet when the test participant does not need help?	5		
8	Does the moderator avoid leading questions?	2		
9	Does the moderator encourage test participants to think aloud without overdoing it?	2		

# Usability Test Checklist

10	<p>Are test tasks communicated properly to the test participant without any risk for misunderstanding?</p> <p>Note 1: Deduct one point if the test participant is not encouraged to paraphrase the task.</p> <p>Note 2: Deduct one point if a long complex task is only read aloud to the test participant by the moderator.</p>	2		
11	<p>Is the moderator sufficiently curious during moderation? Does the moderator follow up on any important unclarities?</p>	5		
12	<p>Does the moderator appear interested in what the test participant is saying and doing?</p> <p>Note 1: Does the moderator have regular eye-contact with the test participant?</p> <p>Note 2: Does the moderator take notes?</p>	5		
13	<p>Is the moderator unbiased?</p> <p>The moderator must not defend the interactive system. The moderator must not express their own views on the interactive system. The moderator must not have a secret agenda such as a pet peeve or theory about the interface being tested and try to get the test participant to articulate it.</p>	2		

# Usability Test Checklist

14	<p>Is the moderator respectful towards the test participant?</p> <p>Note 1: The moderator should pay attention to test participants' suggestions even if they appear unreasonable.</p> <p>Note 2: The moderator should not take over the keyboard or the mouse without explicit permission from the test participant. The test session should be designed so no intervention from the moderator is required, for example to enter passwords, etc.</p>	12		
15	<p>Is the moderator respectful towards the manufacturer or provider of the test object?</p> <p>Note: The moderator should not badmouth the interactive system or the development team, even if it is done to calm the test participant.</p>	2		
16	<p>If the test participant can't solve a task and wants to see how it can be done, does the moderator diplomatically refuse to reveal the intended way of solving the task?</p> <p>Note: It's OK to show the solution as part of the post-session interview, but only if the test participant insists.</p>	5		
17	<p>Is the moderator sufficiently familiar with the product that is being tested?</p>	5		

## 9 Post-session interview

ID	Evaluation criterion	E1	E2	Evaluator's comment
1	Is the post-session interview efficient?	5		
2	Does the post-session interview take less than 3 minutes?  Note: Using more than 3 minutes for the post-session interview may be OK but requires a justification.	2		
3	Does the post-session interview mainly focus on experience that is not evident from the test session?	2		
4	Does the post-session interview ask what the test participant considers the most important usability problems?	2		
5	Does the post-session interview ask what the test participant considers the most important positive impressions?  Note: Deduct one point if one question addresses both positive and negative aspects.	2		

## 10 Usability test report – Layout and contents

ID	Evaluation criterion	E1	E2	Evaluator's comment
1	Does the usability test report contain an executive summary?	12		
2	Is the usability test report free from unnecessary information?  Note: The usability test report must be as short as possible. Up to 25 pages are reasonable.  Examples of unnecessary information are biographies of the usability specialists involved in the test, transcripts and explanations of what usability is.	5		
3	Does the usability test report contain a version date?	2		

## 11 Usability test report – Executive summary

ID	Evaluation criterion	E1	E2	Evaluator's comment
1	Does the executive summary appear at the very beginning of the usability test report?	5		
2	Is the executive summary contained on one page only?	2		
3	Does the executive summary contain a brief description of the most important positive findings?	2		
4	Are the positive findings that are listed in the executive summary also listed in the Findings section of the usability test report?	2		
5	Does the executive summary contain a brief description of the most important usability problems?  Note: Do not include problems that are rated “major” or “minor” in the executive summary unless all problems that are rated “critical” are included.	2		
6	Are the usability problems that are listed in the executive summary also listed in the Findings section of the usability test report?  Note: It is commendable to combine several problems into an overall theme in the executive summary	2		

## 12 Usability test report - Findings

ID	Evaluation criterion	E1	E2	Evaluator's comment
1	<p>Are there more than 10 substantial findings?</p> <p>Note: Examples of unsubstantial findings are: "Test participants liked the website", "Test participants found no spelling errors"</p>	5		
2	Are there less than 40 findings?	5		
3	Are all findings easy to understand?	12		
4	<p>Are all findings unique?</p> <p>Note: Two separately reported findings must not describe what is essentially the same usability finding.</p>	2		
5	Does each finding describe the problem from the test participant's point of view?	2		
6	<p>Are all findings actionable?</p> <p>Note 1: Generally phrased findings such as "The website does not speak the language of the user" should be accompanied by at least two valid examples.</p> <p>Note 2: Findings must be analyzed in sufficient depth to derive a remediation plan.</p> <p>Example: It is insufficient to report that a test participant got lost in navigation. Instead, the report should detail where exactly and why misnavigation happened.</p>	5		
7	Are all findings rated?	5		

## Usability Test Checklist

8	Are all ratings justifiable?	5		
9	Is the meaning of each rating explained in a useful and usable way?	2		
10	Do at least 3 of the findings contain useful and usable recommendations?  Note: Recommendations are particularly important for findings that are rated “critical”.	2		
11	Are at least 25% of the findings positive?	2		
12	Are positive findings completely positive?  Note: A positive finding should not contain any criticism	2		
13	Are positive findings substantial (as opposed to flimsy or sarcastic)?	2		
14	Are findings that are not obvious from the textual description illustrated with appropriate screenshots?	2		
15	Are findings supplemented with quotes from test participants, where appropriate?  Note: Three reasonable quotes are sufficient.	2		



# Usability Test Checklist

16	<p>Are findings in accordance with test participants' actual behavior as recorded on the videos?</p> <p>Note 1: Findings must not be based on the participant's opinions or the moderator's opinions. Findings must not be based on inspection or an observation by the moderator of a potential usability problem or a bug that did not cause any problems for test participants</p> <p>Note 2: Findings must only be based on test sessions that are submitted for evaluation</p> <p>Note 3: All major or critical usability problems that are evident from one or more videos must be reported</p>	12		
17	<p>Does each finding reflect a single usability issue?</p> <p>Note: Findings must not be conglomerates of several independent but possibly related issues.</p>	2		

## 13 Commendable aspects in the submission

At their discretion, evaluators may list commendable aspects in the submission in this section. Positive points may be awarded for substantial commendable aspects

1		
2		

## Appendix. Important changes compared to previous versions

Date, version	Change
30-06-2015, Version 1.01	First version.
20-01-2017, Version 1.06	<p>2.i: OK to submit blank NDA for data protection reasons</p> <p>5.b: Number of tasks in test script must match assignment exactly</p> <p>5.g: Increased from 1 to 4 points. 5.h: Increased from 2 to 4 points.</p> <p>8.g: Avoid “confirmation questions”</p>
31-08-2018, Version 1.08	<p>Many items have been updated to reflect the examiners’ experiences from evaluating a substantial number of practical examinations.</p> <p>A list of the eight most important reasons for failing the practical examination has been added in section 1.2.</p> <p>A list of formal requirements that are checked before the detailed evaluation starts has replaced the previous list of “Initial check of deliverables”. The list, which appears in section 2, now matches a similar list in the CPUX-UT Examination Regulations.</p> <p>The possibility of awarding positive points for commendable aspects of the submission has been added in section 13.</p> <p>All items in the checklist have been renumbered.</p> <p>New items are: 3.7, 4.1 notes, 4.3, 4.4, 5.1 to 5.6, 5.13, 5.14, 5.19 note, 6.4, 8.10 notes, 8.12 notes, 9.5 notes, 11.6 notes, 12.1, 12.6 note 2, 12.16 note 2+3</p>