GISCI GEOSPATIAL CORE TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE EXAM ® CANDIDATE MANUAL

Updated: July 2025

Introduction

This manual provides essential information about the GISCI Geospatial Core Technical Knowledge Exam®, a required component for earning the GISP® Certification. For complete details about the GISP Certification Program, please visit the GISCI website at www.gisci.org.

Note: This manual is updated before each exam window to reflect the most current procedures and information.

Key Dates

- Next Exam Window: December 6–14, 2025 (Worldwide)
- Application Deadline: November 21, 2025
- Future Exam Windows: Offered twice annually, in June and December

Exam Procedure

1. **Submit Application:** Apply online at www.gisci.org. You must apply **using your legal name.**

2. **Pay Exam Fee:** Payment is due upon application. Accepted payment methods include MasterCard, Visa, American Express, Discover, and checks. When paying by check, you will receive an invoice with instructions.

   Checks should be mailed to: **GIS CERTIFICATION INSTITUTE**
   503 E NIFONG BLVD #338
   COLUMBIA, MO 65201-3717

   Exam fees are as follows:
      - US / Canada / International: $250
      - **Exam fees are non-refundable**

3. **Schedule your specific exam date:** Within three business days of payment, you'll receive an email from Pearson VUE with authorization to schedule your exam. Follow the provided link to create your Pearson VUE account and select your date, time, and location. Failure to schedule your exam within 10 days of receiving your email from Pearson VUE will disqualify you for a rollover if there is no available testing center in your area.

   Tip: Testing center availability varies—schedule early to secure your preferred slot.

4. **Scheduling Support**:
   After receiving your email, contact Pearson VUE at 1-888-270-7759 for help. **Do not call until after you receive your scheduling email.**
5. **Take the Exam:** Arrive at your Pearson VUE testing center as scheduled.
6. **Exam Results:** Results are not immediate. After a thorough review process, you will receive your pass/fail status via email **within four weeks**. Candidates who fail will receive a detailed performance report.

Special Circumstances & Extensions

- **Rescheduling (Same Exam Window):** Log in to your Pearson VUE account **at least 48 hours in advance**. For shorter notice, email GISCI at info@gisci.org. Rescheduling is subject to availability.
- **Postponement to a later exam event.** In extreme cases, you may request to defer to the next exam session by contacting GISCI **before your scheduled exam**. Approval is required and fees will be forfeited if the exam is not taken in the next cycle.
  - Canceling with Pearson VUE does not guarantee a fee rollover.
- **Retaking After a Failed Exam.**
  - You may reapply and retake the exam during the next exam session.
  - After **two consecutive failures**, you must skip one exam session before reapplying.
  - Retakes are **not allowed within the same exam session**.

  Next exam. The GISCI Geospatial Core Technical Knowledge Exam® is held approximately every six months, with exam windows in June and December. Please visit www.gisci.org for future exam dates.

Exam Details

- **Delivery:** Computer-based, proctored by Pearson VUE
- **Length:** 100 scored questions + up to 60 unscored pretest questions
- **Duration:** 4 hours
- **Format:** Multiple choice
- **Language:** English
- **Scoring:**
  - No penalty for incorrect answers
  - Passing requires **73% correct** on the 100 scored questions

Exam Content

The exam evaluates core technical geospatial knowledge based on a national job analysis of professionals with at least four years of experience. It is grounded in:

- **Geospatial Technology Competency Model (Tier 4)**
- **UCGIS GIS&T Body of Knowledge**

Focus: The exam tests **technical concepts** only—**not** software-specific knowledge, ethics, or management skills.

Exam Knowledge Areas

The exam covers 45 specific Knowledge Areas grouped into ten Knowledge Categories as shown in the tables below.

GISCI Geospatial Core Technical Knowledge Exam ® Knowledge Categories

Knowledge Category	Weight
1. Conceptual Foundations	10%
2. Geospatial Data Fundamentals	15%
3. Cartography & Visualization	10%
4. Data Acquisition	11%
5. Data Manipulation	11%
6. Analytical Methods	11%
7. Database Design & Management	10%
8. Application Development	7%
9. Systems Design & Management	7%
10. Professional Practice	8%
10. Total	100%

Sample Questions

The following sample questions supply examples of the question format. An answer key is provided at the end of the list of questions.

1) Which is an example of analog-to-digital conversion? a) Creating centroids from a polygon file b) Importing a DXF c) Scanning a map document to JPG format d) Transforming a GIF to a TIF

2) Which of the following is NOT a component of the OGC geometry object model? a) Chain b) Curve c) Point d) Surface

3) Which is the most effective method for maintaining data quality to ensure that no line features of a stream center line layer intersect the polygon feature of a land cover layer? a) Clip b) Intersect c) Overlay d) Topology

4) According to National Map Accuracy Standards, what percentage of features must be within 1/30 of an inch or less from their intended horizontal accuracy on maps with scales of 1:20,000 or larger? a) 5% b) 10% c) 90% d) 95%

5) Which are compression techniques for raster data? Select all that apply. a) Lattice b) Pyramids c) Quad trees d) Run length encoding

(ANSWER KEY: 1=c; 2=a; 3=d; 4=c; 5=c, d)

After the Exam

You will receive a post-exam Exit Report. Exam results are reviewed by GISCI's psychometrician and Exam Review Committee. You will be notified of your official pass/fail status **within four weeks**.

Only communication from GISCI should be considered official.

Study Resources

GISCI recommends studying from a wide range of general geospatial resources:

- Textbooks in GIS, cartography, geography, statistics, and mathematics
- GIS periodicals and manuals (excluding software manuals)
- Online or in-person courses in GIS and computer science
- GIS discussion forums from reputable providers

GISCI does **not** endorse specific titles but provides guidance at:

Exam Preparation Info
Practice Exam

On the Day of the Exam

- Arrive **30 minutes early**
- Bring a **valid, unexpired photo ID** that matches your exam authorization
- No personal belongings or electronics are allowed
- You may not leave or use electronic devices during the exam
- Always maintain professional conduct
- Reproduction or transmission of test content is strictly prohibited

Violations may result in disqualification or legal consequences.

Pearson VUE Exam FAQs: https://www.pearsonvue.com/us/en/test-takers/resources.html

Accommodations & Non-Discrimination

GISCI complies with the **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**. Request accommodations at least 30 days in advance. More info: https://www.gisci.org/Want-to-be-a-GISP/The-Exam/Accommodations

GISCI maintains a **non-discrimination policy** and ensures equal access regardless of race, sex, age, national origin, disability, religion, or other protected status.