





Arista Academy - Enhanced Certifications & Recertification Overview

The Arista Academy Enhanced Certification and Recertification program debuted June 1, 2025, utilizing the new Learning Track approach to develop and validate specialized domain expertise. This document outlines these certifications and the associated recertification requirements for the Arista Certified Engineer (ACE).

Enhanced Certifications

The Enhanced Certification Program adopts a four-tier framework centered on Learning Tracks. This structure defines progressive proficiency levels based on technical depth and specialization. Please note, the use of the former numbered 'Level' system (Levels 1 through 7) is now **discontinued**.

Certification Tier	Definition	Example Badge
Associate	The Associate level validates a foundational understanding of core concepts within a track, serving as the entry point for professionals to demonstrate their baseline knowledge of Arista technologies.	
Specialist	The Specialist tier validates specialized sub-track expertise (such as Operations, Engineering, Fundamentals, or Advanced) within a broader learning track, representing a notable advancement in technical proficiency.	
Professional	Professional status signifies Learning Track mastery. It is achieved by passing the Professional exam or earning both track-specific Specialist certifications (e.g., Operations and Engineering).	
Expert	Expert is the highest tier in the Arista Certified Engineer program, recognizing professionals as leading resources in cloud-native or hyperscale environments who possess deep, specialized knowledge covering the full breadth of Arista core network solutions.	

Certification Exam Prerequisites

The Enhanced Arista Academy Certification exams, with the exception of the Expert certification, have no prerequisites or required order of completion. Individuals can attempt any certification exam (from Associate to Professional) in any track, and in any order, regardless of prior certifications, course completion, or curriculum subscription. The Expert-level exam requires a candidate to successfully complete a four-hour "Expert Pre-Qualification" exam as a prerequisite for the full assessment.

Recertification

The Arista Academy Recertification program provides a comprehensive framework for current and future ACE credentials, managing the migration of previous Level 1 through 7 certification holders into the track-based hierarchy. While legacy Level 1–5 exams reached end-of-life on December 31, 2025, professionals can maintain their status by completing the modernized Academy Track exams.

Two-Year Recertification Schedule

- **Certifications earned before June 1, 2024:** Recertification is required by **June 1, 2026** (L5 excepted)
- **Certifications earned after June 1, 2024:** Recertification is required within **two (2) years** of the certification date.
- Subsequent recertifications are required every **two years** thereafter, following the *Academy Track Recertification Cycle*.

Level 5 Recertification

- The previous Level 5 (Automation) certification is migrating to the new track-based program, mapping to the **Automation Advanced Specialist** certification. Because the required exam for this credential is not expected until Q4 2026, the recertification deadline for all L5 holders is extended to **February 1, 2027**.

Level 6 Certification

- Level 6 is now **retired**.
- Current holders may keep their credentials; pursuing Expert certification is recommended.

Expert Certification

- Holding an Expert (previous “Level 7”) certification **removes the requirement** to recertify for any lower-level certifications, as it encompasses all other Arista certifications.

Academy Track Recertification Cycle

The Academy Track Recertification Cycle is designed to simplify the ongoing maintenance of ACE expertise. This two-year cycle utilizes shorter, track-specific recertification exams that target core competencies and recent curriculum updates, ensuring professionals stay current with technical progress without redundant testing. Legacy L-level holders must first complete a one-time upgrade by passing the full, corresponding track-based exam according to the recertification timelines noted earlier before fully entering this streamlined process. The Professional certification offers a further level of streamlining: achieved by either passing the single Professional exam or by earning both Specialist certifications within a track (e.g., Operations and Engineering), attaining this status supersedes the individual Specialist exams, removing the requirement to recertify those lower-level credentials.

Certification / Recertification Exam Considerations

Note the following regarding the mandatory transition from legacy certifications to the new Learning Track program:

- **Legacy Exam Retirement and Migration:**

- Previous Level 1–5 exams reached end-of-life on December 31, 2025. All holders of Level 1-5 credentials must recertify using the new track-based exams by their respective deadline.

- **Certification Mapping:**

- To guide the transition, previous L-Level certifications map to the new Learning Track exams as follows:
 - Level 1 → Network Foundations Associate
 - Level 2 → Data Center Operations Specialist
 - Level 3 → Data Center Engineering Specialist
 - Level 4 → WAN Routing - MPLS Core Specialist
 - Level 5 → Automation Advanced Specialist
 - Level 6 → Retired
 - Level 7 → Expert

- **New Exam Content and Structure:**

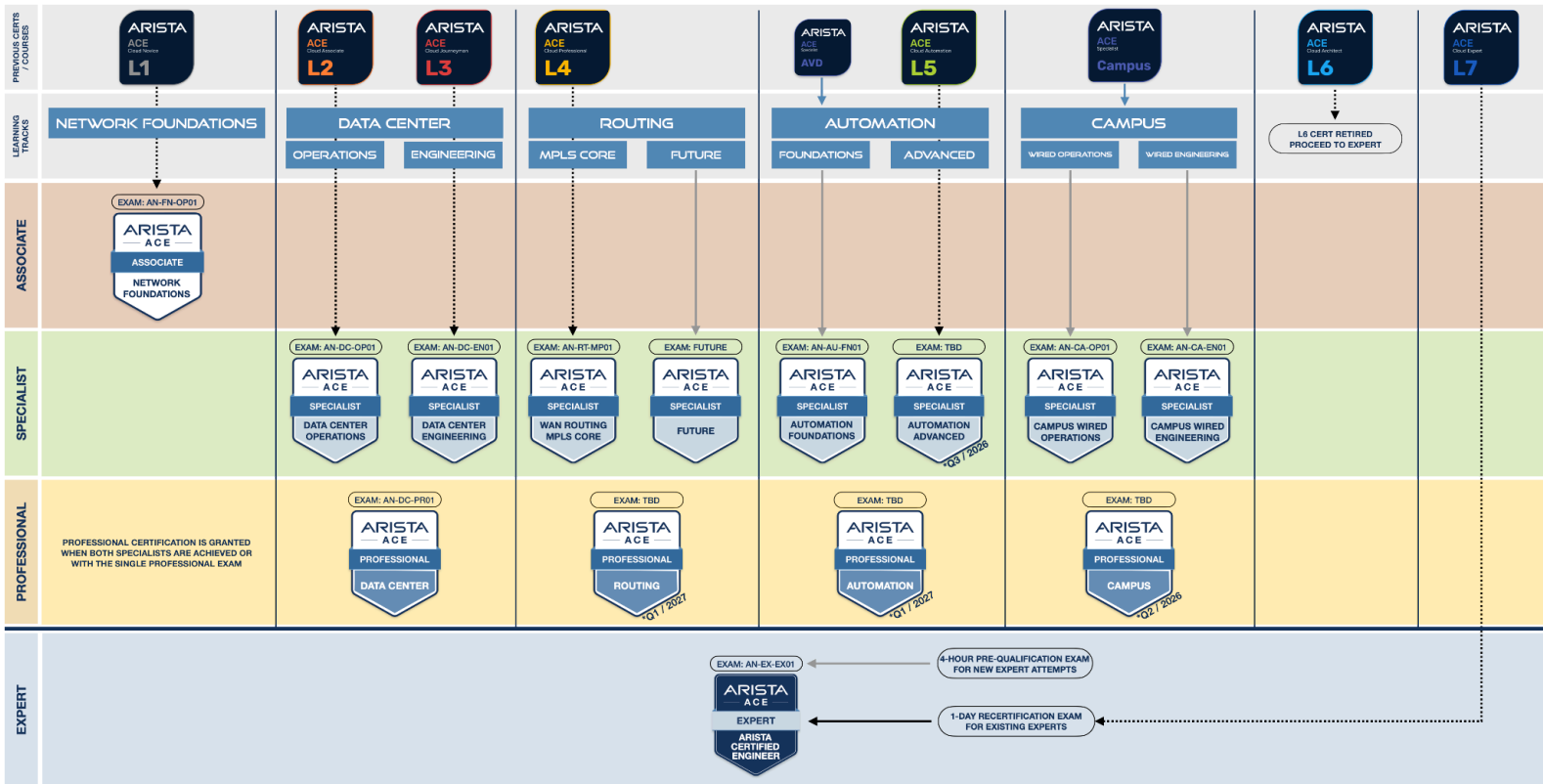
- The new exams cover similar material but are not direct replacements; previous success does not guarantee passing scores on the updated tracks.

- **Expert Certification Updates (L7):**

- The two-day Expert certification assessment now requires a mandatory four-hour Expert Pre-Qualification exam.
- A shorter, one-day Expert recertification exam for previous L7 holders is expected in Q2 2026.

Recertification Examples

- **John:** Passed his L3 exam on March 15, 2023. He must upgrade his credential by June 1, 2026 by taking the full Data Center Engineering Specialist exam. John will then recertify his DC Engineering Specialist thereafter according to the Academy Track Recertification Cycle. Conversely, John could take the Data Center Professional exam prior to June 1, 2026 which would supersede the legacy L3 certification and satisfy the recertification requirement.
- **Monica:** Monica passed her legacy L2 exam on September 15, 2024, and her Data Center Engineering Specialist exam on March 10, 2026. Typically, she **would need** to upgrade her L2 to the full Data Center Operations Specialist exam by September 15, 2026, and recertify her DC Engineering Specialist using the shorter recertification exam by March 10, 2028. **However, if she completes her L2 upgrade while the DC Engineering credential is still active, she will achieve both Specialist certifications for Data Center, automatically earning the DC Professional certification.** She will then recertify **only** on the DC Professional according to the Academy Track Recertification Cycle.
- **Michael:** Passed his L2 exam on March 10, 2023 and his L5 exam on August 12, 2024. He must upgrade his L2 credential by taking the full Data Center Operations Specialist exam by June 1, 2026. He must also upgrade his L5 with the full Automation Advanced Specialist exam by February 1, 2027. Michael can then recertify for each credential thereafter according to the Academy Track Recertification Cycle.



*APPROXIMATE FUTURE RELEASE DATE OF EXAM CORRESPONDING TO THE CERTIFICATION (OTHERWISE EXAM IS CURRENTLY AVAILABLE)

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