CKA: Certified Kubernetes Administrator

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My goal is to get all three Kubernetes Certifications from The Linux Foundation (CKA, CKAD, CKS), today I started this journey by passing the first Exam (CKA) and becoming a **CKA: Certified Kubernetes Administrator**.

It's the first performance-based exam since almost two years and I have to admit, I missed it! For whatever reason, it became standard in the industry to go with question-based exams instead. I understand that those are easier to deliver and might even attract more people, but in my opinion, demonstrating real Hands-On experience during an Exam is way more valuable and requires a lot of practice.

Don't get me wrong, every Exam has it's values, there is not a single one I took were I not learned something new during preparation. But at least for me, I gained the deepest level of understanding and the most real world experience from practical exams.

I did a lot with Kubernetes before and of course knew already much about it, but preparing for the CKA Exam gave me a massive boost in my `kubectl` skills and pushed my knowledge about all the different components and how to interact with objects to a new level. Personally, I never felt that comfortable with Kubernetes before and can recommend the CKA to everyone who works with Kubernetes.

A lot of people complain about the Exam provider PSI and the exam environment, especially the PSI secure browser, it's poor performance and a bad experience with the proctors. For me things went actually very well, I used the MacBook Pro M1 with an external 27" Monitor, external Webcam (Logitech C925e), wired Keyboard and Mouse. As per policy, the MacBook was closed during the Exam, before I launched the PSI secure browser I connected all external devices and closed the lid. Monitor and Webcam were recognized as expected, scan of my ID was no problem with the Logitech Webcam. I have another Monitor on my desk, which I unplugged and turned around. I removed anything else (e.g. smartphone charger, pens, paper). The proctor was fine with the external monitor that way, I showed my whole desk, in more detail the region below keyboard, mouse and macbook. I have some stickers on my macbook and had to zoom in to show that there are no notes or something. Then the rest of my room, the walls, ceiling, below my desk and so on. All this went fine, no complains from the proctor, I just followed the instructions and was ready to take the exam after around 15 minutes, which is a good time and comparable to PearsonVUE and Questionmark. Also the actual exam environment, remote desktop delivered through the PSI secure browser, was working without much issues. I had a few times a brief "lag" and the sticky key problem - you press a key once and it gets repeated multiple times, hitting *k* becomes *kkkkkkkkkk* for example - but most of the time I could use the environment just the same way as I would run the commands on my local machine.

So my recommendations in regards to PSI: Ensure the computer you use has a supported operating system and enough cpu/ram resources. Keep your desk clean as good as possible but don't worry too much about if there are still some cables or a second monitor, just ensure that the proctor can clearly see that it's impossible for you to use. Follow the instructions of the Proctor, arguing will not help even if they might ask "stupid questions", just answer, explain what something is or what it's used for and show it in the camera, everything will be fine. Check your internet connectivity, in my case it's a 400mbit up/down fibre connection which did great, just ensure you have some bandwidth and that not the rest of the household is streaming Netflix in 4k in parallel ;). Last but not least, focus on your monitor and don't look around too much, that's

something the PSI system will otherwise recognized and trigger the proctor, worst case they close your Exam.

Summary: Earners of this designation demonstrated the skills, knowledge and competencies to perform the responsibilities of a Kubernetes Administrator. Earners demonstrated proficiency in Application Lifecycle Management, Installation, Configuration & Validation, Core Concepts, Networking, Scheduling, Security, Cluster Maintenance, Logging / Monitoring, Storage, and Troubleshooting

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Skills

- API objects

- Cloud

- Custom Resource Definitions

- Helm

- Ingress

- Kubernetes

- Logging and Troubleshooting

- Open Source Software

- Orchestration

- Scheduling

- Security Policies

- Services

- Site Reliability Engineer

- System Administrator

- Volumes

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Certificate

- Downloads

    - Certificate - The Linux Foundation (ID LF-0v1fpn4ify) (PDF, 704K)

    - Certificate - Credly (PDF, 128K)

    - Badge (PNG, 110K)
- Links

    - Credly Badge (Archive: [1], [2])

    - Certificate verification (The Linux Foundation)