

THE CERTIFIED OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE READINESS INDEX (OPERI) ASSESSOR PROGRAMME FACT SHEET

1. Operational Excellence Readiness Index

- 1.1. What do most of these Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (“MSMEs”) have in common? Most of their challenges can be traced back to the lack of prioritising [operational excellence](#), yet operational improvements and a continuous improvement culture are mechanisms to guarantee business survival and ongoing growth.
- 1.2. Meet INCIT’s revolutionary, Operational Excellence Readiness Index (“OPERI”), consisting of an “all-rounded” self-assessment that MSMEs can leverage to increase productivity, fast-track digitalisation, and accelerate growth. OPERI offers three key features to unlock visibility over improvement areas through a guided self-assessment, a star emblem system used to benchmark against industry peers, and reporting with in-depth analysis to highlight areas of improvement. With the OPERI-guided self-assessment, manufacturing MSME owners will gain instant insights and actionable feedback to drive business growth.
- 1.3. Now, micro and smaller manufacturers can create real change in their organisation from the ground up to champion operational excellence and bridge the productivity gap while addressing these top common MSME challenges: unstable financial performance, high material costs, supply chain disruptions, human resource challenges, and technical adaptation and digital literacy.

2. The Certified OPERI Assessor Programme

- 2.1. The Certified OPERI Assessor (“COA”) Programme is to recognize independent and neutral individuals who can professionally support MSMEs owners to use OPERI and its accompanying frameworks and tools.
- 2.2. The COA Programme consists of an online course and certification scheme. For existing Certified SIRI Assessors (“CSAs”) and Certified COSIRI Assessors (“CCAs”), one will go through a “fast track” certification process that includes the online training course and an online Multiple-Choice Questions (“MCQs”) examination. For new candidates (i.e. those who are neither CSAs nor CCAs), one will need to first fulfil the pre-requisites, followed by the online training course, an online MCQ examination and a practical assessment.

2.3. Training Course

The COA Programme is suitable for consultants, CSAs and CCAs who are assisting MSMEs in increasing efficiency, starting digitalisation, and/or accelerating growth.

OPERI works by enhancing operational efficiency through Lean principles, technology, and Key Performance Indicators (“KPIs”). It also supports digitalisation by implementing the right tools and effective data management, and drives growth by strengthening business fundamentals and leveraging key levers.

After receiving training, candidates will be able to explain the rationale behind OPERI, interpret assessment results, and develop transformation roadmaps in collaboration with MSME owners. OPERI data can be utilised to draw new insights into MSMEs and their pain points, as well as provide real-world case studies on how businesses can leverage OPERI to achieve operational excellence.

However, OPERI is not a one-size-fits-all solution. It requires adaptation based on specific business contexts and must be tailored accordingly.

2.4. Certification Scheme

The certification scheme aims to safeguard the integrity and consistency of OPERI assessments conducted, by ensuring the quality and proficiency of the COAs. In addition to having attended COA Training Course, candidates will have to meet pre-requisites, such as having relevant manufacturing and consulting work experience, to be eligible to sit for the examination, which includes both theory (MCQs) and a practical assessment.

3. Certification Pre-requisites and Examination Requirements

	CSA and CCA	New Candidates
Certification Pre-requisites		
Academic Qualifications	Not Applicable	Diploma or Degree in a STEM ¹ field
Professional Experience		At least 5 years of job experience in the manufacturing sector

¹ A STEM diploma or degree represents specialised education in Science, Technology, Engineering, or Mathematics, fostering a deep understanding of technical principles and practical applications. Both pathways emphasise critical thinking and problem-solving skills within these crucial fields.

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		OR
		At least 3 years of job experience related to advisory work and activities
Knowledge <i>*If any two of the Expertise areas are at the Basic level, it is recommended not to proceed with the examination at this stage</i>		Domain Expertise: Basic / Intermediate / Advanced
		Lean Expertise: Basic / Intermediate / Advanced
		Change Management & Consulting Expertise: Basic / Intermediate / Advanced
Coursework Requirements	Complete online OPERI training	
Examination Requirements		
Theory Component: MCQs	Pass required	
Practical Component: Case Study	Not required to undergo	Pass required

4. Certified OPERI Assessor Examination

4.1. The Certified OPERI Assessor Examination is made up of two modes of assessment to qualify as a COA.

- i. A theory examination consisting of MCQs.
- ii. A practical examination in the form of a case interview. The applicant will be expected to conduct a mock OPERI debrief in the presence of the examiner(s).

4.2. Please refer to Annex B for more information on the COA Examination.

5. Award of Certificate

The certification scheme aims to safeguard the integrity and consistency of Official OPERI Assessment Support Sessions conducted, by ensuring the quality and proficiency of the COAs. In addition to having attended the COA Training Course, candidates will have to meet pre-requisites, such as having relevant manufacturing and consulting work experience, to be eligible to sit for the examination, which includes both theory (MCQs) and a practical assessment.

5.1. Applicants that pass the COA Examination will be awarded the COA certificate.

5.2. The COA designation is valid for a 5-year term, subject to the renewal requirement, which is as follows:

Number of Official OPERI Assessment Support Sessions Conducted per 5-year Term	Renewal Requirement
CSA and CCA	
5 and above	Auto-renewal
0 – 4 (if CSA or CCA status is still valid/active at the expiry/renewal date for COA)	Theory test only
0 – 4 (if CSA or CCA status is no longer valid/active at the expiry/renewal date for COA)	Follow New Candidates renewal requirements
New Candidates	
5 and above	Auto-renewal
3 – 4	Practical test only
0 – 2	Theory and practical tests

5.3. All COAs will have to confirm their acceptance of the award by formally registering themselves via the OPERI Portal. Upon completing their registration, they will be issued an account to allow them to commence the provision of Official OPERI Assessment Support Sessions. Charges for these Official OPERI Assessment Support Sessions are borne by the client directly, with the price being set by the COA themselves at their discretion; INCIT does not interfere and is not liable to these arrangements.

THE CERTIFIED OPERI ASSESSOR PROGRAMME SYLLABUS 2025

1. Syllabus Objectives

The COA Programme is suitable for consultants, CSAs and CCAs who are assisting MSMEs in increasing efficiency, starting digitalisation, and/or accelerating growth.

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After receiving training, candidates will be able to explain the rationale behind OPERI, interpret assessment results, and develop transformation roadmaps in collaboration with MSME owners. OPERI data can be utilised to draw new insights into MSMEs and their pain points, as well as provide real-world case studies on how businesses can leverage OPERI to achieve operational excellence.

However, OPERI is not a one-size-fits-all solution. It requires adaptation based on specific business contexts and must be tailored accordingly.

2. Syllabus Content

#	Chapter Title	Learning Outcomes	Online Training Duration
1	Objectives and Purposes	1. Be aware of the key objectives and purposes of the COA Programme	5 mins
2	Introduction to Operational Excellence	1. Recognise that productivity and efficiency practices are keys to ensure MSMEs’ survivability and growth 2. Know the top 5 challenges faced by MSMEs 3. Understand that MSMEs that have adopted productivity and efficiency practices have benefited 4. Recognise that using Lean methodologies and performance metrics can lead to operational excellence 5. Know that digital literacy is the key for MSMEs to achieve Manufacturing X.0	30 mins

		6. Know the pathways for growth and the importance of eco-efficiency practices 7. Be able to articulate the benefits of OPERI to MSMEs, governments and trade associations	
3	OPERI Framework	1. Know the core design features and rationale behind the development of OPERI – 3 building blocks, 6 pillars and 18 dimensions 2. Understand the definition of each building block and pillar 3. Know how to adopt the LEAD Framework in MSMEs' approaches towards achieving operational excellence 4. Know about the TIER Framework and that the Assessment Matrix falls under "T" of the TIER Framework	15 mins
4	User Journey	1. Know the pre-assessment instructions and requirements 2. Understand the overview of the OPERI user journey 3. Know the assessment outcomes of OPERI, including the reports, Star Emblem and Transformation Schedule	20 mins
5	Assessment Matrix	1. Understand and be able to describe the 3 layers of OPERI: 3 building blocks, 6 pillars and 18 dimensions 2. Explain in depth the Assessment Matrix, which serves as a diagnostic tool that consists of 6 bands under each of the 18 OPERI dimensions 3. Describe the assessment criteria for each of the 6 bands for each of the 18 OPERI dimensions	1 hour 45 mins
6	Prioritisation Matrix	1. Describe the 4 key principles of prioritisation, collectively known as the TIER Framework 2. Explain the rationale for the development of the Prioritisation Matrix 3. Based on the TIER Framework, explain the inputs required from users for "I",	30 mins

		"E" and "R", including Performance Metrics and their calculation	
7	Transformation Schedule	1. Be able to fill in the Transformation Schedule 2. Be able to fill in the Reassessment Template	10 mins
8	Case Example	1. Understand the application and outcome of the OPERI toolkit across the Assessment Matrix and the Prioritisation Matrix	5 mins
Total Time for Online Training			3 hours 40 mins
Recommended Time for Self-study			2 hours
Overall Time for Online Training and Self-study (rounded up)			6 hours

THE CERTIFIED OPERI ASSESSOR EXAMINATION

1. Theory Component: MCQs

1.1. Competency Areas

The COA Examination (Theory) seeks to assess a candidate's level of proficiency in the following competency area(s):

Competency Area	Description
Possessing knowledge and understanding of: - Key terms, concepts and frameworks relating to OPERI - Roles and responsibilities of a COA	Ability to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of all the modules and topics outlined in the COA Programme Syllabus (<i>please refer to Annex A</i>)

1.2. Examination Format

The COA Examination (Theory) adheres to the following format:

Mode of Examination	The Theory Examination may be conducted: - in-person with a group of candidates under invigilation; or - remotely via an online platform with online proctoring. This is a closed-book examination. Candidates are not allowed to refer to any supplementary materials beyond what is provided in the Theory Examination Paper.
Assessment Format	50 Multiple-Choice Question (MCQs). All questions will have 4 options.
Total Duration	1 hour 30 mins
Grading	Each question is worth 1 point. 1 point will be awarded per correct answer, while 0 point will be awarded for an incorrect answer. The total is 50 points.
Weightage	The Theory Examination grade contributes to 50% of the overall grade for the COA Examination.

	[For existing CSAs and CCAs under the “Fast Track”] The Theory Examination grade contributes to 100% of the overall grade for the COA Examination.
Passing Grade	Minimum 70% questions correctly answered for the Theory Examination

2. Practical Component: Case Study

2.1. Competency Areas

The objective of this assessment is to ensure that as a COA, you can effectively support MSMEs in achieving meaningful progress through the OPERI toolkit.

This assessment stimulates a real-world, assessor-led case study, guiding companies through the OPERI toolkit. This includes working with the self-assessment matrix, prioritisation matrix, final user report, and transformation schedule.

2.1.1. From pilot testing, some common challenges MSMEs face include:

- i. Band ratings: MSMEs might find it challenging to distinguish between what was implemented in the company versus their future plans, and hence would tend towards a higher band. COAs are required to explain to MSMEs why they were placed in each particular band for each dimension, with clear reasoning and proof points. This is important to ensure the prioritisation output is useful for them.
- ii. Prioritisation of key KPIs in “E” Essential Focus Areas: Many MSMEs might find it challenging to select only 1 KPI in each quadrant. COAs will need to help guide or advice the prioritisation based on the company’s objectives and context.
- iii. Filling in the activities in the Transformation Schedule: Some MSMEs might find it difficult to define the problem statement as well as to detail out short-term activities and their costs.

2.1.2. As a candidate in the COA Programme, you will be graded based on your ability to:

- i. Explain the results of the Assessment Matrix with proof points and explain why the company is not rated in the next band.
- ii. Demonstrate a strong understanding and effectively explain the implications of “I” Impact to Bottom Line and “E” Essential KPIs.

- iii. Complete the Transformation Schedule with clarity, comprehensiveness and relevance to the company's objectives and the four prioritised dimensions.

2.2. Examination Format

The COA Examination (Theory) adheres to the following format:

Mode of Examination	The Practical Examination may be conducted: • in-person; or • remotely via video conferencing. This is an open-book examination.
Assessment Format	The Practical Examination is in the form of a case interview, comprising of reading the case notes and conducting a debrief to the examiner, who will be role-playing as a MSME business owner.
Total Duration	1 hour 30 mins
Grading	Candidates will be graded against an evaluation framework. The total is 100 points.
Weightage	The Practical Examination grade contributes to 50% of the overall grade for the COA Examination. [For existing CSAs and CCAs under the "Fast Track"] The Practical Examination is not required as only the Theory Examination constitutes 100% of the overall grade, and this section is not applicable.
Passing Grade	Minimum 70% marks obtained from the Practical Examination [existing CSAs and CCAs under the "Fast Track" are exempt from this]

1.1. Structure of Case Interview

Segment	Description	Duration
Overview of Case Interview	The examiner will provide an overview of the case interview format to the candidate.	3 mins
Instructions and Case Materials	The examiner will state the expectations and provide the candidate with the following materials: a. case study b. final report c. Transformation Schedule template	2 mins

Review of Case	The candidate will have 40 mins to review the materials and prepare their walk-through of the Official OPERI Assessment Support Session. The candidate is free to ask the examiner any clarifying questions during this period.	40 mins
Case Interview Commences		
Band Rating explanation	Candidates need to explain the results of the Assessment Matrix with proof points and explain why the company is not rated in the next higher band.	15 mins
KPI Explanation	Candidates need to demonstrate a strong understanding and effectively explain the implications of "I" Impact to Bottom Line and "E" Essential KPIs.	15 mins
Transformation Schedule Explanation	Candidates need to complete the Transformation Schedule with clarity, comprehensiveness and relevance to the company's objectives and the four prioritised dimensions.	15 mins
Case Interview Ends		