thrivePCI

COURSE 05

Assessment Preparation

A clearer handover into the engagement

Release 0.1.3+20 261 118T215 034Z | Draft for review

Learning objectives



01

Distinguish preparation from assessment validation

02

Describe an actionable gap

03

Prepare a handover with visible dependencies

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Preparation and validation



01

Preparation develops accurate inputs and resolves gaps

02

Assessment evaluates the presented information

03

Engagement scope defines the contracted services

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A preparation responsibility map

Questions need the right responsible party
An agreed handover reduces avoidable reconstruction

Question	Preparation route
How does our environment operate?	Entity’s business and technical owners
How do we organize or remediate a gap?	Entity and engaged readiness partner
What does the provider perform?	Provider and entity vendor owner
Which reporting instructions apply?	Relevant compliance-accepting organization

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An actionable preparation gap



01

Describe the missing or inconsistent support

02

Identify the effect on the planned submission

03

Assign investigation and a review point

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A working gap register

Internal states describe work in progress
They do not replace formal assessment responses

Field	Meaning in preparation
Gap statement	Specific missing or inconsistent support
Owner and output	Who investigates and what they return
Internal work state	Progress of the preparation activity
Dependency and review point	What must happen before the next decision

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Scope and reporting questions



01

The entity has a scoping confirmation duty

02

Reporting requirements come from the applicable program

03

Preparation must preserve unresolved decisions

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A useful assessment handover

Current environment and service descriptions
Evidence index and responsible contacts
Open gaps and documented decisions

Handover component	What it helps the reviewer understand
Current environment records	What arrangement is being presented
Evidence index and versions	Where the relevant support can be found
Responsible contacts	Who can explain the activities
Open gap and decision register	What remains unresolved and who owns it

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Practice scenario

01

The assessment is scheduled

02

The scope record predates a service change

03

A provider question and two evidence gaps remain open

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Scenario debrief

The calendar does not resolve missing support
The handover needs an honest account of the gaps

Open matter	Next preparation action
Service change and scope record	Entity owner reviews and confirms the current position
Provider responsibility question	Vendor owner obtains relevant clarification
Missing supporting material	Activity owners investigate authentic evidence
Engagement dependency	Program lead communicates the factual status

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Knowledge check

Which statement best describes a handover?

A. It guarantees the assessment will pass

B. It replaces the report template

C. It organizes current facts, evidence and unresolved items

D. It grants a required remediation round

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Answer and explanation

01

C is the supported answer

02

The report, testing and engagement requirements remain separate

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Your assessment preparation brief

01

Describe the current factual state

02

Link available evidence and accountable contacts

03

Separate open gaps from documented decisions

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Sources and course boundary

PCI DSS v4.0.1: sections 4, 9, 10 and 11

Requirements 12.5.2, 12.5.2.1 and 12.8.5

Practitioner gap and handover formats

Educational guidance. No compliance guarantee.

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Current standard and assessment timing

The phase-in has elapsed

Requirements and specified bullets previously phased in on March 31, 2025 are effective. Apply their entity, technology and other applicability conditions.

Use the current successors

6.4.1 6.4.2 | 8.3.10 8.3.10.1 | 10.7.1 10.7.2. The superseded requirements are N/A for current reporting; retain them only for historical context.

Keep timing and evidence distinct

An effective date does not create a recurring control interval or an evidence freshness limit. Use the applicable requirement and testing procedures to establish those obligations.

Source: PCI DSS v4.0.1; PCI SSC FAQs 1593 and 1176. Source checked November 21, 2026.

PCI DSS v4.0.1 / corpus 1.1.0+20261121T170000Z