



# AUSTHINK

CONSULTING

## Certification in Argument Mapping

### What is Austhink certification?

Austhink certification is official recognition from Austhink that you have a given level of argument mapping expertise. The value of certification lies in having independent recognition, from acknowledged leaders in the field, that you have expertise at that level.

### How is certification obtained?

To obtain certification you must take and pass a test provided by Austhink.

### What levels of certification are there?

Austhink offers three levels of certification:

Bronze	Competence in basic argument mapping. Ability to create simple maps, and to map the arguments found in short, pre-digested texts.
Silver	Competence in the full range of standard argument mapping concepts and techniques, including articulation of co-premises.
Gold	Mastery of standard argument mapping concepts and techniques. Mastery includes ability to debate the merits of different ways of meeting particular argument mapping challenges.

The levels are cumulative; each builds on the one before.

### What does certification cost?

A fee of \$500 is paid in order to sit a certification test. The fee covers test provision, assessment, feedback, and other administrative expenses. If you pass the test, you will receive an Austhink certificate. If you do not pass you will receive feedback indicating where improvement is needed.

### How do I know what is on the test?

Austhink Consulting provides a syllabus and a sample test with model answers.

### How do I prepare for the test?

There are a number of ways you can prepare for a certification test, including

1. Self-directed study using publicly-available materials
2. “Apprenticeship” style learning with guidance from others in your organisation
3. Attend training workshops provided by Austhink Consulting or other organisations.

4. Participate in distance (internet-based) training provided by Austhink Consulting.

### **How do I take a certification test?**

Generally certification tests are arranged through a sponsoring organisation. For example, a government agency may arrange for a group of analysts to take a test, and would ensure appropriate supervision.

### **Does certification expire? How long does it last?**

Technically, Austhink certification is valid *at the time of the test*. Austhink naturally cannot guarantee that you will maintain your expertise indefinitely into the future. Also, the discipline of argument mapping changes over time, and so your expertise may become outdated. Thus, although there is no “expiry date” on certification, its value will diminish over time and you may want to be re-certified.

### **Do I need the Austhink software (Rationale or bCisive)?**

Argument mapping is a general technique, and is quite independent of any particular software package. However, using a suitable software package will help you learn the techniques. Further, the Austhink software packages, particularly Rationale, closely reflect argument mapping as tested in the Austhink certification. Thus it would be very sensible to use the Rationale software when preparing for certification tests.

### **What about certification to be trainer?**

Asthink argument mapping certification, at Bronze, Silver and Gold levels, is concerned only with your own expertise in argument mapping. It is not certification as a trainer of argument mapping. Training others in a skill requires more than just having the skills yourself. Austhink separately may be providing certification in argument mapping training.

Although mapping and training are different, obviously the higher your mapping expertise, the better equipped you are to train. As a rule of thumb, to train at a given level you should have at least the next higher level of expertise. Thus, to train people at Bronze level, you should have at least Silver level expertise.

### **Why get certification from Austhink Consulting?**

Asthink Consulting are widely recognised to be pioneers, and have the highest level of expertise in, argument mapping. Austhink Consulting introduced argument mapping into the intelligence community, particularly in Australia and the US, and have trained people from other organisations to conduct training. Austhink Consulting established Austhink Software which has developed leading argument mapping software tools, Rationale and bCisive.