Best agile certifications in 2026: Scrum, PMI-ACP, SAFe and more

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Short answer: for a Scrum Master role, the two best-known options are Scrum Alliance's Certified ScrumMaster (CSM) and Scrum.org's Professional Scrum Master (PSM). For agile practitioners with experience, PMI-ACP covers several agile approaches. In large enterprises using the Scaled Agile Framework, SAFe certifications are often requested. ICAgile offers a learning-path model. For engineers leading agile delivery in technical teams, IICTP's ADP tests agile delivery judgement alongside engineering practice.

TL;DR The short version

- Starting Scrum Masters usually choose Scrum Alliance's CSM or Scrum.org's PSM.
- PMI-ACP suits experienced agile practitioners, and SAFe certifications are often requested in enterprises that use the Scaled Agile Framework.
- Real skills such as Sprint planning with a true Sprint Goal and retrospectives that change something matter more than the badge.

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The main options

- **Certified ScrumMaster (Scrum Alliance):** based on a required course with a certified trainer, followed by an exam.
- **Professional Scrum Master (Scrum.org):** an assessment you can take without a course, with higher levels for experienced practitioners.
- **PMI-ACP (PMI):** for practitioners with agile experience, covering several approaches beyond Scrum.
- **SAFe (Scaled Agile):** role-based certifications for organisations using the Scaled Agile Framework.
- **ICAgile:** learning-path certifications focused on courses and competencies.
- **Product Owner certifications:** offered by Scrum Alliance and Scrum.org for that role.

Which suits you

- Starting as a Scrum Master: CSM or PSM. See how to become a Scrum Master.
- Your company uses SAFe: the matching SAFe role certification.
- Experienced agile practitioner who works beyond Scrum: PMI-ACP.
- Engineer or tech lead running agile delivery: IICTP ADP, which needs 24 months of experience.

Agile skills that matter more than the badge

- Sprint planning with a real Sprint Goal.
- Retrospectives that change something.
- Honest use of velocity and burndown.
- Knowing when Kanban fits better than Scrum.

Before you book

Certification bodies rename, update and retire exams often. Check each issuer's own page for current versions, prerequisites and fees before you book.

> Related credential: Agile Delivery Practitioner. Explore the exam facts and syllabus.

Sources and further reading

1. Scrum Alliance. scrumalliance.org.
2. Scrum.org. scrum.org.
3. Project Management Institute. Certifications. pmi.org/certifications. Read 20 October 2026. PMI®, PMP®, CAPM® and PMI-ACP® are marks of Project Management Institute, Inc.; IICTP is not affiliated with PMI.
4. Scaled Agile. scaledagile.com.
5. ICAgile. icagile.com.
6. IICTP. Exam facts, eligibility and blueprints. iictp.org/certifications/exam-facts.

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