How the Programme Works — Structure, Assessment & Certificates

AiCE Software Engineering Foundations — Unit 1: Orientation

Now that you understand what this course is building, this lesson explains how the journey is organised day to day: how units and progress work, how assessment is structured, what deadlines mean for your score, and what you receive when you graduate.

1. The Journey

The programme is organised into units. Each unit represents a stage in your development and may contain lessons, reading, demonstrations, discussions, quizzes, practical assessments, GitHub work, community activities, or a combination of these. Progress is cumulative: what you learn early will be used later.

Do not treat a unit as something to rush through simply to unlock the next one. The goal is competence. When you meet a command, concept, programming pattern, database query, historical idea, or engineering practice that you do not understand, return to it. Repetition is part of learning.

Your Learning Rhythm

- Study the lesson and supporting materials carefully.
- Practise the technical concepts yourself instead of only watching or reading them.
- Complete the quiz before attempting the practical assessment for that unit.
- Complete practical work independently and keep your GitHub work organised.
- Use the AiCE Community page to publish required work, participate through posts and comments, and learn with other students.
- Submit every assessment before its deadline.

2. Assessment, Deadlines and Graduation

Assessment is part of the learning process, not an interruption to it. The course uses both quizzes and practical assessments because knowing an answer and being able to build something are different skills. Quizzes check understanding. Practical assessments test whether you can apply what you have learned.

ASSESSMENT ORDER

For each applicable unit, complete the quiz first. The practical assessment comes after the quiz. Follow the required sequence and the instructions provided for that unit.

Deadlines Are Part of the Training

Every unit has an assessment window. If you do not submit an assignment before the deadline for that unit passes, the assignment will close and you will not be able to complete it afterward. A missed assessment therefore affects your total course score. Plan your time before the deadline, not on the deadline.

This rule is intentionally serious. Professional software engineering involves deadlines, releases, team dependencies and commitments. The course therefore trains not only technical ability but also consistency, planning and responsibility.

The 60% Graduation Requirement

At the end of the programme, your scores across the course will determine whether you qualify for graduation. You must achieve at least 60% of the total available score to graduate and receive the course certificates. A final score below 60% means that the graduation requirement has not been met and the certificates will not be issued.

IMPORTANT

Do not build your strategy around "just reaching 60%." Build your strategy around understanding the material, completing every assessment and doing your best work. Strong learning usually produces strong scores as a consequence.

3. Your Two Certificates

Students who successfully satisfy the graduation requirement will receive two certificates, reflecting the two pillars of the programme:

- Software Engineering Foundations Certificate — recognising successful completion of the technical foundation in the programme.
- Africanism and Pan-African Studies Certificate — recognising successful completion of the African studies and Pan-African learning track.

The certificates are milestones, but they are not the final destination. The greater achievement is the knowledge, discipline, portfolio, engineering habits, historical understanding and problem-solving mindset that you carry beyond the programme.

Key Takeaways

The programme moves through cumulative units, each following the same rhythm: study, practise, quiz, then practical — always in that order. Deadlines are firm and directly affect your final score, and graduating requires at least 60% overall, earning you both the Software Engineering Foundations Certificate and the Africanism and Pan-African Studies Certificate. The next lesson covers the professional habits the course expects of you — how GitHub and the AiCE Community function as part of your classroom, the standard of discipline and independence required, and the commitment you'll be asked to make before moving into Unit 2.