

# Becoming an STLE Certified Lubrication Specialist (CLS)

**Why?**  
Most professions have a benchmark qualification that signifies a level of competency that makes customers happy to deal with them. For lubrication engineers, salespeople, technical managers – anyone involved in the broad area of Tribology – there are very few such qualifications, and little recognition in South Africa.

The SAIT has been running the Lubrication Engineering course for many years, which gives an excellent local qualification that is well respected. A certificate is only received after passing a tough examination, at the end of a busy 5-day course.

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However, there is a demand for an internationally recognised qualification, especially among the many South African companies that are trading globally, as well as global companies with bases in South Africa. With the rising cost of capital equipment and the maintenance thereof, it is essential that the person in charge of lubrication is competent.

## How?

The SAIT, through its association with the STLE (Society of Tribologists and Lubrication Engineers, based in the US), have been running the prestigious CLS exam in South Africa for the last six years. Needless to say, this is an internationally-recognised qualification, and requires a very high level of knowledge and experience in the field of lubrication engineering to obtain a pass. The pass mark is 70%, and the global pass rate is 50% - imagine how proud you would be if you obtained a pass!

There are currently seven very proud people at the SAIT who have passed this exam over the years, which is testament to the training and experience they have received.

## When?

The exam is run in South Africa annually, and this year it will be on the 20th November, at the SAIT offices in Kelvin, Johannesburg.

As this exam is US-based, all measurements are

Imperial (although metric equivalents are given, this just complicates any calculations needed). Although the exam deals with all industries, it must be noted that the exam grew out of the steel industry, so some knowledge of that area is important.

The question paper is unique for each candidate – the questions are randomly drawn from a large database – so fairness is assured. Over the years, the SAIT has created a similar database of old questions, which are invaluable in preparing for the exam.

## Preparation course

Due to the difficulty of preparing for this exam, the SAIT runs a preparation course for CLS candidates. It will be run for the two days before the exam (so that the information is still fresh on exam day), and will be facilitated by a current CLS holder.

The agenda will include: Imperial measurements, the Lubrication Engineers Manual (which is essential reading material, and is available from the SAIT), previous questions, exam techniques and various technical subjects. It will be a challenge to fit all of this into two days, so be prepared for hard work! Last year's inaugural course received a lot of positive feedback, and this year's course will follow similar lines.

## Who?

If you are involved in Lubrication Engineering or Tribology and would like to obtain a formal qualification, the CLS is for you. It is internationally recognised and the low pass rate adds extra value to a rare qualification. It is important to have attended and passed the SAIT 5-day Lubrication Engineering course as a prerequisite for this exam. A distinction would be a definite advantage. Candidates with a few years' experience in lubrication or tribology will stand a much better chance than recently appointed persons.

*If you are interested in this course and exam, please contact Gill or Isabel at the SAIT offices (011) 802-5145. Further information is also available from David Beard, 082-850-3205. STLE Website: [www.stle.org](http://www.stle.org), SAIT Website: [www.sait.org.za](http://www.sait.org.za)*

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