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aws solution architect certification questions

Published: September 19, 2026 | Index ID: #-

Mastering the AWS Solution Architect Certification: A Deep Dive into the Questions You'll Encounter

In today's cloud first world, the **AWS Certified Solutions Architect – Associate** exam has become a coveted credential for IT professionals looking to validate their design and deployment expertise on Amazon Web Services. Whether you're a seasoned system administrator, a budding cloud engineer, or a senior architect preparing to lead large scale projects, understanding the *AWS solution architect certification questions* is the key to turning your knowledge into a pass.

Unlike generic "multiple choice" tests, the AWS exam is a rigorous assessment of real world scenarios. You'll need to translate business requirements into scalable, secure, and cost efficient architectures. This article offers a comprehensive guide—complete with sample questions, strategic study tips, and best practice resources—to help you navigate the exam's intricacies and boost your confidence.

Why the AWS Solutions Architect Certification Matters

The AWS ecosystem is vast, spanning compute, storage, networking, security, and analytics services. The Solutions Architect exam evaluates your ability to:

- Design resilient, fault tolerant systems that meet performance and availability goals.
- Implement security controls that protect data and comply with regulatory standards.
- Optimize cost by selecting the right service types and sizing resources appropriately.
- Use AWS best practices and architectural patterns to solve complex business challenges.

Holding this certification not only signals expertise to employers but also unlocks advanced roles, higher salaries, and a broader career trajectory in cloud architecture.

Exam Overview: Format, Domains, and Difficulty

Below is a snapshot of what to expect on test day:

- Exam Code: SC0 200 (now replaced by SAA C01)
- Duration: 130 minutes
- Question Types: Multiple choice and multiple answer (select all that apply)
- Pass Score: 720 out of 1000 (70%)
- Domains & Weightings (per the latest exam guide):

1. Design Resilient Architectures (30%) – Focus on high availability, fault tolerance, and disaster recovery.
2. Define Performant Architectures (28%) – Emphasize performance optimization, caching, and load balancing.
3. Specify Secure Applications and Architectures (24%) – Cover identity, access, network security, and encryption.
4. Decompose Applications into Components (18%) – Address scalability, cost, and operational efficiency.

While the exam's structure remains consistent, the questions evolve to reflect AWS's rapid service expansion. That means you'll encounter scenarios involving new services like AWS Outposts, Lambda@Edge, or AWS App Mesh,

as well as updated pricing models.

Common Themes in AWS Solution Architect Certification Questions

Below are recurring themes that appear across multiple domains. Familiarizing yourself with these will help you anticipate the type of reasoning required.

1. Multi Region and Multi Availability Zone Deployments

Questions often ask you to design an architecture that spans several Availability Zones (AZs) or regions to achieve high availability and fault tolerance. You'll need to choose the correct services (e.g., Amazon RDS Multi AZ, Amazon S3 cross region replication) and understand the trade offs.

2. Cost Optimization and Right Sizing

Examers test your ability to balance performance with cost. Expect queries about choosing between On Demand, Reserved Instances, Spot Instances, and Savings Plans. You'll also be asked to select appropriate instance families based on workload characteristics.

3. Security and Compliance Controls

Security is a core domain. You'll need to map business security requirements to AWS services such as IAM, Cognito, KMS, and Security Hub. Questions may involve setting up VPC security groups, network ACLs, or configuring encryption at rest and in transit.

4. Scalability and Performance Optimization

Expect to evaluate caching strategies (e.g., Amazon ElastiCache, CloudFront), auto scaling policies, and database performance tuning (e.g., read replicas, provisioned throughput). The exam often presents scenarios where you must choose the most appropriate scaling mechanism.

5. Integration and Messaging Patterns

Designing event driven architectures using Amazon SQS, SNS, Kinesis, and EventBridge is a frequent topic. You'll need to decide when to use a message queue versus a streaming service, and how to handle retries, dead letter queues, and message ordering.

6. Migration and Hybrid Architectures

Many questions revolve around migrating on premises workloads to AWS or building hybrid solutions using AWS Direct Connect, VPN, or AWS Outposts. Understanding the nuances of data transfer, latency, and security in hybrid environments is essential.

Sample AWS Solution Architect Certification Questions

Below are realistic, scenario based questions that illustrate the depth and breadth of knowledge the exam requires. For each, we'll provide the correct answer and a brief explanation.

Question 1 – Multi AZ Deployment for High Availability

Scenario:A company runs a web application behind an Application Load Balancer (ALB). The application uses an Amazon RDS MySQL database. The business requires 99.99% uptime. Which combination of services and configurations will best meet the availability requirement?

- A) Deploy RDS in a single AZ with automatic backups and enable Multi AZ replication.
- B) Deploy RDS in two AZs and use read replicas.

- C) Deploy RDS in a single AZ and use Aurora Global Database.
- D) Deploy RDS across three AZs using a cross region read replica.

Answer: A

Explanation: Multi AZ replication for Amazon RDS provides synchronous standby copies in a second AZ, ensuring high availability and automatic failover with minimal downtime. Deploying read replicas across AZs (option B) improves read scalability but does not provide failover for the primary instance. Aurora Global Database (option C) is designed for multi region replication, not for single region high availability. Option D adds complexity without providing the required 99.99% uptime for the primary database.

Question 2 – Cost Effective Compute for Variable Load

Scenario:A startup's backend service experiences highly variable traffic. During peak hours, the service requires 8 vCPUs, but during off peak it only needs 1 vCPU. The team wants to minimize costs while ensuring performance.

- A) Use On Demand instances for all hours.
- B) Use Reserved Instances for 8 vCPUs.
- C) Use Spot Instances with a maximum price of $0.10 per hour.
- D) Use On Demand instances during peak hours and Spot Instances during off peak.

Answer: D

Explanation: Spot Instances are ideal for workloads that can tolerate interruptions, which is not the case during peak hours. Using On Demand instances during peak ensures reliability, while Spot Instances during off peak significantly reduce costs. Reserved Instances (option B) provide a lower price but lock you into a capacity that is often over provisioned for variable workloads.

Question 3 – Securing Data In Transit and At Rest

Scenario: An application stores sensitive customer data in an Amazon S3 bucket. The data must be encrypted both in transit and at rest. Which combination of services and features satisfies the security requirement?

- A) Enable S3 default encryption with SSE S3 and use HTTPS for all API calls.
- B) Enable SSE KMS and enforce bucket policies to deny non SSL requests.
- C) Use IAM policies to restrict bucket access and rely on TLS 1.2 for data transfer.
- D) Use SSE C for encryption and ensure all clients use HTTPS.

Answer: B

Explanation:SSE KMS provides server side encryption with AWS Key Management Service, giving you control over the encryption keys. Enforcing a bucket policy that denies non SSL requests ensures data is always transmitted over HTTPS. Option A relies on SSE S3, which uses AWS managed keys and offers no granular control. Option C only restricts access but does not enforce encryption at rest. Option D uses client side encryption (SSE C) but still requires additional client side handling.

Question 4 – Selecting the Right Caching Layer

Scenario:A SaaS product serves a global user base with a highly read heavy workload. The backend database is Amazon DynamoDB. The company needs to reduce read latency and database cost.

- A) Deploy Amazon ElastiCache for Redis in each region.
- B) Enable DynamoDB Accelerator (DAX) in a single region.
- C) Use Amazon CloudFront with Lambda@Edge to cache responses.

- D) Store frequently accessed data in an Amazon S3 Glacier Deep Archive.

Answer: B

Explanation: DynamoDB Accelerator (DAX) is a fully managed, in memory cache for DynamoDB that reduces read latency and offloads read traffic from the database. While ElastiCache (option A) is suitable for relational or key value stores, it requires additional data modeling and does not integrate directly with DynamoDB. CloudFront (option C) is a CDN for static content, not for dynamic database reads. S3 Glacier (option D) is an archival storage solution and does not provide low latency.

Question 5 – Building a Serverless API

Scenario:A developer wants to build a RESTful API that scales automatically and requires minimal operational overhead. The API will trigger Lambda functions and store data in Amazon DynamoDB.

- A) Use Amazon API Gateway with Lambda integration and enable DynamoDB Streams.
- B) Deploy a containerized application on Amazon ECS and expose it via ALB.
- C) Use Amazon App Runner with a custom runtime and connect to RDS.
- D) Configure an ALB to forward requests to EC2 instances running Node.js.

Answer: A

Explanation: Amazon API Gateway provides a fully managed, scalable interface for RESTful APIs, automatically handling request routing to Lambda functions. DynamoDB Streams (option A) can be used for event-driven processing but is not required for the basic API. Options B, C, and D involve managing servers or containers, which increases operational overhead.

Strategic Study Tips for Mastering Exam Questions

Passing the AWS Solutions Architect exam is less about memorizing facts and more about applying knowledge to realistic scenarios. Below are proven strategies to help you internalize the concepts and tackle the questions with confidence.

1. Build a Lab Environment

Hands on experience is invaluable. Create a free tier or low cost lab that mirrors the exam domains: VPC design, IAM policies, auto scaling, and serverless services. By experimenting with real services, you'll remember best practices and common pitfalls.

2. Use the AWS Well Architected Framework

The Well Architected Framework offers five pillars—Operational Excellence, Security, Reliability, Performance Efficiency, and Cost Optimization. Study each pillar and map exam domains to them. This will help you recognize the best approach to a scenario quickly.

3. Practice with Scenario Based Questions

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