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PUBLICATION

# EXAM-TM40J-PRE



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## PRE-TEST — SL 4J: PROGRAM MANAGER (TECHNICAL)

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*Maven Smart System (MSS) — USAREUR-AF*

HEADQUARTERS  
UNITED STATES ARMY EUROPE AND AFRICA  
(USAREUR-AF)  
Wiesbaden, Germany

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**26 MARCH 2026**

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## PRE-TEST — SL 4J: PROGRAM MANAGER (TECHNICAL)

### MAVEN SMART SYSTEM (MSS) — USAREUR-AF

Field	Detail
Course	SL 4J: Program Manager (Technical)
Form	Pre-Test
Level	SL 4J (Specialist)
Audience	Technical PMs, product owners, team leads; prerequisite: SL 1 + SL 2 + SL 3 (REQUIRED)
Time Allowed	30 minutes
Passing Score	N/A — diagnostic only

### INSTRUCTIONS

This diagnostic assessment establishes your baseline knowledge before training. Your score does not affect course eligibility. Answer honestly — results help the instructor tailor instruction to gaps.

### SECTION 1 — MULTIPLE CHOICE

Circle the letter of the best answer. (2 points each)

**1. In Scrum, a "sprint" is:**

- A. A meeting where the team reviews the work completed in the last iteration
- B. A daily check-in meeting where each team member reports blockers
- C. A prioritized list of features and work items for the project
- D. A time-boxed period of work (typically 1–4 weeks) in which the team commits to completing a defined set of backlog items

**2. A "user story" in Agile development is best described as:**

A. A technical specification document listing all system requirements  
B. A risk register entry describing a potential failure scenario  
C. A short description of a desired outcome written from the perspective of the end user, often in the format: "As a [role], I want [capability] so that [benefit]"  
D. A test case documenting expected system behavior

**3. "Acceptance criteria" for a user story serve which purpose?**

A. They define specific, testable conditions that must be met for the story to be considered done  
B. They define how long the story will take to complete  
C. They assign the story to a developer track  
D. They document the business justification for the story

**4. In a project context, a "blocker" is:**

A. An impediment that prevents a team member from making progress on their work until it is resolved  
B. A dependency on another team that is expected to resolve in the next sprint  
C. A stakeholder who is resistant to adopting a new capability  
D. A low-priority backlog item that is deferred to a later sprint

**5. A "sprint retrospective" is primarily focused on:**

A. Reviewing and accepting completed work with the product owner and stakeholders  
B. Planning the next sprint's backlog  
C. Updating the project risk register with new risks discovered during the sprint  
D. Improving the team's process — what went well, what didn't, and what the team will do differently

**6. The "Definition of Done" (DoD) for a data product specifies:**

A. The date by which the product must be delivered to the operational user  
B. The list of stakeholders who must sign off on the product before release  
C. The set of conditions that must be met before the product is considered ready for production release — including quality, documentation, and governance checks  
D. The minimum performance threshold for the product's underlying data pipeline

**7. In a six-phase ML project lifecycle (Problem Definition → Data Audit → Prototype → Evaluation → Production → Sustainment), the PRIMARY purpose of the Data Audit phase is to:**

A. Build the first version of the model and test it against a small dataset  
B. Deploy the model to the production environment and notify operational users  
C. Assess whether the data needed for the model actually exists, is accessible, and is of sufficient quality  
D. Define the business problem the model will solve and identify stakeholders

**8. A product owner's PRIMARY responsibility in an Agile team is:**

A. Writing code and building the technical components of the product  
B. Representing stakeholder needs, maintaining and prioritizing the product backlog, and ensuring the team builds the right thing  
C. Facilitating sprint ceremonies (planning, standup, review, retrospective)  
D. Managing the team's personnel evaluations and workload assignments

**9. "Scope creep" in project management refers to:**

A. The natural expansion of a project timeline due to technical complexity  
B. The gradual addition of unplanned requirements or features without corresponding adjustments to schedule or resources  
C. The process of formally expanding project scope after stakeholder approval  
D. A risk that the project's quality

standards will exceed what is operationally necessary

**10. A "risk register" in project management is:**

A. A log of all past issues that were resolved during the project B. A list of stakeholder concerns that were raised at project kickoff C. A financial tracking tool for project budget risks D. A documented record of identified risks, including likelihood, impact, mitigation actions, owners, and due dates

**11. "Velocity" in Agile refers to:**

A. How quickly a team can respond to emergency requirement changes B. The amount of work a team completes in a sprint, measured in story points or tasks C. The speed at which a data pipeline processes new records D. A metric comparing planned vs. actual delivery dates

**12. When translating a commander's requirement into a backlog, the PM's first step should be:**

A. Break the requirement immediately into user stories and size them in story points B. Identify the technical developer track (SL 4G through SL 4O) that will build the capability C. Clarify the requirement until the success criteria are specific and testable — distinguish what the user needs from what they asked for D. Estimate the delivery timeline and brief the commander on expected completion

**13. A "dependency" in project management is:**

A. A piece of work that cannot start or complete until another piece of work is done, often by a different team B. A risk that has already materialized and is causing active impact C. A stakeholder who must approve deliverables before the team can proceed D. A technical prerequisite for a pipeline to run correctly

**14. In change management, resistance to adopting a new data capability from operational users is MOST often caused by:**

A. Lack of trust, unfamiliarity with the new tool, or concern that the new product will reveal performance problems B. Technical quality problems with the data product C. Insufficient briefing from senior leadership on the operational requirement D. Integration failures between the new capability and existing reporting systems

**15. A "kanban board" is most useful for managing:**

A. A long-term program roadmap across multiple fiscal years B. Ongoing operational support work with continuous flow — where work items arrive and are completed without fixed sprint boundaries C. A sprint backlog for a two-week development sprint with a fixed team D. The risk register for a data product that is in production sustainment

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## SECTION 2 — SHORT ANSWER

*Answer in 2–5 sentences. (6 points each)*

**SA-1. Describe the difference between a "sprint review" and a "sprint retrospective." What is the purpose of each, and who attends?**

**SA-2. A commander says: "I want to see readiness." As a technical PM, describe the steps you take to turn this statement into a user story with acceptance criteria that a developer can build against.**

**SA-3. An ML project has passed the Prototype phase. The team wants to move directly to Production. As the PM, what questions do you ask before authorizing that jump, and what phase are they trying to skip?**

**SA-4. You are managing a project with four developers: a SL 4H (AI Engineer), a SL 4M (ML Engineer), a SL 4K (Knowledge Manager), and a SL 4L (Software Engineer). Describe one dependency between two of these tracks that could create a blocker, and how you would manage it.**

**SA-5. An operational user refuses to use a new MSS capability your team delivered, saying "the old way worked fine." What is your change management response?**

## SCORING SUMMARY

Section	Questions	Points Each	Total Points
Multiple Choice	15	2	30
Short Answer	5	6	30
<b>Total</b>	—	—	<b>60</b>

Passing: N/A — Pre-test is diagnostic only.

## ANSWER KEY — INSTRUCTOR USE ONLY

*Do not distribute to students.*

**Multiple Choice:** 1. D — Sprint = time-boxed iteration in which the team commits to completing a defined backlog set. 2. C — User story = short user-perspective description of desired outcome. 3. A — Acceptance criteria define specific, testable conditions for a story to be done. 4. A — Blocker = impediment preventing progress until resolved. 5. D — Retrospective = process improvement (went well, didn't, will change). 6. C — Definition of Done = conditions a product must meet before production release. 7. C — Data Audit = assess data existence, accessibility, and quality. 8. B — Product owner owns the backlog and represents stakeholder needs. 9. B — Scope creep = unplanned requirement additions without schedule/resource adjustment. 10. D — Risk register = documented risks with likelihood, impact, mitigation, owners, and dates. 11. B — Velocity = work completed in a sprint (story points or tasks). 12. C — First step: clarify until success criteria are specific and testable. 13. A — Dependency = work blocked on another piece of work, often by another team. 14. A — Resistance most often stems from distrust, unfamiliarity, or concern about visibility. 15. B — Kanban = continuous flow work without fixed sprints (operational support).

### Short Answer Guidance:

SA-1. Full credit: sprint review = team presents completed work to stakeholders/product owner; goal is to accept or reject completed stories and gather feedback; attendees include team + stakeholders + product owner. Sprint retrospective = team-internal process improvement meeting; goal is to identify what went well, what didn't, and what to change in the next sprint; attendees are team only (no stakeholders). Must distinguish purpose and audience for full credit.

SA-2. Full credit: PM pushes back on the vague requirement with structured questions — which unit, which readiness metric, at what echelon, refreshed how often, compared to what threshold, used in which briefing or decision. Translates answer into: "As an S3, I want to see battalion-level FMC rate updated daily with a red alert when any battalion drops below 85%, so I can identify readiness shortfalls before the morning battle update." Acceptance criteria: FMC rate displayed by battalion, refreshes daily, threshold alert fires at 85%, visible in the S3 workspace. Partial credit (3 pts) for producing a story without testable acceptance criteria.

SA-3. Full credit: the team is trying to skip the Evaluation phase. PM questions: Has the model been evaluated against a held-out dataset not used in training? What is the performance metric and did it meet the threshold? Has the data steward reviewed the output for quality? Has the operational user seen the output and confirmed it is interpretable and actionable? Has a production readiness review been conducted against the Definition of Done? All must be answered before Production. Partial credit (3 pts) for identifying the skipped phase without the gate questions.

SA-4. Full credit: any plausible cross-track dependency — e.g., SL 4L (SWE) must complete the API integration before SL 4M (ML Engineer) can run the model pipeline against live data; or SL 4K (KM) must finalize the Ontology Object Type definition before SL 4H (AI Engineer) can wire the AI agent to the correct object properties. Management: identify the dependency in the sprint planning session; assign an owner; put a due-date gate on the downstream story; raise it as a risk if the upstream work is delayed. Partial credit (3 pts) for identifying a plausible dependency without a management approach.

SA-5. Full credit: do not argue with the user — investigate. Ask what "the old way" was and what specific concerns they have about the new capability. Common root causes: product doesn't match their workflow, they weren't involved in requirements, they don't trust the data, or they fear the product will create accountability they didn't have before. Response: schedule a 30-minute walkthrough with the user and their supervisor; identify one concrete workflow where the new capability saves them time; document their feedback and bring it back to the team as a user story for the next sprint. Resistance that is dismissed or ignored escalates — it does not resolve.

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*USAREUR-AF Operational Data Team TM-40J Pre-Test | Version 2.0 | March 2026*