

Cisco 500-651 2026: CMaaS & Collaboration Prep

Cisco 500-651 2026. CMaaS and collaboration solution design, deployment models, and architectures.

IT Certifications Instructor: Brian Mitchell • 5 sections • 44 lessons • 13.75h total

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About this course

The Cisco 500-651 exam is a key requirement for the CMaaS and Collaboration specializations, focusing on solution design and implementation. This course cuts through the noise to give you what you need to know for the 2026 exam, focusing on practical knowledge over just memorizing facts. We will tackle the core concepts and design methodologies you will face.

You will learn how to apply Cisco collaboration architectures, understand key deployment models, and navigate the essential technologies. The course uses video lectures, real case studies, and problem-solving sessions. By the end, you will have a clear strategy for passing the exam and applying these skills in your role.

Course curriculum

Foundations: Cisco Specializations and Exam Structure

- **Demystifying the 500-651 Exam Requirements (12m)**
Get a clear breakdown of the exam topics, question formats, and passing criteria for the 2026 version. We'll map out the entire test so you know exactly where to focus your study time.
- **Understanding the CMaaS Specialization (18m)**
Learn what Collaborations Management as a Service (CMaaS) really means for Cisco partners. We'll cover the business value and the technical scope you'll be tested on.
- **Core Cisco Collaboration Architectures (22m)**
A step-by-step guide to the foundational architecture models, including Webex and on-premises solutions. This lesson builds the framework for all advanced topics.
- **Key Licensing and Partner Program Overview (15m)**
Navigate the complexities of Cisco's partner specializations and the licensing models tied to CMaaS. We'll use a real case study to explain how this impacts solution design.
- **Essential Prerequisites and Knowledge Gaps (10m)**
Identify the baseline knowledge you need before diving deep. We'll highlight common gaps and provide resources to fill them efficiently.
- **Setting Up Your Study Environment (8m)**
Practical tips for organizing your study materials, using Cisco's learning portals, and creating a realistic study plan for the 500-651.
- **High-Level Solution Design Principles (20m)**
Learn the 'why' behind Cisco's design choices. This lesson covers the business and technical drivers you need to understand for the exam's scenario-based questions.

Core Concepts: Collaboration Technologies Deep Dive

- **Webex Calling and Meetings: The Fundamentals (25m)**
We'll break down the architecture and key features of Webex Calling and Meetings. Understand the differences between cloud, hybrid, and on-premises deployments.
- **Cisco Unified Communications Manager (CUCM) Basics (28m)**
A practical look at CUCM's role in a collaboration solution. We'll cover call processing, user management, and its integration with other components.
- **Cisco Unity Connection and IM & Presence (19m)**
Learn how voicemail and instant messaging fit into the bigger picture. This lesson includes a downloadable checklist for deployment considerations.
- **Understanding Expressway and Edge Architecture (32m)**
Tackle the complex topic of Expressway for remote access and mobility. We'll use a network diagram to show how it secures collaboration traffic.
- **Video Endpoints: Desk, Room, and Meeting Series (16m)**
Explore the different Cisco video endpoints and their capabilities. We'll discuss provisioning and management best practices you'll need to know.

- **Cloud Collaboration: Webex Control Hub Essentials (21m)**
A hands-on guide to managing a Webex organization via the Control Hub. We'll cover user onboarding, policy settings, and analytics.
- **QoS for Voice and Video: A Practical Guide (24m)**
Don't just memorize DSCP values. We'll show you how to design and verify a QoS policy that actually works in a real network.
- **Security in Cisco Collaboration Solutions (23m)**
Cover the critical security topics for the exam, including encryption, certificate management, and securing your collaboration infrastructure.
- **Integration with Microsoft Teams and Other Platforms (14m)**
A problem-solving session on deploying and troubleshooting Cisco devices within a Microsoft Teams environment. A key area for modern solutions.

Deep Dive: Solution Design and Sizing

- **Conducting a Successful Customer Discovery (17m)**
Learn the right questions to ask to gather technical and business requirements. We'll role-play a discovery call to show you how it's done.
- **Sizing a Collaboration Deployment: User Counts to Bandwidth (26m)**
Walk through a real case study to learn how to size a solution correctly. We'll calculate bandwidth, server resources, and licenses.
- **Designing for High Availability and Redundancy (29m)**
Understand how to build a resilient collaboration solution. We'll cover server clustering, failover paths, and geographic redundancy.
- **Choosing the Right Deployment Model: Cloud, Hybrid, On-Prem (20m)**
A decision-making framework for selecting the best model based on customer needs, budget, and existing infrastructure.
- **Designing for Mobility and Remote Workers (18m)**
Focus on the technologies that enable a mobile workforce. We'll cover remote access strategies and mobile client deployment.
- **Sizing and Selecting Video Endpoints (15m)**
This lesson provides a step-by-step guide to choosing the right video devices for different room types and user personas.
- **Integration with Existing IT Infrastructure (22m)**
Learn how to design a solution that integrates seamlessly with Active Directory, firewalls, and other network services.
- **Advanced Troubleshooting Methodologies (35m)**
A deep-dive problem-solving session. We'll analyze common failure points in a collaboration deployment and how to isolate them.

Advanced Application: CMaaS and Operational Excellence

- **Defining the CMaaS Service Catalog (13m)**
What services should you offer under the CMaaS model? We'll break down the typical service tiers and what's included in each.

- **Monitoring and Analytics for Proactive Management (21m)**
Learn which metrics matter for collaboration health. We'll explore Cisco's analytics tools to identify issues before users complain.
- **Building a CMaaS Delivery Workflow (19m)**
A practical guide to creating a repeatable process for onboarding new customers and deploying solutions under the CMaaS model.
- **Customer Success and Adoption Strategies (16m)**
It's not just about the tech. Learn how to drive user adoption and ensure customer satisfaction with training and enablement plans.
- **Change Management in a Live Environment (23m)**
How to plan and execute changes, like upgrades or new feature rollouts, with minimal impact on the business. Includes a risk assessment template.
- **Automating Common Management Tasks (27m)**
Explore ways to use APIs and scripting to automate user provisioning, device resets, and report generation. A real time-saver.
- **Generating and Presenting Value Reports (14m)**
Learn how to create simple, clear reports that demonstrate the value of your CMaaS solution to business stakeholders.
- **Handling Service Escalations Effectively (12m)**
A problem-solving session on managing difficult support scenarios. We'll provide a framework for de-escalation and resolution.
- **Lifecycle Management: From Onboarding to Renewal (25m)**
Understand the entire customer journey. We'll map out the key touchpoints to ensure a smooth relationship and successful contract renewal.
- **Staying Current: Continuous Learning for CMaaS (9m)**
The collaboration landscape changes fast. We'll share tips and resources for staying up-to-date with new Cisco features and exam changes.

Implementation & Next Steps: Exam Day and Beyond

- **Final Exam Strategy: Topic Weighting and Review (15m)**
We'll review the exam blueprint one last time, focusing on high-weight sections and common tricky topics. A final check before the test.
- **Practice Exam: 500-651 Scenario Walkthrough (38m)**
Sit through a full-length practice exam where we dissect each question, explain the logic, and identify distractors. This is a must-watch.
- **Time Management During the Exam (10m)**
Learn techniques to pace yourself effectively, flag questions for review, and avoid getting stuck on difficult scenarios.
- **What to Expect After You Pass: Certification Maintenance (11m)**
Congratulations, you passed! Now what? We'll cover the recertification process and how to leverage your new credential for career growth.

- **Building Your First CMaaS Proposal (Template Included)** (24m)
Apply your knowledge to a real-world task. We'll walk through creating a solution proposal, and you'll get a downloadable template to use.
- **Common Post-Exam Pitfalls to Avoid** (13m)
A practical look at the challenges you might face in your first few CMaaS projects and how to overcome them with confidence.
- **Resources for Ongoing Professional Development** (8m)
A curated list of communities, blogs, and advanced courses to take your collaboration skills to the next level.
- **Setting Up a Home Lab for Practice** (20m)
Get hands-on experience without a corporate budget. We'll show you how to set up a virtual lab using Cisco's sandbox environments.
- **Final Q&A: Answering Your Top Questions** (16m)
We've compiled the most frequently asked questions about the 500-651 and CMaaS and provide clear, concise answers to wrap up the course.
- **Your Action Plan: From Study to Implementation** (7m)
A clear, step-by-step plan to help you schedule your exam, apply for the specialization, and start using your new skills on the job.

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