Python Institute

PCEA-30-01

Python Institute Certified Entry-Level Automation Specialist with Python (PCEA)

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Question: 1

An HR team's script takes a completed new-hire form, requests the employee's user account, adds the person to the payroll sheet and sends a welcome email, carrying onboarding from start to finish in one run.
Which level of automation is this?

A. Basic scripting, since it is one Python file
B. Process automation, since it covers one business process end to end
C. Orchestration, since it works across the account, payroll and email systems in sequence
D. Basic scripting, since each individual step is simple

Answer: B

Question: 2

A project's README says to run its script with python report.py. On a colleague's Linux machine the terminal shows:
$ python report.py
bash: python: command not found
$ which python3
/usr/bin/python3
What is the most likely explanation and fix?

A. Python is not installed, so the python3 package must be installed before the script can run
B. The terminal is in the wrong folder, so cd into the script's directory and run python again
C. The script must be made executable with chmod +x before python is able to run it
D. The system installs the interpreter under the name python3 only, so the script should be run as python3 report.py

Answer: D

Question: 3

A nightly job, sync.py, prints a one-line summary to standard output and writes any error messages to standard error. The administrator needs a file named errors.log that contains the error messages and nothing else.
Which two commands produce that file in bash? (Choose two.)

A. python3 sync.py 2> errors.log
B. python3 sync.py > errors.log
C. python3 sync.py > summary.log 2> errors.log
D. python3 sync.py > errors.log 2>&1
E. python3 sync.py 1>> errors.log

Answer: A,C

Question: 4

A script reads an API key from the environment:
import os
api_key = os.environ["REPORT_KEY"]
print("Key loaded")
In one terminal window a user runs export REPORT_KEY=abc123. She then opens a second terminal window and runs python3 fetch.py, which fails with KeyError: 'REPORT_KEY'.
Why does the script fail?

A. Linux treats variable names as case-insensitive, so Python looked up report_key and found nothing
B. The variable was exported in the first window's shell only, so the process started from the second window never inherited it
C. os.environ holds only variables that the script has itself assigned earlier with os.environ
D. The value abc123 needed quotes around it, so the shell discarded the export silently

Answer: B

Question: 5

The current folder contains draft.txt and an empty subfolder archive.
import os, shutil
shutil.copy("draft.txt", "final.txt")
shutil.move("final.txt", "archive/final_v1.txt")
print(sorted(os.listdir(".")))
What does the script print?

A. ['archive', 'draft.txt', 'final.txt']
B. ['archive']
C. ['archive', 'final.txt']
D. ['archive', 'draft.txt']

Answer: D

Question: 6

An upload script used to write this line to the console:
ERROR:root:Upload failed
After a change, the same failure is written as:
2026-10-30 03:00:02,118 ERROR Upload failed
Which change produced the second form?

A. Replacing logging.error() with print(time.ctime(), "ERROR", "Upload failed")
B. Adding level=logging.DEBUG and filename="upload.log" to the basicConfig() call
C. Adding format="%(asctime)s %(levelname)s %(message)s" to basicConfig()
D. Changing the call to logging.error("%(asctime)s %(levelname)s Upload failed")

Answer: C

Question: 7

A script fetches exchange rates with requests.get(url, timeout=10) every 30 minutes and logs each attempt:
06:00:00 INFO GET https://api.example.org/rates
06:00:10 ERROR Rates fetch failed: ReadTimeout (read timeout=10)
06:30:00 INFO GET https://api.example.org/rates
06:30:10 ERROR Rates fetch failed: ReadTimeout (read timeout=10)
07:00:00 INFO GET https://api.example.org/rates
07:00:10 ERROR Rates fetch failed: ReadTimeout (read timeout=10)
Which interpretation fits the log?

A. The server is not answering within 10 seconds, so every call ends at the timeout before any status code arrives
B. The URL is wrong, since a read timeout is how requests reports a 404 Not Found response for the path
C. The timeout itself is the fault, so removing timeout=10 lets each request wait for as long as the server needs to reply
D. Logging is misconfigured, since each ERROR line appears exactly 10 seconds after the INFO line before it

Answer: A

Question: 8

The documentation for a weather API at https://api.example.org states: Free tier: register to receive a key. Limit: 100 requests per hour. Send the key in the X-Api-Key header.

Which two statements about a script using this tier are accurate? (Choose two.)

A. A free tier means the API needs no key, so requests without one still succeed
B. Each request must include the key in the X-Api-Key header
C. The key belongs in the JSON body of each GET request
D. The hourly limit counts only POST requests, so GET calls are unlimited
E. The script must keep to at most 100 requests in any hour

Answer: B,E

Question: 9

Leila keeps a small mini PC at home running a Python script around the clock. She wants the script to copy her Documents folder to an external drive every Sunday at 20:00.
Which pair of libraries fits this task most directly?

A. os and logging
B. subprocess and logging
C. schedule and shutil
D. schedule and requests

Answer: C

Question: 10

An export script logs its start and end. One night's log reads:
2026-10-30 23:58:40,102 INFO Export started
2026-10-30 23:59:55,870 WARNING Retry 1/3: api.example.com timed out
2026-10-31 00:00:07,314 INFO Retry succeeded
2026-10-31 00:03:12,415 INFO Export finished: 1240 rows, 0 errors
What does this excerpt show about the run?

A. It ran for 4 min 32 s across midnight and finished normally, as the single retry succeeded
B. It ran for 23 h 55 min 28 s, as the finish time of day is earlier than the start time of day
C. It ran for 4 min 32 s but failed, since a WARNING means the export stopped
D. It ran for 1 min 15 s, measured from the start line until the timeout was logged by the export

Answer: A

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