

ASSOCIATE EXAM GUIDE

Support Associate

Exam Number: PSSA_001

Contents

- About Pure Storage® Certified Exams..... 3**
- Section 1: Exam Registration Instructions..... 4**
 - 1.1. Exam Information.....4
 - 1.2. Creating an Online Account.....4
 - 1.3. Online Exam Computer Requirements4
 - 1.4. Day of the Exam.....5
 - 1.5. Exam Scoring.....5
 - 1.6. After the Exam.....5
 - 1.7. Your Candidate Record6
- Section 2: Pure Storage Support Associate Exam Topics.....7**
 - 2.1. Domain Names7
 - 2.2. Task Information.....7
 - 2.3. Domain Distribution.....8
- Section 3: The Pure Storage Certified Support Associate Job Role 9**
 - 3.1. The Minimally Qualified Candidate (MQC).....9
 - 3.2. MQC Work Experience.....9
- Section 4: Determine Exam Readiness10**
 - 4.1. Exam Prerequisites10
 - 4.2. On-the-Job Experience10
 - 4.3. Self-Assessment Preparation Worksheet10
- Section 5: Pure Storage Support Associate Exam Sample Questions12**
- Section 6: Answer Key.....16**
- Support 20**

About Pure Storage® Certified Exams

To be a Pure Storage Certified Support Associate is to demonstrate foundational knowledge of how to provide first-call customer support of Pure Storage products, features, and services. Pure Storage's Certification exams have been developed following industry best practices to strive for reliable and valid test score interpretations.

This guide has two purposes:

- to provide you with the recommended preparations for the Pure Storage Support Associate Exam, and
- to help you determine if you are ready to sit for the exam.

This guide outlines the knowledge, skills, and abilities required of a “minimally qualified candidate” for a specific job role, which will be evaluated in the exam.

Section 1: Exam Registration Instructions

1.1. Exam Information

- Exam name: Pure Storage Support Associate
- Exam number: PSSA_001
- Exam cost: \$129 (US Dollars)
- Number of questions: 60
- Question types: Multiple Choice (four or five options; one, two, or three correct answers)
- Time limit: 120 minutes

1.2. Creating an Online Account

1. Go to the [ExamStudio Storefront](#).
2. Select "Pure Storage Support Associate".
3. Either confirm the scheduling process or log in. The system will automatically recognize if you are eligible and will allow you to move forward.
4. Log in to your candidate dashboard and click "Schedule" under the Actions tab.
5. Select the appropriate time zone; then, select the date and time you want to take the exam. Please note that exams require a 24-hour lead time to schedule. The earliest date on which you can make a reservation is the next business day.
6. Complete a technical compatibility check by visiting <https://go.proctoru.com/testitout>

1.3. Online Exam Computer Requirements

Your computer must meet the minimum requirements of ProctorU, including:

- A stable broadband internet service with a download speed of at least 12Mbps down and 3Mbps up
- Chrome or Firefox web browser. Download ProctorU extensions: [Chrome](#) or [Firefox](#)
- Webcam
- Microphone

To check if your computer meets the minimum requirements of the exam provider, visit <https://go.proctoru.com/testitout>. To watch a video on how ProctorU works, please click [here](#).

You will be prompted to download and run a LogMeIn Rescue applet file that will bring up a chat box to allow you to text with your proctor. If prompted, be sure to click "Open" or "Allow" to give the file permission to run. When the chat box says "Waiting," it means that you are in the queue waiting for your proctor.

TIP: If your status shows "Waiting," do not re-download the applet file. You will be put back at the end of the queue. For more information on what to expect on the day of the exam, please visit this [link](#).

1.4. Day of the Exam

Requirements:

- You must provide one form of government-issued photo ID (e.g., driver's license, passport).
- If you do not provide acceptable proof of identification via webcam to the proctor prior to the exam, you will not be allowed to take the exam. No refund or rescheduling is provided when an exam cannot be started due to failure to provide proper identification.
- You must also consent to have your photo taken. The ID will be used for identity verification only and will not be stored.
- You must be in a private, well-lit environment such as a conference room or home office.
- You must close all third-party programs and unplug any secondary monitors.
- The proctor will ask you to show your desk and surroundings before your exam can start.
- You cannot consult notes or books during the exam. The proctor will not allow the use of documents, materials, or websites during the exam.
- Make sure you have downloaded the ProctorU extension for either [Chrome](#) or [Firefox](#).

Log in to Launch the Exam

To launch the exam, log in to your [ExamStudio account](#).

1. Enter your login credentials.
2. Click "Start Exam" under the Actions tab on your dashboard.

NOTE: The timer for your exam does not start until the proctor launches the exam. You will have 120 minutes to complete the exam. You may start your exam once the countdown timer reaches 0:00:00. If you do not start your exam within 15 minutes of this time frame, the system will automatically mark you as a No-Show and you will not be able to take your exam.

Special Considerations

- To reset a forgotten password, visit <https://portal2.examstudio.com/ResetPassword.aspx?id=100106>. Once you reset your password, you can log in via your [candidate portal](#).
- For additional questions regarding ProctorU, please visit this [link](#).
- For any other additional questions or concerns, please contact the Pure Storage certification team at certadmin@purestorage.com.

1.5. Exam Scoring

- One point is awarded for each correct answer to a single-response or multi-response question.
- No points are awarded for either incorrectly answered or unanswered single-response or multi-response questions.

1.6. After the Exam

Your candidate record will be updated with the results of your exam 24-48 hours following the exam. Please see Section 1.7 of this exam guide for instructions on how to review your candidate record.

If You Pass:

Your candidate record will have an eCertificate when you achieve a certification, as well as a Pure Storage certification logo for this exam. A certification is valid for 2 years, and, upon expiration, you will need to take the exam again.

If You Fail:

You will need to wait 72 hours to re-schedule the exam.

1.7. Your Candidate Record

To access your candidate record, visit <https://www.certmetrics.com/purestorage/login.aspx>. From here, you will be able to access your score report(s).

The first time you log in, you will need to create an account.

To create an account:

1. Click "Never logged in before?" on the landing page.
2. Enter either your email address or data from your score report, as shown below.

The screenshot shows the 'CANDIDATE LOGIN' page for Pure Storage. At the top left is the Pure Storage logo with the tagline 'Helps Provision'. At the top right is the text 'CANDIDATE LOGIN'. Below the header, a small note states: 'The system will send an email that includes a link which will allow you to set your password and obtain your login ID. The email address we have on file is most commonly the same one you supplied the last time you took an exam.' There are two main sections for account creation:

- By email address:** This section has a text input field labeled 'Email address' and a red 'SUBMIT' button below it.
- By score report:** This section has a text input field for 'Last name *', a dropdown menu for 'Registration number', and a text input field for 'New email address'. A red 'SUBMIT' button is located below these fields.

3. You will receive an email with instructions on how to access your account.

Once you create your account, you will be able to log in with your login ID and password.

Section 2: Pure Storage Support Associate Exam Topics

2.1. Domain Names

The job tasks measured on the exam are grouped into the following domains of practice:

- Analysis
- Procedures
- Troubleshooting
- Communications

2.2. Task Information

Within each domain, you will be asked about specific tasks you should be able to perform as a Pure Storage Certified Support Associate, including but not limited to:

Analysis

- Perform health checks on the FlashArray™
- Triage incoming cases
- Investigate cases to decide courses of action
- Analyze data in Pure1®

Procedures

- Manage information on Skyline
- Determine correct escalation methods
- Identify the location of resources and their uses
- Create cases for Support

Troubleshooting

- Perform basic troubleshooting
- Analyze basic support logs or tool outputs

Communications

- Gather relevant information from the end customer
- Explain standard technical problems, processes, and solutions to customer

2.3. Domain Distribution

The questions on the exam are distributed as follows for each domain.

NOTE: Each question carries the same weight, and there is no partial credit for any question.

Domain	Percent of Exam
Analysis	30%
Procedures	31%
Troubleshooting	19%
Communications	20%

Section 3: The Pure Storage Certified Support Associate Job Role

This exam is designed for individuals who are currently performing or have previous work experience with the job responsibilities of a Pure Storage Certified Support Associate.

3.1. The Minimally Qualified Candidate (MQC)

To pass the exam, you must possess at least the minimum level of knowledge, skills, and abilities required of a Pure Storage Certified Support Associate. The MQC is an Authorized Support Operator (ASO) or an Authorized Support Partner (ASP) who provides first-call support for Pure Storage products. The MQC has between 3 and 6 months of experience working with the Pure Storage support team. The MQC has general knowledge of Pure Storage products, support terminology, support processes, and knowledge of their customers' environments.

The Pure Storage Certified Support Associate should be able to perform the following tasks without any assistance:

- Provide Level 1 Support
- Create and escalate a case with Pure Support
- Handle cases with hardware faults and hardware RMAs
- Gather appropriate customer information
- Perform troubleshooting, triage, and diagnostics

3.2. MQC Work Experience

A minimally qualified Pure Storage Certified Support Associate typically has the following work experience:

- Associate-level role
- Between 3 and 6 months of experience working with the Pure Storage support team

Section 4: Determine Exam Readiness

Nothing can guarantee that you will pass your test; however, the more practical work experience you have, the better your chances are to pass the test. Use the self-assessment preparation worksheet (below) to evaluate your level of readiness.

4.1. Exam Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for the Pure Storage Support Associate Examination.

4.2. On-the-Job Experience

Since Pure Storage exams measure knowledge, skills, and abilities for a specific job role, one of the best ways to prepare for the exam is to make sure you have the minimum work experience, as described in this guide.

4.3. Self-Assessment Preparation Worksheet

Use the following worksheet to review the exam topics and assess your own readiness. If you need to prepare more for a certain topic, determine if you need training, on-the-job experience, or both.

I can:

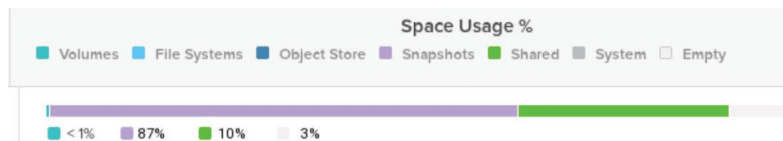
Topic	Yes	No
Analysis		
Execute necessary pre-upgrade health checks		
Determine which commands to run to identify issues		
Sort cases according to priority		
Determine types of issues (e.g., space and performance)		
Analyze performance indicators for arrays		
Procedures		
List tools available in Skyline		
Identify escalation paths and steps		
Identify systems used to manage ASP members and contract details		
Identify methods for opening a case with Pure Storage Support		
Troubleshooting		
Compare performance metrics (e.g., array latency vs SAN latency)		
Identify and compare space categories		
Determine which tools should be used given a reported fault (e.g., space consumption increases, Fiber channel port errors, and controller failures)		
Communications		
Determine pertinent customer information (e.g., impact, hardware faults, escalation requests, and case status inquiries)		
Determine types of customer information that should be collected (e.g., system environments, accessibility of the array, and current state of impact)		
Outline a standard explanation of an issue		

Section 5: Pure Storage Support Associate Exam Sample Questions

Review and practice taking exam questions to get a sense for the types of questions on the exam. Please note that **your performance here does not indicate how you will do on the actual exam**. To fully prepare for the exam, closely review the topic areas and objectives in this Exam Guide.

The correct answers are at the end of the exam guide.

1. Refer to the exhibit.



Pure1 displays the alert, "storage array.capacity high utilization".

What should the Support Engineer recommend to the customer?

- Call their account team to purchase more space
 - Reduce the amount of shared space on the array
 - Delete snapshots until sufficient space is reclaimed
 - Ignore the alert as a false alarm
2. A customer creates a case with the Support Partner for an issue that is degrading all workflows so that tasks CANNOT be completed. The Support Engineer is unable to solve the issue on their own. How should the Support Engineer create the case?
- Create the case in Pure1
 - Email support@purestorage.com
 - Call Pure Storage Support
 - Call the Pure Account team
3. A customer running Purity version 5.2 is having problems using NPIV on the array. The customer's SAN switch has NPIV enabled.
- Which two commands should be used to investigate the issue? (Select two.)
- puredb npiv status
 - puredb npiv supported
 - purearray list --nvp
 - puretune --list | grep NPIV
 - puredb npiv disable

4. Refer to the exhibit.

```

Mar 12 2019 12:31:52.535 Some-Array 0x652749d4: PEER STDOUT: Mode
Mar 12 2019 12:31:52.535 Some-Array 0x652749d4: PEER STDOUT: primary
Mar 12 2019 12:31:52.555 Some-Array 0x652749d4: Running command on peer : /opt/Purity/sbin/purealert untag --suppress 106
Mar 12 2019 12:31:53.001 Some-Array 0x652749d4: PEER STDOUT: Name
Mar 12 2019 12:31:53.001 Some-Array 0x652749d4: PEER STDOUT: suppress_106
Mar 12 2019 12:31:53.018 Some-Array 0x652749d4: Successfully unmuted alert 106
Mar 12 2019 12:31:53.018 Some-Array 0x652749d4: Running command on peer : /opt/Purity/sbin/purealert untag --suppress 108
Mar 12 2019 12:31:53.451 Some-Array 0x652749d4: PEER STDOUT: Name
Mar 12 2019 12:31:53.451 Some-Array 0x652749d4: PEER STDOUT: suppress_108
Mar 12 2019 12:31:53.467 Some-Array 0x652749d4: Successfully unmuted alert 108
Mar 12 2019 12:31:53.468 Some-Array 0x652749d4: Running command on peer : /opt/Purity/sbin/purealert untag --suppress 109
Mar 12 2019 12:31:53.938 Some-Array 0x652749d4: PEER STDOUT: Name
Mar 12 2019 12:31:53.960 Some-Array 0x652749d4: Successfully unmuted alert 109
Mar 12 2019 12:31:55.692 Some-Array-ct0 0x652749d4: STDOUT: Desired Version 5.1.9_201902140401+c755a21-51x
Mar 12 2019 12:31:55.714 Some-Array-ct0 0x652749d4: Sending progress to middleware with kwargs {'status': 'Installed', 'percentage': 100, 'name': 'Purity', 'detail':
'Upgrade stopped. 1/1 hops completed.'}
Mar 12 2019 12:31:55.738 Some-Array-ct0 0x652749d4: Upgrade stopped. 1/1 hops completed.
Mar 12 2019 12:31:55.738 Some-Array-ct0 0x652749d4: ---exiting stop_upgrade---
Mar 12 2019 12:31:55.738 Some-Array-ct0 0x652749d4: ---exiting post_commit---

```

What is the status of the upgrade?

- The upgrade has upgraded the secondary controller only.
 - The upgrade is completed. The upgrade script has been terminated.
 - The upgrade script has terminated, after upgrading the primary controller.
 - The upgrade script has stopped due to a failure.
5. A Support Engineer is triaging a Pure1 connected FlashArray that has sent hardware alerts for both PSUs at different times and the SAN ports.

What should the Support Engineer do?

- Ask the customer to gather logs from the FlashArray
- Ask the customer if there was a power event in the data center
- Ask the customer to verify if firmware upgrades are occurring on the array
- Ask the customer if the array is in production or in testing

6. A Support Engineer needs specific information about an array that phones home.

Which resources should the Support Engineer access?

- a. Pure1
Partner Portal
Skyline
- b. Pure1
CloudAssist
Skyline
- c. CloudAssist
ASP Dashboard
Skyline
- d. ASP Handbook
Pure KBs
Pure1

7. Refer to the exhibit.

Name	Status	Identify	Slot	Index	Speed	Temperature	Voltage	Details
CT0.FC0	disconnected	-	0	0	0.00 Gb/s	-	-	:37:01:25:fa
CT0.FC1	ok	-	0	1	16.00 Gb/s	-	-	:37:01:25:fc
CT1.FC0	ok	-	0	2	16.00 Gb/s	-	-	:37:01:25:fd
CT1.FC1	ok	-	0	3	16.00 Gb/s	-	-	:37:01:a1:f6
								:37:01:a1:f8
ct1.eth3	False	-	static	-	-	-	9000	24:a9:37:01:a1:f9
replbond	True	-	static	-	-	-	1500	86:b7:b1:f3:b3:2a
vir0	True	-	static	-	255.255.252.0	10.204.120.1	1500	8a:36:ab:34:c6:c1

A customer reports that they reseated one of their FC cables.

What should the Support Engineer do?

- a. Request a replacement of the Optical Transceiver (SFP)
- b. Request permission to enable and disable CT0.FC0
- c. Request the FC cable from CT0.FC0 to CT0.FC3 be swapped
- d. Request a replacement of the FlashArray Controller

8. Refer to the exhibit.

```
-----
Mar 12 15:17:05 purehw list --all
-----
Name      Status  Identify  Slot  Index  Speed      Temperature  Voltage  Type      Handle      Parent
CT0       ok      off       -     0      -          -           -        controller R710_46GGH02 hwroot
CT0.ETH0  ok      -         -     0      1.00 Gb/s -          -        eth_port  R710_46GGH02_0000:07:00.0_p0 R710_46GGH02
CT0.ETH1  off     -         -     1      1.00 Gb/s -          -        eth_port  R710_46GGH02_0000:07:00.1_p1 R710_46GGH02
CT0.ETH2  ok      -         -     2      0.00 b/s  -          -        eth_port  R710_46GGH02_0000:01:00.0_p2 R710_46GGH02
CT0.ETH3  off     -         -     3      0.00 b/s  -          -        eth_port  R710_46GGH02_0000:01:00.1_p3 R710_46GGH02
CT0.FAN0  off     on        -     0      -          -           -        cooling    R710_46GGH02_sens48 R710_46GGH02
CT0.FAN1  off     on        -     1      -          -           -        cooling    R710_46GGH02_sens50 R710_46GGH02
CT0.FAN2  off     -         -     2      -          -           -        cooling    R710_46GGH02_sens55 R710_46GGH02
CT0.TMP0  HiCrit -         -     0      -          46 C       -        temp_sensor R710_46GGH02_sens4 R710_46GGH02
CT0.TMP1  HiCrit -         -     1      -          49 C       -        temp_sensor R710_46GGH02_sens1 R710_46GGH02
CT1       ok      off       -     1      -          -           -        controller R710_27PGH02 hwroot
CT1.ETH0  ok      -         -     0      1.00 Gb/s -          -        eth_port  R710_27PGH02_0000:07:00.0_p0 R710_27PGH02
CT1.ETH1  off     -         -     1      1.00 Gb/s -          -        eth_port  R710_27PGH02_0000:07:00.1_p1 R710_27PGH02
CT1.ETH2  ok      -         -     2      0.00 b/s  -          -        eth_port  R710_27PGH02_0000:01:00.0_p2 R710_27PGH02
CT1.ETH3  off     -         -     3      0.00 b/s  -          -        eth_port  R710_27PGH02_0000:01:00.1_p3 R710_27PGH02
CT1.FAN0  off     on        -     0      -          -           -        cooling    R710_27PGH02_sens48 R710_27PGH02
CT1.FAN1  off     on        -     1      -          -           -        cooling    R710_27PGH02_sens50 R710_27PGH02
CT1.FAN2  off     -         -     2      -          -           -        cooling    R710_27PGH02_sens55 R710_27PGH02
CT1.TMP0  HiCrit -         -     0      -          52 C       -        temp_sensor R710_27PGH02_sens4 R710_27PGH02
CT1.TMP1  HiCrit -         -     1      -          45 C       -        temp_sensor R710_27PGH02_sens1 R710_27PGH02
-----
```

A customer receives "Alert 3125 - Temperature Alert".

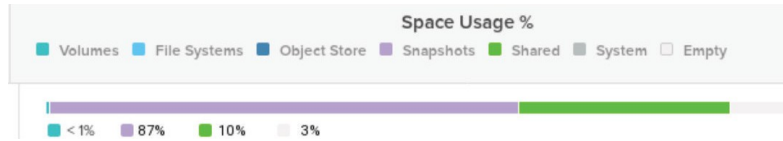
What triggered this alert?

- a. The data center A/C unit is NOT working.
- b. The fans for both controllers are off.
- c. The FlashArray is NOT installed in a location with proper airflow.
- d. The FlashArray's fans are NOT running at a high enough RPM.

Section 6: Answer Key

Correct answers are shown below in *bold italics*.

1. Refer to the exhibit.



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Which resources should the Support Engineer access?

- a. Pure1
Partner Portal
Skyline
- b. *Pure1*
CloudAssist
Skyline
- c. CloudAssist
ASP Dashboard
Skyline
- d. ASP Handbook
Pure KBs
Pure1

7. Refer to the exhibit.

Name	Status	Identify	Slot	Index	Speed	Temperature	Voltage	Details
CT0.FC0	disconnected	-	0	0	0.00 Gb/s	-	-	:37:01:25:fa
CT0.FC1	ok	-	0	1	16.00 Gb/s	-	-	:37:01:25:fc
CT1.FC0	ok	-	0	2	16.00 Gb/s	-	-	:37:01:25:fd
CT1.FC1	ok	-	0	3	16.00 Gb/s	-	-	:37:01:a1:f6 :37:01:a1:f8
ct1.eth3	False	-	static	-	-	-	9000	24:a9:37:01:a1:f9
replbond	True	-	static	-	-	-	1500	86:b7:b1:f3:b3:2a
vir0	True	-	static	-	255.255.252.0	10.204.120.1	1500	8a:36:ab:34:c6:c1

A customer reports that they reseated one of their FC cables.

What should the Support Engineer do?

- a. *Request a replacement of the Optical Transceiver (SFP)*
- b. Request permission to enable and disable CT0.FC0
- c. Request the FC cable from CT0.FC0 to CT0.FC3 be swapped
- d. Request a replacement of the FlashArray Controller

8. Refer to the exhibit.

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-----
Name      Status  Identify Slot  Index  Speed      Temperature Voltage  Type      Handle      Parent
CT0       ok      off     -     0      -          -        -       controller R710_46GGH02 hwroot
CT0.ETH0  ok      -       -     0      1.00 Gb/s -        -       eth_port  R710_46GGH02_0000:07:00.0_p0 R710_46GGH02
CT0.ETH1  off     -       -     1      1.00 Gb/s -        -       eth_port  R710_46GGH02_0000:07:00.1_p1 R710_46GGH02
CT0.ETH2  ok      -       -     2      0.00 b/s  -        -       eth_port  R710_46GGH02_0000:01:00.0_p2 R710_46GGH02
CT0.ETH3  off     -       -     3      0.00 b/s  -        -       eth_port  R710_46GGH02_0000:01:00.1_p3 R710_46GGH02
CT0.FAN0  off     on      -     0      -          -        -       cooling    R710_46GGH02_sens48 R710_46GGH02
CT0.FAN1  off     on      -     1      -          -        -       cooling    R710_46GGH02_sens50 R710_46GGH02
CT0.FAN2  off     -       -     2      -          -        -       cooling    R710_46GGH02_sens55 R710_46GGH02
CT0.TMP0  HiCrit -       -     0      -          46 C     -       temp_sensor R710_46GGH02_sens4 R710_46GGH02
CT0.TMP1  HiCrit -       -     1      -          49 C     -       temp_sensor R710_46GGH02_sens1 R710_46GGH02
CT1       ok      off     -     1      -          -        -       controller R710_27PGH02 hwroot
CT1.ETH0  ok      -       -     0      1.00 Gb/s -        -       eth_port  R710_27PGH02_0000:07:00.0_p0 R710_27PGH02
CT1.ETH1  off     -       -     1      1.00 Gb/s -        -       eth_port  R710_27PGH02_0000:07:00.1_p1 R710_27PGH02
CT1.ETH2  ok      -       -     2      0.00 b/s  -        -       eth_port  R710_27PGH02_0000:01:00.0_p2 R710_27PGH02
CT1.ETH3  off     -       -     3      0.00 b/s  -        -       eth_port  R710_27PGH02_0000:01:00.1_p3 R710_27PGH02
CT1.FAN0  off     on      -     0      -          -        -       cooling    R710_27PGH02_sens48 R710_27PGH02
CT1.FAN1  off     on      -     1      -          -        -       cooling    R710_27PGH02_sens50 R710_27PGH02
CT1.FAN2  off     -       -     2      -          -        -       cooling    R710_27PGH02_sens55 R710_27PGH02
CT1.TMP0  HiCrit -       -     0      -          52 C     -       temp_sensor R710_27PGH02_sens4 R710_27PGH02
CT1.TMP1  HiCrit -       -     1      -          45 C     -       temp_sensor R710_27PGH02_sens1 R710_27PGH02
-----
```

A customer receives "Alert 3125 - Temperature Alert".

What triggered this alert?

- a. The data center A/C unit is NOT working.
- b. The fans for both controllers are off.**
- c. The FlashArray is NOT installed in a location with proper airflow.
- d. The FlashArray's fans are NOT running at a high enough RPM.

Support

For information on Pure Storage's certification programs, visit [this link](#). To contact us, please send an email to certadmin@purestorage.com.

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