ACG CERTIFIED COMMISSIONING AUTHORITY (CXA) PRACTICE EXAM (SAMPLE)

STUDY GUIDE

SAMPLE STUDY GUIDE WITH LIMITED QUESTIONS

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Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

- Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,
- Improve accuracy and speed,
- Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and
- Approach the exam with greater confidence.

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

Remember: successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

How to Use This Guide

This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here's how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:

1. Start with a Diagnostic Review

Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.

2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions

Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 – 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations.

3. Learn from the Explanations

After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.

4. Track Your Progress

Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.

5. Simulate the Real Exam

Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.

6. Repeat and Review

Don't just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning. Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.

There's no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly, adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!

Questions

1. What phase is the OPR developed?

A. Pre-Design Phase

B. Construction Phase

C. Occupancy and Operations Phase

D. Post-Design Phase

2. Who is responsible for digitally recording training materials during the Acceptance Phase?

A. CxA

B. Vendor

C. Shared

D. CxT

3. Which role is designated to supervise witnessing installation tests during the Construction Phase?

A. Owner

B. CxA

C. CxT

D. Contractor

4. In a traditional plan and spec project, the commissioning authority typically reports directly to whom?

A. The Owner

B. The Project Manager

C. The Architect

D. The Contractor

5. Which phase precedes the Design Phase in the commissioning process?

A. Post-Design Phase

B. Construction Phase

C. Occupancy Phase

D. Pre-Design Phase

6. Which term is used to describe commissioning activities in existing buildings aimed at diagnosing ongoing problems or supporting planned maintenance?

A. Retro-Commissioning

B. Re-Commissioning

C. Initial Commissioning

D. Decommissioning

7. During HVAC functional performance testing, what is the responsibility of the CxA?

A. Directing, witnessing, and documenting the tests

B. Performing the tests personally

C. Authorizing vendor invoices

D. Setting the project budget

8. What does the acronym TBE stand for?

A. Test balancing engineer

B. Thermal balance engineer

C. Test and balance engineer

D. Test balance technician

9. ISO represents which organization?

A. World Standards Organization

B. International Standards Organization

C. International Organization for Standardization

D. International Standard Organization

10. When does the Occupancy and Operations Phase begin?

A. At contract award

B. At the start of construction

C. At substantial completion

D. After final project handover

Answers

1. A
2. D
3. C
4. A
5. D
6. A
7. A
8. C
9. C
10. C

Explanations

1. What phase is the OPR developed?

A. Pre-Design Phase

B. Construction Phase

C. Occupancy and Operations Phase

D. Post-Design Phase

The Owner's Project Requirements (OPR) are created at the very start of a project to capture the owner's goals, function, performance targets, budget, and timeline so the design team has a clear set of criteria to translate into design decisions. This happens in the Pre-Design Phase (often called the programming phase), when the project's needs are defined before any design work begins. Having the OPR established early ensures the design and later decisions are aligned with what the owner must achieve, helping to validate options against defined requirements and guiding the Basis of Design. Waiting until construction or occupancy to define or rework requirements makes it difficult to align outcomes with owner expectations and can lead to misfit solutions or costly changes.

2. Who is responsible for digitally recording training materials during the Acceptance Phase?

A. CxA

B. Vendor

C. Shared

D. CxT

During the Acceptance Phase, the person who coordinates the testing and handover activities is the one who should digitally capture the training materials. This role, the CxT, is on site and responsible for documenting how the system operates, including creating and organizing training content, manuals, and recordings that support end-user training and system handover. The CxA oversees the overall commissioning process but does not typically carry out the day-to-day capture of training materials. The vendor provides materials, but capturing and compiling them into a usable digital training package during acceptance falls to the CxT, who handles testing, documentation, and handover deliverables.

3. Which role is designated to supervise witnessing installation tests during the Construction Phase?

A. Owner

B. CxA

C. CxT

D. Contractor

During the Construction Phase, the on-site task of supervising the witnessing of installation tests is handled by the Commissioning Technician. This role is the hands-on coordinator for test activities, ensuring procedures are followed, witnessing the tests, collecting data, and feeding results into the commissioning records under the oversight of the Commissioning Authority. The owner sets requirements and the contractor executes the work, but the formal witnessing and coordination of tests in the field are the responsibility of the CxT, with the CxA guiding and approving the overall process.

4. In a traditional plan and spec project, the commissioning authority typically reports directly to whom?

A. The Owner

B. The Project Manager

C. The Architect

D. The Contractor

Direct reporting to the Owner ensures independence and alignment with the owner's goals, which is essential for the commissioning authority to verify that installed systems meet performance requirements and the owner's acceptance criteria. In a traditional plan and spec project, the CxA acts as an independent verifier, coordinating, documenting, and validating systems from design through occupancy. If the CxA reported to the project manager, architect, or contractor, conflicts of interest could arise and objectivity might be compromised, making it harder to rigorously identify deficiencies and push for proper resolution. The owner is the party funding and ultimately benefiting from the commissioning effort, so a direct line of communication supports clear accountability, timely issue escalation, and unambiguous acceptance decisions. That's why the common arrangement is for the CxA to report directly to the Owner.

5. Which phase precedes the Design Phase in the commissioning process?

A. Post-Design Phase

B. Construction Phase

C. Occupancy Phase

D. Pre-Design Phase

Before any design work begins, planning sets the direction for the project. The Pre-Design Phase focuses on defining what the project needs to achieve—owner requirements, performance targets, budget considerations, and the overall goals for commissioning. This stage provides the baseline that shapes the Design Phase, where those goals are translated into concepts, drawings, and specifications. Construction comes after design to build the project, and occupancy/operations occur once the building is in use. Post-design isn't typically a formal phase in this sequence. Therefore, the phase that comes before the Design Phase is the Pre-Design Phase.

6. Which term is used to describe commissioning activities in existing buildings aimed at diagnosing ongoing problems or supporting planned maintenance?

A. Retro-Commissioning

B. Re-Commissioning

C. Initial Commissioning

D. Decommissioning

Retro-commissioning is the process applied to a building that is already in operation, focusing on diagnosing problems that have developed over time and supporting planned maintenance. It starts from how the building actually operates rather than how it was designed, identifying faults, miscalibrations, and control sequence issues that affect performance, comfort, or energy use. The goal is to tune and adjust existing systems so they run more reliably and efficiently, with maintenance planning informed by actual operating conditions. This distinguishes it from initial commissioning, which is done for new buildings to ensure systems are installed and tested correctly; from re-commissioning, which involves repeating the commissioning process after significant changes, and from decommissioning, which means shutting down or removing systems. The focus on an existing building, diagnosing current problems, and supporting maintenance makes retro-commissioning the correct term.

7. During HVAC functional performance testing, what is the responsibility of the CxA?

A. Directing, witnessing, and documenting the tests

B. Performing the tests personally

C. Authorizing vendor invoices

D. Setting the project budget

Directing, witnessing, and documenting the tests during HVAC functional performance testing is the CxA's responsibility. The CxA leads the testing activities, ensures test procedures follow the commissioning plan and project requirements, and coordinates with contractors and engineers. By witnessing, the CxA provides independent verification that tests are performed correctly and that the results reflect the system's design intent and the specified performance criteria. By documenting, the CxA captures test data, observations, deviations, and corrective actions, creating a traceable record for the commissioning report and future operations. This oversight helps confirm the systems meet the owner's requirements before handover and occupancy. This role is not to perform tests personally, nor to approve vendor invoices or set the project budget.

8. What does the acronym TBE stand for?

A. Test balancing engineer

B. Thermal balance engineer

C. Test and balance engineer

D. Test balance technician

In commissioning practice, TBE stands for Test and Balance engineer—the professional responsible for verifying HVAC system performance by testing and balancing airflows and pressures to meet the design intent. They perform field tests, collect data with instrumentation, adjust dampers and control devices, and compile reports showing that delivered ventilation matches the design values and meets requirements. Other terms aren't standard in the industry: a term without the "and" isn't the common title, a "thermal balance" label isn't used for this role, and "technician" suggests a different level of responsibility. So the Test and Balance engineer is the correct designation.

9. ISO represents which organization?

A. World Standards Organization

B. International Standards Organization

C. International Organization for Standardization

D. International Standard Organization

The main idea here is recognizing what ISO stands for and who ISO is. ISO is the international body that develops and publishes standards through a federation of national standards organizations. The official English name is International Organization for Standardization, a title chosen so the acronym ISO works consistently across languages. The ISO brand uses this neutral, universally recognizable form, and the letters come from the Greek word isos meaning equal, which helps the acronym stay the same in many languages. Because of that, the organization represented is the International Organization for Standardization. The other phrasing options don't reflect the official name—they use different words like World or Standard alone, which aren't how ISO is titled.

10. When does the Occupancy and Operations Phase begin?

A. At contract award

B. At the start of construction

C. At substantial completion

D. After final project handover

The main idea here is that the Occupancy and Operations Phase starts when the building is ready for people to occupy and operate it as intended. That point is substantial completion—when the owner can take possession and begin using the space. Once occupancy can occur, the commissioning focus shifts from checking that everything was built correctly to confirming that the systems actually perform during real use, meeting comfort, reliability, and energy targets. During this phase you also finalize training, operation and maintenance manuals, and warranty alignment, and you verify that the building operates as designed under actual occupancy conditions. Earlier milestones like contract award or the start of construction are part of planning and construction, not occupancy. And waiting until after final handover would miss the period when the building is first placed into service; occupancy and operations formally begins as soon as occupancy is possible, which is at substantial completion.

Next Steps

Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.

As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.

If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at hello@examzify.com.

Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:

https://acgcxa.examzify.com

We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!