

Association of Social Work Boards Bachelor (ASWB) Practice Exam (Sample)

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

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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

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- 1. When a social worker is testifying in court regarding a client, what concept is important to remember?**
 - A. The social worker has social work privilege and cannot provide information**
 - B. Agency policy requires absolute confidentiality**
 - C. The Code of Ethics requires the worker to refuse to testify**
 - D. The social work privilege is not absolute and may require testimony**
- 2. What is a primary role of support groups in a social work context?**
 - A. Create a safe space for sharing experiences**
 - B. Establish rules for the agency**
 - C. Focus on developing leadership skills among members**
 - D. Improve the agency's funding**
- 3. What is the first action to take for a psychotic client who is HIV+ and has alcohol abuse issues?**
 - A. Start treatment for alcohol abuse**
 - B. Perform blood tests to determine T-cell count and viral load**
 - C. Stabilize on meds**
 - D. Call the family**
- 4. How should a social worker explain confidentiality to a client with reservations about discussing sensitive issues?**
 - A. Provide information about the limits of confidentiality as the need arises**
 - B. Provide a thorough explanation of the limits of confidentiality**
 - C. Do nothing until specific questions are raised by the client**
 - D. Provide initial information regarding limits only as it relates to the worker-client relationship**

5. A client mentions a history of substance abuse but no longer engages in use. How should this be addressed in therapy?

- A. Focus primarily on past abuses**
- B. Dismiss it as a non-issue**
- C. Explore triggers and coping strategies moving forward**
- D. Encourage complete avoidance of any substance-related issues**

6. What is an appropriate action when a client expresses the need for a support network?

- A. Provide counseling services**
- B. Refer her to unemployment services**
- C. Identify community resources and support groups**
- D. Encourage her to seek family support**

7. After 4 weeks of treatment with little progress, what should the social worker consider doing?

- A. Refer the client to another social worker**
- B. Schedule a case consultation**
- C. Continue with treatment**
- D. Confront the client about their lack of motivation**

8. How does social work typically address issues of diversity?

- A. By implementing uniform practices for all**
- B. Through cultural insensitivity**
- C. By recognizing unique challenges faced by diverse populations**
- D. By avoiding discussions on diversity**

9. How should a social worker respond to a sexual encounter between two gay men in a residential facility, where one is HIV+?

- A. Advise the negative one to have an AIDS test**
- B. Tell the positive one about HIV laws**
- C. Talk to the negative one about the dangers of unprotected sex**
- D. Review the rules of the facility with both**

10. What should a supervisor do if an intern admits to having sex with a client?

- A. Report the intern to the licensure board**
- B. Explain the inappropriateness of the act and remove the intern from the case**
- C. Consult with the client before taking action**
- D. None of the above**

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Answers

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

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Explanations

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- 1. When a social worker is testifying in court regarding a client, what concept is important to remember?**
 - A. The social worker has social work privilege and cannot provide information**
 - B. Agency policy requires absolute confidentiality**
 - C. The Code of Ethics requires the worker to refuse to testify**
 - D. The social work privilege is not absolute and may require testimony**

When a social worker is testifying in court regarding a client, it is vital to recognize that social work privilege is not absolute and may require testimony. This concept acknowledges that there are circumstances under which a social worker might be compelled to provide information in a legal setting. Social work privilege typically protects clients' confidentiality and encourages open communication between clients and social workers. However, certain situations, such as cases involving child abuse, threats of harm to oneself or others, or legal proceedings that require disclosure for justice to be served, can override this privilege. Understanding this nuance is crucial for social workers, as they must navigate the delicate balance between maintaining client confidentiality and fulfilling legal obligations. By recognizing that privilege may not be absolute, social workers can prepare themselves for the complexities of court appearances and ensure they are aligned with ethical and legal standards.

- 2. What is a primary role of support groups in a social work context?**
 - A. Create a safe space for sharing experiences**
 - B. Establish rules for the agency**
 - C. Focus on developing leadership skills among members**
 - D. Improve the agency's funding**

Support groups play a vital role in providing a safe and welcoming environment where individuals can come together to share their thoughts, feelings, and experiences related to common challenges they face. This aspect of safety and mutual understanding fosters trust among participants, enabling them to open up about their struggles without fear of judgment. In a social work context, this sharing can facilitate emotional healing and community building, as members often find strength in connecting with others who have similar experiences. While establishing rules for the agency, developing leadership skills among members, and improving funding are important tasks within social work, they do not capture the core essence of what support groups aim to achieve. The primary emphasis of a support group is on interpersonal connection and mutual support, rather than organizational structure or funding strategies. This focus on creating a supportive atmosphere allows individuals to explore their feelings, gain insight, and receive encouragement, ultimately promoting personal growth and resilience.

3. What is the first action to take for a psychotic client who is HIV+ and has alcohol abuse issues?

- A. Start treatment for alcohol abuse**
- B. Perform blood tests to determine T-cell count and viral load**
- C. Stabilize on meds**
- D. Call the family**

When working with a client who is experiencing psychosis, especially one who is also HIV positive and dealing with alcohol abuse, the priority is to ensure the client's immediate safety and mental stability. Stabilizing the client on medication addresses the acute mental health issue, which is critical for anyone experiencing a psychotic episode. Once stabilization is achieved, it becomes feasible to address other aspects of their care, such as managing their HIV status or implementing treatment for alcohol abuse. Mental health stabilization provides a foundation that can enhance the effectiveness of subsequent interventions and supports the client in engaging more fully in their overall treatment plan. While other actions, such as testing for T-cell counts and viral loads, or treating alcohol abuse, are important components of comprehensive care, they do not take precedence over the need to stabilize the client's mental health condition first. By prioritizing stabilization, the clinician is ensuring that the client is in a state where they can participate in further evaluations and treatments, which can often be impaired during episodes of psychosis.

4. How should a social worker explain confidentiality to a client with reservations about discussing sensitive issues?

- A. Provide information about the limits of confidentiality as the need arises**
- B. Provide a thorough explanation of the limits of confidentiality**
- C. Do nothing until specific questions are raised by the client**
- D. Provide initial information regarding limits only as it relates to the worker-client relationship**

Providing a thorough explanation of the limits of confidentiality is essential for building trust and rapport with clients, especially those who may have reservations about discussing sensitive issues. This comprehensive approach ensures that clients fully understand what confidentiality entails, including what information can be kept private and under what circumstances confidentiality may be breached, such as in cases of imminent harm to themselves or others, or if there is a legal obligation to disclose certain information. A detailed explanation helps to alleviate anxiety by clarifying any misconceptions about confidentiality. By doing so, clients are more likely to feel safe and comfortable in sharing their thoughts and feelings, which is critical for effective therapy and support. This empowers clients by making them aware of their rights, while also establishing clear boundaries regarding the limits of confidentiality. This thoroughness also helps to prevent future misunderstandings regarding confidentiality, making it clear from the outset how the social worker will handle sensitive information and the ethical standards guiding their practice.

5. A client mentions a history of substance abuse but no longer engages in use. How should this be addressed in therapy?

- A. Focus primarily on past abuses**
- B. Dismiss it as a non-issue**
- C. Explore triggers and coping strategies moving forward**
- D. Encourage complete avoidance of any substance-related issues**

When a client shares a history of substance abuse but states they are no longer using, it is crucial to focus on exploring triggers and coping strategies moving forward. This approach acknowledges the client's experience while empowering them to navigate their recovery actively. Understanding triggers is vital as they often play a significant role in recovery. By identifying what might lead the client to reconsider substance use, the therapist can help the client develop effective coping strategies. This can enhance the client's resilience, making them better equipped to handle potential challenges related to substance use in the future. Encouraging the client to identify and strengthen their coping skills creates a forward-focused therapeutic environment. This approach fosters growth and healing rather than lingering in the past, allowing the client to constructively integrate their past experiences into their current life without being defined by them. Focusing primarily on past abuses can hinder progress, as it may not address the present and future challenges the client faces. Dismissing the issue as a non-issue can ignore the complexity of the client's history and undermine the therapeutic relationship. Lastly, promoting complete avoidance of substance-related issues can be unrealistic; rather, it's essential to encourage open discussions about these topics to develop awareness and skills that support long-term recovery.

6. What is an appropriate action when a client expresses the need for a support network?

- A. Provide counseling services**
- B. Refer her to unemployment services**
- C. Identify community resources and support groups**
- D. Encourage her to seek family support**

Identifying community resources and support groups is a crucial action when a client expresses the need for a support network. This step ensures that the client has access to structured forms of support that can enhance their well-being and address their specific needs. Community resources can include local organizations, support groups, and outreach programs tailored to help individuals in various situations, from mental health support to social connections. By connecting clients with these resources, you empower them to build a network of support that is both relevant and accessible, enhancing their skills in seeking help and fostering relationships outside their immediate circle. This networking can provide clients with a sense of belonging and validation, which are essential for their emotional stability and personal growth. While providing counseling services can be beneficial, it may not directly address the client's immediate need for a support network. Referring a client to unemployment services does not meet the broader need for social support, and simply encouraging them to seek family support may not be feasible or appropriate for every individual, especially if family relationships are strained or unavailable. Therefore, highlighting community resources and support groups stands out as the most effective and supportive action in this scenario.

7. After 4 weeks of treatment with little progress, what should the social worker consider doing?

- A. Refer the client to another social worker**
- B. Schedule a case consultation**
- C. Continue with treatment**
- D. Confront the client about their lack of motivation**

Scheduling a case consultation after four weeks of treatment with little progress is a strategic approach for several reasons. A case consultation allows the social worker to seek guidance and input from colleagues or supervisors who may have different insights or expertise. This collaboration can provide valuable perspectives on the client's situation and may reveal different therapeutic methods or interventions that could be more effective. Additionally, case consultations foster professional development by encouraging discussion of challenging cases, which can enhance the social worker's skills. It provides an opportunity to reflect on the treatment strategies employed so far and to consider if there are underlying issues that need to be addressed in the therapeutic process. Continuing treatment without evaluating the situation does not account for the stagnation in progress, and referring the client to another social worker may limit the opportunity to improve the current therapeutic relationship. Confronting the client about their lack of motivation could damage the rapport built in therapy and may not effectively address the underlying issues that could be affecting progress. Therefore, a case consultation serves as a constructive and collaborative way to enhance treatment strategies moving forward.

8. How does social work typically address issues of diversity?

- A. By implementing uniform practices for all**
- B. Through cultural insensitivity**
- C. By recognizing unique challenges faced by diverse populations**
- D. By avoiding discussions on diversity**

Social work fundamentally aims to advocate for and empower all individuals, particularly those from diverse backgrounds. The correct choice highlights the profession's commitment to recognizing unique challenges faced by diverse populations. This recognition is crucial because social workers must be adept at understanding various aspects of identity, such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and ability, among others. By acknowledging these unique challenges, social workers can tailor their interventions and support to meet the specific needs of different individuals or groups. This approach fosters inclusivity and encourages respectful, culturally competent service delivery, allowing for more effective and meaningful engagement with clients. In contrast, implementing uniform practices for all would fail to consider the distinct circumstances and barriers that different populations encounter. Cultural insensitivity goes against the core values of social work, which emphasize respect for diversity and the importance of understanding cultural context in practice. Avoiding discussions on diversity undermines the social work profession's commitment to social justice and equity, leaving many issues unaddressed. Hence, recognizing and addressing the unique challenges of diverse populations is paramount in effective social work practice.

9. How should a social worker respond to a sexual encounter between two gay men in a residential facility, where one is HIV+?

- A. Advise the negative one to have an AIDS test**
- B. Tell the positive one about HIV laws**
- C. Talk to the negative one about the dangers of unprotected sex**
- D. Review the rules of the facility with both**

The most appropriate response in this scenario is to talk to the negative individual about the dangers of unprotected sex. This response is crucial because it directly addresses the immediate health risks associated with sexual activity between individuals of differing HIV statuses. It emphasizes the importance of communication and education regarding safe sex practices to prevent the transmission of HIV, especially given that one individual is already HIV positive. Focusing on the negative individual allows the social worker to provide tailored information on how they can protect themselves, the significance of using protection such as condoms, and the overall importance of being informed about their sexual health. This discussion can empower the individual to make safer choices and is a proactive approach to promote their well-being. While advising the negative individual to have an AIDS test is also important for their health, it does not address the immediate situation regarding their sexual encounter. Informing the positive individual about HIV laws could be relevant, but it may not be as urgent or applicable in this particular context of preventing transmission. Reviewing the rules of the facility may offer some background but does not provide specific guidance on safe practices or health education crucial for this scenario. Therefore, directing the conversation towards the dangers of unprotected sex is the most effective way to ensure both individuals are informed and supported in making safer

10. What should a supervisor do if an intern admits to having sex with a client?

- A. Report the intern to the licensure board**
- B. Explain the inappropriateness of the act and remove the intern from the case**
- C. Consult with the client before taking action**
- D. None of the above**

When an intern admits to having a sexual relationship with a client, the supervisor has a critical responsibility to maintain ethical standards within the profession and protect the welfare of the client. Reporting the intern to the licensure board is the correct action because such behavior constitutes a serious violation of ethical and professional standards in social work. Engaging in a sexual relationship with a client is classified as dual relationship abuse and can severely harm the client, undermining the therapeutic relationship and causing potential emotional and psychological detriment. This relationship creates a power imbalance, where the client may not be able to provide informed consent due to their vulnerable position in the therapeutic setting.

Furthermore, the actions of the intern could compromise the integrity of the social work profession, prompting mandatory reporting to ensure accountability and adherence to ethical guidelines. Taking this action not only upholds the ethics of the profession but also reinforces the importance of setting boundaries within the therapist-client relationship. Other options like explaining the inappropriateness of the act and consulting with the client do not adequately address the seriousness of the violation and the need for formal reporting, while deciding on "none of the above" fails to recognize the ethical duty to take immediate and appropriate measures in such situations.

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://aswb-bachelor.examzify.com>

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

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