

Cannon Financial Institute CFIRS Practice Exam (Sample)

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

This is a sample study guide. To access the full version with hundreds of 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. Don't worry about getting everything right, 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, and take breaks to retain information better.

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.

7. Use Other Tools

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!

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Questions

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- 1. Which aspect was not a concern of the OCC regarding operational risk in Qualified Retirement Plan Services?**
 - A. Employer securities or real property**
 - B. Affiliated mutual funds and target-date funds**
 - C. Non-publicly traded assets**
 - D. Providing employee education to Plan Sponsors**
- 2. At what point during the audit should findings be communicated to the auditee?**
 - A. Immediately**
 - B. At the exit meeting**
 - C. In the first draft of the report**
 - D. During the preliminary survey**
- 3. What is the primary goal of the asset allocation process?**
 - A. Maximizes expected return versus all other portfolios**
 - B. Maximizes risk versus all other portfolios**
 - C. Optimizes investor return for a given level of risk**
 - D. Balances the equity-fixed income mix equally**
- 4. How effective is a spendthrift clause in a revocable living trust to protect oneself from creditors?**
 - A. Protects only from business creditors**
 - B. Protects only original assets in the trust**
 - C. Protects only assets acquired after trusting**
 - D. Effective in no circumstances**
- 5. Which of the following does not hold an insurable interest in a person's life?**
 - A. Her spouse**
 - B. His business partner**
 - C. The bank which holds his mortgage**
 - D. Her life insurance company**

6. Which of the following risks is considered the most significant risk faced by a bank from its corporate trust activities?

- A. Credit**
- B. Legal**
- C. Liquidity**
- D. Operational**

7. Which department in a broker-dealer firm is responsible for acting as a liaison between issuing organizations and customers?

- A. Customer Service Department**
- B. Compliance Department**
- C. Stock Record Department**
- D. Corporate Actions Department**

8. Which of the following is NOT allowed under OCC Regulation 9?

- A. A member of the trust administration committee also is on the investment committee.**
- B. A member of the trust committee also is on the bank's loan and discount committee.**
- C. A director/officer who participates significantly in the administration of fiduciary activities serving on the trust audit committee.**
- D. A member of the trust administration committee is an officer of a non-affiliated bank.**

9. How frequently does Regulation 12 CFR 9 require fiduciary accounts to be reviewed?

- A. Every calendar year.**
- B. Every thirty days after acceptance.**
- C. Promptly upon acceptance.**
- D. Every fifteen months.**

10. Which type of investment is characterized as having low risk and yet offers a steady income stream?

- A. Common stocks.**
- B. Corporate bonds.**
- C. Treasury securities.**
- D. Real estate investments.**

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Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. Which aspect was not a concern of the OCC regarding operational risk in Qualified Retirement Plan Services?

- A. Employer securities or real property**
- B. Affiliated mutual funds and target-date funds**
- C. Non-publicly traded assets**

D. Providing employee education to Plan Sponsors

The focus of the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC) regarding operational risk in Qualified Retirement Plan Services encompasses a range of factors that impact the stability and effectiveness of these services. Among the options listed, providing employee education to Plan Sponsors is not typically viewed as an operational risk concern. This aspect primarily addresses the educational needs of the Plan Sponsors and their employees, aiming to help them understand the retirement plan options and make informed decisions. While it is undoubtedly important for enhancing the overall effectiveness and success of a retirement plan, it does not pose the same level of operational risk as the other options. In contrast, aspects like employer securities, affiliated mutual funds, and non-publicly traded assets directly relate to the integrity, governance, and marketability of the assets involved in the retirement plans, which are critical for safeguarding the interests of participants and ensuring compliance with regulations. These factors present tangible risks that could affect the operational performance and overall management of retirement plan offerings, making them a primary concern for regulators.

2. At what point during the audit should findings be communicated to the auditee?

- A. Immediately**
- B. At the exit meeting**
- C. In the first draft of the report**
- D. During the preliminary survey**

Communicating findings to the auditee immediately is essential for several reasons. First, it allows for prompt feedback, enabling the auditee to clarify any misunderstandings or provide additional context that might be relevant to the findings. This fosters an environment of transparency and cooperation, which is crucial for an effective audit process. When findings are communicated right away, it also helps in ensuring that any critical issues can be addressed before the audit process is completed. This proactive approach can lead to more accurate reporting in the final audit results and can also help in the collaborative effort to reach resolutions or corrective actions based on those findings. In comparison, discussing findings at the exit meeting or in the first draft of the report may lead to delays in addressing significant issues, as these processes come later in the audit timeline. Similarly, discussing findings during the preliminary survey would be premature since it is an early stage where the audit's focus is primarily on understanding the auditee's operations rather than evaluating compliance or effectiveness. Immediate communication keeps the audit process dynamic and responsive to the auditee's needs.

3. What is the primary goal of the asset allocation process?

- A. Maximizes expected return versus all other portfolios
- B. Maximizes risk versus all other portfolios
- C. Optimizes investor return for a given level of risk**
- D. Balances the equity-fixed income mix equally

The primary goal of the asset allocation process is to optimize investor return for a given level of risk. This involves strategically distributing investments across various asset classes—such as equities, fixed income, and cash—based on the investor's risk tolerance, investment objectives, and time horizon. By doing so, the asset allocation process seeks to achieve the best possible returns while managing potential risks. This optimization is crucial because different asset classes respond differently to market conditions. By diversifying across asset classes, investors can reduce the overall risk of their portfolio without necessarily sacrificing return potential. The core idea is to find the most efficient balance between risk and return, allowing investors to align their investment strategies with their personal financial goals. Other options do not accurately capture the nuanced objective of the asset allocation process. For instance, purely maximizing expected return or risk without considering the investor's comfort with volatility would not align with the fundamental principles of investment strategy and could lead to undesirable outcomes for investors with varying levels of risk tolerance. Similarly, an equal balance of equity and fixed income does not take into account individual circumstances, which can lead to suboptimal investment results.

4. How effective is a spendthrift clause in a revocable living trust to protect oneself from creditors?

- A. Protects only from business creditors
- B. Protects only original assets in the trust
- C. Protects only assets acquired after trusting
- D. Effective in no circumstances**

A spendthrift clause in a revocable living trust does not provide protection from creditors. This type of clause is intended to prevent beneficiaries from squandering their inheritance and to restrict creditors from accessing a beneficiary's interest in the trust until it is distributed. However, in the case of revocable living trusts, the grantor retains control over the assets and has the ability to revoke or amend the trust at any time. Because of this control, creditors can reach the assets in the trust since they are considered available to satisfy the grantor's debts. In essence, while a spendthrift clause may offer some level of protection in irrevocable trusts, in the context of a revocable living trust, it is ineffective against creditors. Hence, the notion that it is effective in any of the situations listed in the other options is inaccurate due to the nature of revocable trusts.

5. Which of the following does not hold an insurable interest in a person's life?

- A. Her spouse**
- B. His business partner**
- C. The bank which holds his mortgage**
- D. Her life insurance company**

The life insurance company does not hold an insurable interest in a person's life in the same way that individuals or entities like a spouse, business partner, or a bank do. Insurable interest is a legal and financial relationship that ensures that the policyholder will suffer a loss or hardship if the insured person dies. In the case of a spouse or business partner, there is a clear personal or financial reliance on the individual's continued life; they would experience a tangible loss if that person were to pass away. The bank, holding a mortgage, also has an insurable interest because the death of the borrower could jeopardize the repayment of the debt, thus impacting the bank financially. In contrast, a life insurance company exists to provide a financial benefit upon the death of the insured, but it does not stand to lose financially in a way that would constitute insurable interest. Their relationship is contractual and based on the policy terms, rather than one of personal or financial dependency. This distinguishes the insurance company from the other entities listed, which all have a vested interest in the person's life due to existing relationships.

6. Which of the following risks is considered the most significant risk faced by a bank from its corporate trust activities?

- A. Credit**
- B. Legal**
- C. Liquidity**
- D. Operational**

In the context of a bank's corporate trust activities, operational risk is often considered the most significant risk. This is due to the highly complex nature of trust operations, which involve managing various assets and fiduciary duties. Operational risk encompasses a range of potential issues, such as failures in internal processes, people, and systems, as well as external events that could negatively impact the trust services provided. In corporate trust activities, banks interact with numerous stakeholders, including clients, beneficiaries, and regulators, which increases the complexity and potential for errors. For example, any mismanagement in the handling of trust accounts, incorrect documentation, or inadequate compliance with regulations can lead to significant financial losses, reputational damage, and legal ramifications. Thus, the potential for operational failures to disrupt service delivery and harm the bank's reputation makes operational risk a priority for banks engaged in these activities. While other risks such as credit, legal, and liquidity risks are also pertinent in a banking context, operational risk's encompassing nature and the direct impact it has on the trust department's functioning and service provision elevate its significance above the others in this specific scenario.

7. Which department in a broker-dealer firm is responsible for acting as a liaison between issuing organizations and customers?

- A. Customer Service Department**
- B. Compliance Department**
- C. Stock Record Department**
- D. Corporate Actions Department**

The Corporate Actions Department in a broker-dealer firm plays a critical role in acting as a liaison between issuing organizations and customers. This department is primarily responsible for managing and communicating information regarding corporate actions, which include events such as stock splits, dividends, mergers, and other significant changes that can affect the value or structure of a company's securities. When an issuing organization enacts a corporate action, the Corporate Actions Department ensures that all relevant details are accurately conveyed to customers, helping them understand how these actions may impact their investments. This communication is crucial as it helps customers make informed decisions regarding their portfolios. Additionally, this department handles the logistics associated with implementing these corporate actions, ensuring all necessary procedures are followed in accordance with industry regulations. In contrast, other departments have different functions that do not involve direct liaison activities with issuing organizations and customers. For instance, the Customer Service Department focuses on assisting clients with inquiries and issues related to their accounts. The Compliance Department ensures that all activities within the firm adhere to regulatory standards but does not directly communicate corporate actions to customers. The Stock Record Department manages the firm's records related to customer holdings and transactions but does not interface with issuing organizations or provide information about corporate actions. Therefore, the Corporate Actions Department is best suited to fulfill the

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8. Which of the following is NOT allowed under OCC Regulation 9?

- A. A member of the trust administration committee also is on the investment committee.**
- B. A member of the trust committee also is on the bank's loan and discount committee.**
- C. A director/officer who participates significantly in the administration of fiduciary activities serving on the trust audit committee.**
- D. A member of the trust administration committee is an officer of a non-affiliated bank.**

The correct answer highlights a key aspect of OCC Regulation 9, which pertains to the governance of fiduciary activities, particularly focusing on the separation of duties within trust administration and auditing functions. In this context, having a director or officer who is actively involved in the administration of fiduciary activities serve on the trust audit committee could create significant conflicts of interest. The audit committee's purpose is to review and ensure the integrity of fiduciary activities, and if a committee member is also involved in the administration of those activities, it undermines the objective independence necessary for an effective audit process. The other scenarios involve instances where members serve on multiple committees or hold positions that may not directly contradict the principles laid out in OCC Regulation 9. For example, having a member of the trust administration committee also on the investment committee may reflect appropriate collaborative functions within the bank's internal structure, as long as safeguards against conflicts of interest are observed. Similarly, a member of the trust administration committee being an officer of a non-affiliated bank does not present a conflict under the regulation, provided there are no overlapping interests that could compromise fiduciary duties. Overall, the emphasis on ensuring that those who audit fiduciary activities are independent from those who administer them is a crucial component of

9. How frequently does Regulation 12 CFR 9 require fiduciary accounts to be reviewed?

- A. Every calendar year.**
- B. Every thirty days after acceptance.**
- C. Promptly upon acceptance.**
- D. Every fifteen months.**

Regulation 12 CFR 9 emphasizes the necessity for fiduciary accounts to undergo a review promptly upon acceptance. This requirement is critical because it ensures that the fiduciary institution evaluates the account to confirm that it is being managed in accordance with the applicable legal and regulatory standards, as well as the investment objectives laid out by the trust or estate document. This immediate review process allows the fiduciary to assess all relevant information about the account, including asset allocation, compliance with the terms of the fiduciary agreement, and any potential conflicts of interest. Timely reviews upon account acceptance contribute to the overall effectiveness and accountability of fiduciary management, enhancing the protection of beneficiaries' interests. Maintaining this standard helps to ensure that fiduciaries are acting in the best interests of those they represent from the very beginning of their relationship with the account. Thus, the requirement for a prompt review aligns well with the broader principles of trust and accountability in fiduciary duties.

10. Which type of investment is characterized as having low risk and yet offers a steady income stream?

- A. Common stocks.**
- B. Corporate bonds.**
- C. Treasury securities.**
- D. Real estate investments.**

Treasury securities are considered low-risk investments that provide a steady income stream due to their backing by the full faith and credit of the U.S. government. They include various types such as Treasury bills, notes, and bonds, which pay interest at regular intervals. The safety of Treasury securities comes from the fact that they are virtually risk-free in terms of default, making them a favored choice for conservative investors seeking reliable returns. In contrast, common stocks tend to carry higher risk because their value can fluctuate significantly due to market conditions, and they may not guarantee any income, especially if dividends are cut. Corporate bonds may offer higher yields than Treasury securities but come with added risk depending on the financial health of the issuing corporation. Real estate investments can provide steady income through rental income, yet they also involve market and management risks, as well as significant upfront costs. As such, Treasury securities stand out as the most suitable option for investors prioritizing low risk and a consistent income stream.

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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:

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

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