

CMAA Certified Associate Construction Manager (CACM) Practice Test (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 the CM performs forward pricing, which of the following factors should be considered in evaluating production rates?**
 - A. Labor productivity**
 - B. Material cost escalation**
 - C. Equipment depreciation**
 - D. Quality control**

- 2. Which statement best reflects the fiduciary duty of an agency CM toward the owner?**
 - A. Act in the owner's best interest at all times**
 - B. Maximize your own profit even if it conflicts with the owner's interests**
 - C. Disclose all owner's confidential information to others**
 - D. Avoid taking responsibility for project costs**

- 3. CM organizations should provide training to all employees in which topic?**
 - A. Ethics and standards of practice**
 - B. Risk management**
 - C. Quality assurance**
 - D. Environmental compliance**

- 4. Which of the following is typically part of a quality management plan?**
 - A. Cost Estimate Review**
 - B. Installation procedures**
 - C. Procedures for receiving material**
 - D. Project organizational structure**

- 5. Which statement about Schedule Performance Index (SPI) is correct?**
 - A. $SPI > 1$ means ahead of schedule**
 - B. $SPI < 1$ means on schedule**
 - C. $SPI = 0$ means complete**
 - D. SPI cannot measure schedule**

- 6. Which activity verifies and documents the performance of building systems to ensure they operate as intended before occupancy?**
- A. Commissioning**
 - B. System integration testing**
 - C. Cold shut testing**
 - D. Acceptance testing**
- 7. In forward pricing, which factor should be considered in evaluating production rates?**
- A. Material cost escalation**
 - B. Labor cost variance**
 - C. Equipment utilization**
 - D. Subcontractor performance**
- 8. Which delivery method involves contracting with multiple primes for different parts of the project under one project?**
- A. Design-bid-build**
 - B. CM at-risk**
 - C. Multiple-prime contracting**
 - D. Design-build**
- 9. Which milestone marks the date when the building can be occupied for its intended use, with minor work still remaining?**
- A. Final completion**
 - B. Substantial completion**
 - C. Practical completion**
 - D. Acceptance**
- 10. For force account work, daily verification is performed to monitor which aspects?**
- A. Safety incidents**
 - B. Schedule only**
 - C. Quality of workmanship only**
 - D. Progress and costs**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. When the CM performs forward pricing, which of the following factors should be considered in evaluating production rates?

- A. Labor productivity**
- B. Material cost escalation**
- C. Equipment depreciation**
- D. Quality control**

Forward pricing hinges on projecting future costs to set a price for the project, and production rate is the pace you expect to work at while staying within budget. Material costs often swing over the life of a project, and those fluctuations directly affect how much work you can economically complete in a given period. If materials are expected to become more expensive, the cost per unit of output rises, which can force you to adjust the planned production rate or the price to maintain profitability. That's why material cost escalation is the factor you focus on when evaluating production rates for forward pricing—it helps ensure the price you set will still cover future material expenditures. Labor productivity sets the baseline speed of work, but forward pricing emphasizes cost risk over time; equipment depreciation is a non-cash cost allocation, and quality control primarily affects actual efficiency and rework rather than future price risk.

2. Which statement best reflects the fiduciary duty of an agency CM toward the owner?

- A. Act in the owner's best interest at all times**
- B. Maximize your own profit even if it conflicts with the owner's interests**
- C. Disclose all owner's confidential information to others**
- D. Avoid taking responsibility for project costs**

The fiduciary duty of an agency CM toward the owner centers on acting in the owner's best interests at all times. This requires loyalty and diligent, objective decision-making that prioritizes the owner's goals, budgets, and timeline. The CM must provide unbiased advice, manage risks and costs responsibly, and keep the owner informed about significant developments and potential conflicts. Confidential information should be protected, and any conflicts of interest should be disclosed and addressed rather than exploited. In short, the CM's actions should enhance the owner's value and success, not personal profit or shielding responsibility.

3. CM organizations should provide training to all employees in which topic?

- A. Ethics and standards of practice**
- B. Risk management**
- C. Quality assurance**
- D. Environmental compliance**

The key idea is establishing a baseline for professional conduct across the organization. Training every employee in ethics and standards of practice ensures everyone understands expected behavior, integrity, and responsibility, which helps guide decisions and actions aligned with professional norms. This universal grounding builds trust with clients, stakeholders, and the public and reduces the risk of misconduct that could harm the firm's reputation or lead to legal issues. While risk management, quality assurance, and environmental compliance are important, they are typically targeted to specific roles or functions and require more specialized training; they don't provide the universal behavioral standard that ethics and standards of practice deliver.

4. Which of the following is typically part of a quality management plan?

- A. Cost Estimate Review**
- B. Installation procedures**
- C. Procedures for receiving material**
- D. Project organizational structure**

A quality management plan defines how quality will be achieved and verified throughout the project. It covers the methods, standards, and activities that ensure work is performed to meet the specified requirements. Installation procedures fit squarely here because they spell out the approved way to perform installations—the sequence, workmanship standards, tools, materials, tolerances, and acceptance criteria. When teams follow these procedures, the work tends to be consistent and verifiable, making it easier to inspect, test, and confirm that the installation meets design intent and quality standards. Cost estimate review falls under cost management, focusing on budgeting and financial control rather than how work is performed to meet quality. Procedures for receiving material relate to procurement and supply chain controls; while receipt checks can influence quality, they're not typically the central element of the quality plan. Project organizational structure is part of the overall project management plan, not the quality plan.

5. Which statement about Schedule Performance Index (SPI) is correct?

- A. SPI > 1 means ahead of schedule**
- B. SPI < 1 means on schedule**
- C. SPI = 0 means complete**
- D. SPI cannot measure schedule**

The Schedule Performance Index (SPI) compares earned value to planned value to gauge schedule efficiency. $SPI = EV / PV$. When SPI is greater than 1, more work has been completed than was planned for the given time, so you're ahead of schedule. If SPI is less than 1 you're behind schedule, and SPI equals 1 means you're on schedule. Therefore, the statement that SPI > 1 means ahead of schedule is correct. The other options misinterpret the metric: SPI < 1 means behind schedule, SPI = 0 does not indicate completion, and SPI can measure schedule performance.

6. Which activity verifies and documents the performance of building systems to ensure they operate as intended before occupancy?

- A. Commissioning**
- B. System integration testing**
- C. Cold shut testing**
- D. Acceptance testing**

Commissioning is the systematic process of verifying and documenting that building systems operate in accordance with the design intent and project requirements, and it is conducted before occupancy. It involves planning, design review, installation verification, functional performance testing, adjustments, and turnover documentation to prove that systems such as HVAC, electrical, plumbing, controls, and life-safety operate as intended and that the owner has clear operation and maintenance information. While system integration testing focuses on how subsystems work together and acceptance testing often centers on contractual compliance, commissioning provides the comprehensive verification and documentation needed to ensure overall building performance before people move in.

7. In forward pricing, which factor should be considered in evaluating production rates?

- A. Material cost escalation**
- B. Labor cost variance**
- C. Equipment utilization**
- D. Subcontractor performance**

In forward pricing, the key is to anticipate how costs will change over the duration of the project as you estimate the rate at which work can be produced. Material costs often comprise a large portion of total cost and are prone to escalation over time. If materials become more expensive, the cost per unit of output rises, which can erode margins unless production rates or pricing are adjusted accordingly. Therefore, considering material cost escalation ensures the production-rate assumptions remain realistic for future pricing. While labor cost variance, equipment utilization, and subcontractor performance affect actual performance and risk, material cost escalation is the factor most impactful for pricing decisions that cover the entire project horizon.

8. Which delivery method involves contracting with multiple primes for different parts of the project under one project?

- A. Design-bid-build
- B. CM at-risk
- C. Multiple-prime contracting**
- D. Design-build

Multiple-prime contracting is a delivery method where the owner contracts with several prime contractors to perform different portions of the project under one project. This setup lets you bring in specialized firms for each scope—such as foundations, electrical, plumbing, and structural work—while the owner or a coordinating manager ensures these parts fit together. It offers greater control over which trades are hired and can foster competition among primes, but it requires strong coordination and clear interfaces to keep the schedule and costs aligned, since integration depends on managing multiple contracts and their interdependencies. This differs from design-bid-build, which typically involves a design contract plus a single general contractor; design-build, where one entity handles both design and construction; and CM at-risk, where a construction manager serves as adviser and may deliver the project under a single CM contract rather than multiple primes.

9. Which milestone marks the date when the building can be occupied for its intended use, with minor work still remaining?

- A. Final completion
- B. Substantial completion**
- C. Practical completion
- D. Acceptance

Substantial completion is the milestone when the project is ready for its intended use, even though minor tasks may still remain. At this point the owner can occupy the building and begin its normal use, while a punch list of small items is completed afterward. This distinction matters because occupancy and the start of certain protections or warranties are tied to substantial completion, not to final completion. Final completion means all work is finished and closeout items are fully resolved, which comes later. Practical completion is often described as the point at which all major works are finished and the project is substantially usable, but the exact trigger can vary by contract; occupancy is typically associated with substantial completion. Acceptance refers to the owner formally accepting the work, which is not the milestone that allows occupancy.

10. For force account work, daily verification is performed to monitor which aspects?

- A. Safety incidents**
- B. Schedule only**
- C. Quality of workmanship only**
- D. Progress and costs**

For force account work, daily verification is about tracking what has been completed (progress) and what it costs (costs) on a daily basis. This dual focus is essential because payments for force account are based on actual work performed and the true costs incurred, so you need up-to-date information to manage the project effectively. Keeping a daily record helps you see how the project is tracking against the plan. If progress is ahead or behind schedule, you can adjust resource allocation, productivity, or scheduling assumptions promptly. At the same time, recording actual costs daily lets you detect variances from the budget early, forecast final costs, and justify payments or change orders as work unfolds. This combined view enables timely decisions to keep the project on track financially and schedule-wise. Why not isolate only safety, or only schedule, or only quality? Safety incidents are important but are managed through a separate safety program. A focus on schedule alone misses the cost implications, while concentrating only on quality ignores how workmanship status translates into time and money. The daily verification for force account work intentionally pairs progress with costs to provide a complete picture of performance.

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://cmaacacm.examzify.com>

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

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