

DESIGN-BUILD INSTITUTE OF AMERICA (DBIA) EXAM 1 PRACTICE (SAMPLE)

STUDY GUIDE



SAMPLE STUDY GUIDE WITH LIMITED QUESTIONS

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Table of Contents

Copyright	1
Table of Contents	2
Introduction	3
How to Use This Guide	4
Questions	5
Answers	8
Explanations	10
Next Steps	15

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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. Which project delivery method describes a 'Standard of Care Relationship' with the A/E?**
 - A. Spearheading Relationship
 - B. Standard of Care Relationship
 - C. Open Relationship
 - D. Collaborative Relationship
- 2. For project-specific technical submittals, which procurement process and phase limits apply?**
 - A. One-phase
 - B. Two-phase
 - C. Three-phase
 - D. Open-bid
- 3. Which delivery method has a wide spectrum of contracting approaches?**
 - A. Integrated Project Delivery
 - B. Design-Bid-Build
 - C. Construction Manager at Risk
 - D. Design-Build
- 4. Which description best captures the overall nature of Best Practices as presented?**
 - A. High-Level Principles Organized into Three Topic Areas: Procurement, Contracting, and Execution
 - B. A Set of Detailed Procedures
 - C. A Single Universal Standard for All DB Projects
 - D. An Optional Guideline with No Impact on Outcomes
- 5. Which of the following is a type of requirement?**
 - A. External
 - B. Functional
 - C. Performance
 - D. Prescriptive

- 6. Owners should make strategic decisions to take full advantage of Design-Build.**
- A. Design-Build
 - B. Design-Bid-Build
 - C. Construction Manager at Risk
 - D. Integrated Project Delivery
- 7. Which statement best describes the purpose of identifying and involving key project stakeholders early in the planning process?**
- A. To ensure input shapes planning
 - B. To speed up procurement
 - C. To reduce costs at all times
 - D. To complete design faster
- 8. Which type of requirements are considered the top-level mandates in the design-build process?**
- A. Functional
 - B. Performance
 - C. Structural
 - D. Aesthetic
- 9. Prime-subcontractor relationships for DB can be led by which entity?**
- A. Designer-led
 - B. Developer-led
 - C. Owner-led
 - D. Contractor-led
- 10. Which project delivery methods have the potential to fast-track the schedule?**
- A. Design-Build (DB)
 - B. Construction Manager at Risk (CMAR)
 - C. Both Design-Build and CMAR
 - D. None of the above

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. Which project delivery method describes a 'Standard of Care Relationship' with the A/E?

- A. Spearheading Relationship
- B. Standard of Care Relationship**
- C. Open Relationship
- D. Collaborative Relationship

The key idea here is how the Architect/Engineer is engaged and what duties they owe to the owner under a given delivery approach. A Standard of Care Relationship means the A/E provides professional design services under a contract that requires them to perform with the skill, care, and diligence that a reasonably prudent professional would exercise. The owner relies on that professional standard, and the A/E's liability is tied to meeting it. This fits traditional methods where design and construction are separated: the A/E works under a professional services agreement, delivering designs that meet professional standards, rather than operating under a highly integrated or collaborative team structure. In more collaborative delivery approaches, the relationship shifts toward shared risk and joint decision-making, which is different from the strict standard-of-care liability model.

2. For project-specific technical submittals, which procurement process and phase limits apply?

- A. One-phase
- B. Two-phase**
- C. Three-phase
- D. Open-bid

When a project has unique technical requirements that must be demonstrated by bidders, a two-phase procurement is used. In Phase I, the owner prequalifies teams to ensure they have the qualifications, experience, and capabilities to pursue the project. In Phase II, the shortlisted teams submit project-specific technical submittals that detail how they would meet the distinct technical performance requirements, often with price proposals evaluated afterward or in a separate step. This structure lets the owner assess technical capability and approach before considering cost, reducing risk of selecting a team that cannot meet the technical needs. Choosing a single, open, or purely price-focused process would not provide the same opportunity to verify how bidders intend to achieve the project's technical goals, and a more complex three-phase approach is generally reserved for especially large or highly iterative programs.

3. Which delivery method has a wide spectrum of contracting approaches?

- A. Integrated Project Delivery
- B. Design-Bid-Build
- C. Construction Manager at Risk
- D. Design-Build**

Design-Build stands out because it combines design and construction under one contract, giving the owner flexibility to tailor how the project is priced and how risk is shared. With this delivery method, you can choose from a range of contract forms—lump-sum, cost-plus with a target or GMP, incentive-based arrangements, or other pricing structures—while still having a single point of responsibility for both design and construction. That flexibility lets the project adapt to budget, schedule, and risk preferences without changing delivery method. In contrast, design-bid-build follows a traditional sequence with separate contracts for design and construction and a more fixed pricing path after competitive bidding. Construction Manager at Risk focuses on a specific role for the CM with a GMP, which is just one way to structure preconstruction and cost risk. Integrated Project Delivery emphasizes collaboration among multiple parties under a distinct contractual framework, but it's a different delivery approach rather than a broad set of contracting forms under one umbrella. So the ability to accommodate many contracting approaches within a single delivery method is a hallmark of design-build.

4. Which description best captures the overall nature of Best Practices as presented?

- A. High-Level Principles Organized into Three Topic Areas: Procurement, Contracting, and Execution**
- B. A Set of Detailed Procedures
- C. A Single Universal Standard for All DB Projects
- D. An Optional Guideline with No Impact on Outcomes

Best Practices describe high-level principles that guide how design-build projects are organized and delivered. They aren't a rigid set of procedures; instead, they lay out overarching ideas you apply across the project lifecycle. The most fitting description groups these principles into three broad topic areas—Procurement, Contracting, and Execution—covering how you select the team and strategy, how you structure agreements and allocate risk, and how you manage design and construction toward integrated, value-driven outcomes. This framing reflects that Best Practices provide guiding principles across major phases rather than a single universal standard, and they aren't merely optional or without impact—following them helps improve collaboration, risk management, and overall project outcomes.

5. Which of the following is a type of requirement?

- A. External
- B. Functional**
- C. Performance
- D. Prescriptive

In DBIA practice, requirements are described in terms of what the project must do. Functional requirements specify the functions or services the building must provide for its users, focusing on the intended use and operations rather than prescribing exact solutions. This makes them a primary type of owner requirement because they set the what, not the how. The other terms describe different ideas: external considerations are factors outside the project's design, performance requirements set measurable outcomes the project must meet, and prescriptive requirements specify particular materials or construction methods. Among these options, the one that directly names a category of requirement used to capture user and operational needs is the functional type.

6. Owners should make strategic decisions to take full advantage of Design-Build.

A. Design-Build

B. Design-Bid-Build

C. Construction Manager at Risk

D. Integrated Project Delivery

Design-Build brings design and construction services under one contract and one integrated team, from the start. This structure creates a single point of accountability and a shared focus on project goals, which makes it easier to align budget, schedule, and performance. When the owner uses Design-Build, designers and builders collaborate early, allowing constructability input, sequencing decisions, and cost implications to influence the design as it develops. That collaboration tends to reduce change orders, speed up delivery, and improve cost certainty through mechanisms like early budgeting and potential target pricing. With a unified team pursuing common objectives, decisions can be made faster, risks are managed collectively, and the project can progress more efficiently toward the owner's desired outcomes. Other delivery methods separate design and construction across different contracts, which often leads to interface issues, longer approval cycles, and more disputes or delays. While alternatives like IPD or CM at Risk have their own strengths, the Design-Build approach is most directly designed to maximize integration, accountability, and speed whenever the owner's goal is to leverage a streamlined, collaborative delivery.

7. Which statement best describes the purpose of identifying and involving key project stakeholders early in the planning process?

A. To ensure input shapes planning

B. To speed up procurement

C. To reduce costs at all times

D. To complete design faster

Getting input from stakeholders early ensures their input shapes the planning. When you involve owners, end users, operators, and other key players from the start, you gather their objectives, constraints, and performance expectations, and this information directly informs the project scope, criteria, and approach. This early alignment helps set realistic goals, clarifies decision rights, and builds buy-in, which reduces misunderstandings and changes later in the project. The outcome is a planning direction that reflects what matters most to those who fund and will use the project, not just a focus on speed or cost. While faster procurement, lower costs, or quicker design can be benefits of good early collaboration, they aren't the primary purpose; the main aim is to ensure the plan is shaped by the people and needs that will drive project success.

8. Which type of requirements are considered the top-level mandates in the design-build process?

- A. Functional**
- B. Performance
- C. Structural
- D. Aesthetic

Functional requirements are the main statements that define what the project must do for the users and the business. They capture the intended use, activities, and operations the space must support from the owner's perspective, without getting into how the building will be built or exactly how it will perform. Because they establish purpose and scope, they drive the entire design-build process—informing layout, adjacencies, flexibility, capacity, and how success will be judged. Performance requirements then translate those functions into measurable targets, while structural and aesthetic criteria address how the solution will be built and what it will look like. So the top-level mandates are the functional requirements.

9. Prime-subcontractor relationships for DB can be led by which entity?

- A. Designer-led
- B. Developer-led
- C. Owner-led
- D. Contractor-led**

In design-build, a single entity—the design-builder—takes on the role of the prime, coordinating both design and construction and contracting directly with subcontractors. This contractor-led arrangement means the prime-subcontractor relationships are led by the design-builder, who holds the single point of responsibility to the owner. This structure streamlines accountability, speeds decision-making, and ensures integrated design and construction work through one accountable party. Designer-led would place the architectural or engineering firm in charge, which can fragment coordination with trades. Owner-led would put the owner in the lead of managing subs, undermining the design-build model's single-point accountability. Developer-led focuses on project development rather than delivering integrated design and construction. Hence, contractor-led is the best fit for DB prime-subcontractor leadership.

10. Which project delivery methods have the potential to fast-track the schedule?

- A. Design-Build (DB)
- B. Construction Manager at Risk (CMAR)
- C. Both Design-Build and CMAR**
- D. None of the above

Fast-tracking relies on overlapping design and construction activities and getting contractor input early to compress the schedule. Design-Build does this naturally because design and construction are handled under one contract, allowing design decisions to be made with construction thinking in mind and enabling construction work to begin before the full design is complete. Construction Manager at Risk brings the CM onboard early in the design phase, so constructability input, phased plans, and early procurement of long-lead items can be developed and aligned with the design. This early involvement helps overlap work and shorten the overall duration. Because both approaches provide these pathways to overlap and accelerate delivery, both have the potential to fast-track.

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://dbia1.examzify.com>

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

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