

NCARB PROJECT MANAGEMENT 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

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- 1. What describes accrual accounting?**
 - A. Records revenues and expenses when they occur, not necessarily when cash changes hands.
 - B. Records revenues and expenses when cash changes hands
 - C. It is rarely used in practice
 - D. Records revenues at the end of the year only
- 2. Which document is the AIA design-build contract between Owner and Design Builder?**
 - A. A141, Agreement Between Owner and Design Builder
 - B. A101, Agreement Between Owner and Contractor
 - C. C201, General Conditions
 - D. E201, Data Exchange
- 3. Which statement best describes the architect's responsibility regarding code requirements and design decisions?**
 - A. Enforcing code compliance on the owner.
 - B. Handling contractor procurement.
 - C. Approving all construction changes.
 - D. Informing the consultants about the applicable code requirements and about any new design decisions that may have code implications.
- 4. Which statement describes the Design-Build project delivery method?**
 - A. The owner contracts with one entity to provide both design and construction services, that entity then subcontracts portions of the work to others as needed
 - B. A form of business ownership where the owner has unlimited liability
 - C. A project where the owner employs a construction manager to oversee the project
 - D. A project delivery method in which the design and construction are performed by separate entities with a competitive bid
- 5. AIA A132 refers to which Standard Form?**
 - A. Standard Form of Agreement Between Owner and Contractor, Construction Manager as Adviser
 - B. Standard Form of Agreement Between Owner and Architect
 - C. Standard Form of Agreement Between Architect and Contractor
 - D. Standard Form of Agreement Between Owner and Consultant

- 6. Which element is excluded from FAR calculations?**
- A. Structured parking
 - B. Nonresidential floor area
 - C. Residential floor area
 - D. Total site area
- 7. Which option correctly describes the unit cluster sizes used for the townhouse project?**
- A. two-, three-, and four-bedroom units
 - B. four-, five-, and six-townhouse units
 - C. six-, eight-, and ten-townhouse clusters
 - D. single-family homes and townhouses
- 8. Break-even multiplier is defined as which of the following?**
- A. Total overhead divided by Total direct salary.
 - B. Total direct salary divided by Total overhead.
 - C. (Total overhead) divided by (Total direct salary + Total profit).
 - D. (Total overhead + Total direct salary) / Total direct salary.
- 9. Which of the following describes the typical purpose of a certificate of authorization (COA) in state regulation?**
- A. To authorize a corporation to practice architecture
 - B. To authorize individual professionals to practice
 - C. To grant a permit for a building project
 - D. To certify insurance coverage
- 10. In the AIA Contract Series, which series covers Owner-Architect agreements?**
- A. A-series Owner-Contractor Agreements
 - B. C-Other agreements
 - C. D-Miscellaneous Docs
 - D. B-Owner-Architect

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What describes accrual accounting?

- A. Records revenues and expenses when they occur, not necessarily when cash changes hands.**
- B. Records revenues and expenses when cash changes hands
- C. It is rarely used in practice
- D. Records revenues at the end of the year only

Accrual accounting records revenues when they are earned and expenses when they are incurred, regardless of when cash actually changes hands. This mirrors the matching principle: the finances reflect the actions that occurred in the same time period, so you see the true profitability of a project for that period. In practice, this means you bill and recognize revenue as work is performed, even if the client pays later, and you record costs when the related work or obligation occurs, not when you pay the bill. This approach provides a more accurate, period-by-period view of financial performance and is standard for GAAP-based reporting and project-based firms. The other ideas—waiting for cash to flow to recognize revenue, claiming it's rarely used, or only recognizing revenue at year's end—do not align with how accrual accounting actually functions.

2. Which document is the AIA design-build contract between Owner and Design Builder?

- A. A141, Agreement Between Owner and Design Builder**
- B. A101, Agreement Between Owner and Contractor
- C. C201, General Conditions
- D. E201, Data Exchange

In design-build, the owner signs a single contract with the design-builder who provides both design and construction services. The document that formalizes this relationship is the Design-Build Agreement between the Owner and the Design-Builder. It sets the scope, responsibilities, compensation, and risk under one integrated agreement, reflecting the single accountability and collaborative flow of a design-build project. The Owner-Contractor agreement is used for traditional design-bid-build where design and construction are separate; the General Conditions establish the baseline terms for the project and can accompany various contracts; and the Data Exchange document governs information-sharing processes rather than establishing the contract itself.

3. Which statement best describes the architect's responsibility regarding code requirements and design decisions?

- A. Enforcing code compliance on the owner.
- B. Handling contractor procurement.
- C. Approving all construction changes.
- D. Informing the consultants about the applicable code requirements and about any new design decisions that may have code implications.**

The key idea is that the architect coordinates how codes affect the design and keeps the project team aligned. Codes drive safety, accessibility, fire and structural performance, energy, and other requirements, and it's the architect's job to identify which codes apply and to flag any design decisions that could impact code compliance. That information is then shared with the consultants (civil, structural, MEP, fire protection, accessibility experts, etc.) so they can integrate the code requirements into their analyses and drawings. This collaborative stance helps ensure the design stays within code constraints as it evolves. This is why informing consultants about applicable code requirements and the potential code implications of design decisions is the best description of the architect's responsibility. The other options misstate the role: enforcing code compliance rests with the owner and the authorities having jurisdiction, not the architect alone; procuring contractors is a separate function; and approving all construction changes is not a blanket duty of the architect and overlooks the broader contract administration process and owner involvement.

4. Which statement describes the Design-Build project delivery method?

- A. The owner contracts with one entity to provide both design and construction services, that entity then subcontracts portions of the work to others as needed**
- B. A form of business ownership where the owner has unlimited liability
- C. A project where the owner employs a construction manager to oversee the project
- D. A project delivery method in which the design and construction are performed by separate entities with a competitive bid

Design-build is a project delivery approach where the owner signs a single contract with one entity that provides both design and construction services. That entity may subcontract portions of the work to specialists, but the responsibility for design and construction lies with that single point of accountability. This arrangement enables integrated teamwork, faster decision-making, and potential overlapping of design and construction activities, which can shorten the schedule and improve cost control. The other statements describe different concepts. An unlimited-liability business structure isn't about the delivery method. A project where a construction manager oversees the work is characteristic of CM/AR or CM approach, not design-build. A setup where design and construction are performed by separate entities with competitive bids describes design-bid-build, which has distinct bids for design and then for construction.

5. AIA A132 refers to which Standard Form?

- A. Standard Form of Agreement Between Owner and Contractor, Construction Manager as Adviser**
- B. Standard Form of Agreement Between Owner and Architect
- C. Standard Form of Agreement Between Architect and Contractor
- D. Standard Form of Agreement Between Owner and Consultant

AIA A132 is the standard form that documents the agreement between the owner and a Construction Manager acting as Adviser. This delivery method uses the CMA to provide advisory services—such as preconstruction planning, budgeting, scheduling, and coordination—while the actual construction is carried out under a separate contract with a builder. That focus on the owner–construction manager advisory relationship is what sets this form apart from agreements that bind the owner to an architect, an architect to a contractor, or an owner to a consultant. The other options describe those different pairing relationships, not the owner–construction manager as adviser arrangement.

6. Which element is excluded from FAR calculations?

- A. Structured parking**
- B. Nonresidential floor area
- C. Residential floor area
- D. Total site area

FAR measures how densely a site is used by comparing the building's floor area to the site area. It counts floor areas that contribute to occupancy, such as residential and nonresidential space, but excludes spaces that aren't habitable or occupiable. Structured parking fits that exclusion because it is a parking structure for vehicles, not usable interior space. Including it would skew the density metric without reflecting usable space on the site. The site area remains the denominator in the calculation, but it's not counted as floor area. So, structured parking is the element excluded from FAR calculations.

7. Which option correctly describes the unit cluster sizes used for the townhouse project?

- A. two-, three-, and four-bedroom units
- B. four-, five-, and six-townhouse units**
- C. six-, eight-, and ten-townhouse clusters
- D. single-family homes and townhouses

Unit cluster size refers to how many townhouse units share a single cluster or block within the project. For this townhouse plan, the clusters are designed to contain four, five, or six townhouse units. This range provides a balance between density and human-scale design, allowing for efficient layout, shared amenities, and manageable parking and circulation while keeping the development cohesive and walkable. The other options describe bedrooms, larger clusters, or include different housing types, which do not describe the intended townhouse cluster configuration.

8. Break-even multiplier is defined as which of the following?

- A. Total overhead divided by Total direct salary.
- B. Total direct salary divided by Total overhead.
- C. (Total overhead) divided by (Total direct salary + Total profit).
- D. (Total overhead + Total direct salary) / Total direct salary.**

The idea being tested is how to determine the break-even multiplier for labor costs. This multiplier tells you how much to bill per dollar of direct salary so that total costs, including overhead, are covered. To get it, you take the total overhead and add the total direct salary, then divide that sum by the total direct salary. This yields the factor by which direct labor must be billed to break even on costs. In other words, total costs (overhead plus direct salaries) are expressed as a multiple of direct salaries. The correct definition is (Total overhead + Total direct salary) / Total direct salary. The other formulations miss the balance of costs: one only accounts for overhead, another inverts the ratio, and another mixes in profit incorrectly, so they don't reflect the true cost-to-direct-labor relationship.

9. Which of the following describes the typical purpose of a certificate of authorization (COA) in state regulation?

- A. To authorize a corporation to practice architecture**
- B. To authorize individual professionals to practice
- C. To grant a permit for a building project
- D. To certify insurance coverage

In state regulation, a certificate of authorization is used to allow a corporation or firm to practice architecture within that state. It certifies that the business entity has a licensed architect or responsible professional in charge and meets the regulatory requirements to provide architectural services. This is about the entity's permission to offer professional services, not about granting licenses to individual people, issuing building permits, or certifying insurance coverage.

10. In the AIA Contract Series, which series covers Owner-Architect agreements?

- A. A-series Owner-Contractor Agreements
- B. C-Other agreements
- C. D-Miscellaneous Docs
- D. B-Owner-Architect**

Think about how the AIA documents are organized: they're grouped by who is involved and what the agreement covers. The set that handles the relationship between the Owner and the Architect is the B-series. It includes the standard Owner-Architect Agreement and related services documents, outlining scope, responsibilities, and fees for architectural work. So, when the question asks which series covers Owner-Architect agreements, the correct choice is the one that identifies the Owner-Architect relationship as part of the B-series. The other series address other party pairings or miscellaneous documents, not the Owner-Architect contract.

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://ncarbprojectmgmt.examzify.com>

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

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