

NCTJ Essential Media Law Practice Test (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. What kind of works are NOT covered by the 'fair dealing' defence?**
 - A. Written material**
 - B. Broadcast material**
 - C. Photographs**
 - D. All of the above**

- 2. Which of the following indicates that a criminal case is no longer active?**
 - A. When the defendant is acquitted or sentenced**
 - B. When the person is arrested**
 - C. When a warrant for arrest is issued**
 - D. When an appeal is lodged**

- 3. What kind of content typically does not require permission to be copied?**
 - A. Music and art from all public domain pieces**
 - B. Content created within the last five years**
 - C. Highly technical documents**
 - D. Confidential company reports**

- 4. What does the section 3 defence of innocent publication to contempt entail?**
 - A. The publisher must prove good faith**
 - B. The publisher must demonstrate prior knowledge of proceedings**
 - C. The publisher took reasonable care and had no reason to suspect active proceedings**
 - D. The publisher must provide evidence of fairness in reporting**

- 5. What is 'jigsaw identification'?**
 - A. A method to protect anonymity in court systems**
 - B. A technique used in witness protection**
 - C. A situation where someone with anonymity is identifiable through published details**
 - D. A process of legal identification in court**

6. In the scenario of copyright infringement, what can destroy a claim for infringement?

- A. Providing proper citations to the work**
- B. Executives allowing public use of their work**
- C. Showing the work to a small group**
- D. Acquiescence by the owner of the copyright**

7. What is required by law if a journalist wishes to use material obtained through subterfuge?

- A. They must notify their newsroom**
- B. They should seek legal counsel**
- C. It must be approved by a senior editor**
- D. It should be justified as necessary for public interest**

8. Under what condition can police seize film or cameras from journalists?

- A. When there is a public safety concern**
- B. When they suspect evidence of a crime is present**
- C. When they receive a complaint from a citizen**
- D. When they are conducting routine inspections**

9. Who owns the copyright to a speech?

- A. The audience who hears the speech**
- B. The organization that hosted the speech**
- C. The speaker**
- D. The event organizer**

10. Which of the following is NOT an acceptable reason for hiding a journalist's identity in a story?

- A. For personal safety reasons**
- B. To protect their source of information**
- C. To maintain a competitive advantage**
- D. To comply with legal obligations**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What kind of works are NOT covered by the 'fair dealing' defence?

- A. Written material**
- B. Broadcast material**
- C. Photographs**
- D. All of the above**

The 'fair dealing' defence relates to certain categories of works that are protected under copyright law, allowing limited use without permission in specific circumstances, such as criticism, review, or news reporting. While written materials and broadcast content may fall under fair dealing if the use meets the legal criteria, photographs present unique challenges. Photographs are often not included under the same fair dealing provisions as other forms of works due to their specific nature and the way copyright is applied to them. For instance, using a photograph may more easily infringe on the rights of the copyright holder compared to using written excerpts or content from broadcasts. Fair dealing can provide a defence for certain uses of written and broadcast material like quoting or discussing ideas, but photographs often require explicit permission for reproduction or public display, making them a less straightforward case for fair dealing. Thus, while written materials and broadcast materials can often be used under fair dealing guidelines when conditions are met, photographs are typically governed by stricter copyright regulations, making them the category not adequately covered by the 'fair dealing' defence.

2. Which of the following indicates that a criminal case is no longer active?

- A. When the defendant is acquitted or sentenced**
- B. When the person is arrested**
- C. When a warrant for arrest is issued**
- D. When an appeal is lodged**

In a criminal case, the status is considered inactive once the legal proceedings have concluded, which typically occurs when the defendant is acquitted or sentenced. An acquittal signifies that the defendant has been found not guilty of the charges, effectively bringing the case to a close. Similarly, when a defendant is sentenced, it marks the end of that particular phase of the legal process, as the court has made its final decision regarding guilt and the appropriate punishment. The act of arresting a person or issuing a warrant for arrest signifies that the case is still in the preliminary stages of legal proceedings, with various processes yet to unfold. Furthermore, lodging an appeal indicates that there is an ongoing legal dispute regarding the outcome of the case, which means that it is still active in the judicial system. Therefore, the conclusion of acquittal or sentencing is the clear demarcation of a case no longer being active.

3. What kind of content typically does not require permission to be copied?

- A. Music and art from all public domain pieces**
- B. Content created within the last five years**
- C. Highly technical documents**
- D. Confidential company reports**

Content that is in the public domain is free from copyright restrictions, which means that anyone can use, copy, and distribute it without needing to obtain permission. This typically includes works for which the copyright has expired, works created by the U.S. federal government, and some other specific works that have been designated as public domain. This lack of restrictions makes public domain content a valuable resource for creators who want to use, adapt, or build upon existing works. The other options do not share this characteristic. Content created within the last five years is still under copyright protection and requires permission for use. Highly technical documents may contain proprietary information or are protected by copyright, necessitating permission. Similarly, confidential company reports are not meant for public use and require explicit consent from the company to be accessed or copied.

4. What does the section 3 defence of innocent publication to contempt entail?

- A. The publisher must prove good faith**
- B. The publisher must demonstrate prior knowledge of proceedings**
- C. The publisher took reasonable care and had no reason to suspect active proceedings**
- D. The publisher must provide evidence of fairness in reporting**

The section 3 defence of innocent publication to contempt is designed to protect publishers from liability for contempt of court when they publish information related to ongoing legal proceedings. The correct understanding of this defence emphasizes that the publisher must show that they took reasonable care in handling the publication and had no prior knowledge or reason to suspect that active legal proceedings were occurring concerning the subject matter. This defence acknowledges that a publisher who acts carefully and reasonably—ensuring that they are not creating potential harm to the administration of justice—should not be held liable for contempt. Therefore, if a publisher demonstrates that they took reasonable care and had no reason to suspect that any legal action or proceedings were initiated, they can effectively claim this defence. The other options do not accurately reflect the criteria needed for the section 3 defence. For instance, while good faith is a general principle in many legal contexts, it does not specifically address the requirements for this specific defence. Similarly, demonstrating prior knowledge of proceedings contradicts the intent of the defence, as it is meant for those unaware of any ongoing action. Lastly, although fairness in reporting is crucial for journalistic integrity, it is not a primary concern under this particular legal defence, which centers mainly on the publisher's knowledge and the reasonable steps taken prior

5. What is 'jigsaw identification'?

- A. A method to protect anonymity in court systems**
- B. A technique used in witness protection**
- C. A situation where someone with anonymity is identifiable through published details**
- D. A process of legal identification in court**

Jigsaw identification refers to a scenario in which an individual who has been granted anonymity becomes recognizable due to various pieces of information that have been published. This can occur when different sources provide fragmented details that, when combined, allow the public or another party to piece together enough information to reveal the person's identity. This concept is particularly important in media law, as it emphasizes the responsibility of the media to safeguard sensitive information, especially regarding individuals involved in legal proceedings, victims of crime, or whistleblowers. Maintaining anonymity is crucial for protecting the rights of these individuals, and jigsaw identification illustrates how easily anonymity can be compromised when seemingly innocuous details are shared without consideration of their potential to identify someone. Thus, the answer highlights a critical issue in the intersection of media reporting and legal protections for individuals.

6. In the scenario of copyright infringement, what can destroy a claim for infringement?

- A. Providing proper citations to the work**
- B. Executives allowing public use of their work**
- C. Showing the work to a small group**
- D. Acquiescence by the owner of the copyright**

The option regarding acquiescence by the owner of the copyright accurately illustrates a legal concept that can undermine a claim for copyright infringement. Acquiescence occurs when the copyright owner expresses a clear acceptance or tacit approval of another party's use of their work, which can imply that the owner is relinquishing their rights to enforce copyright against that particular usage. This can weaken their case if they later attempt to assert their exclusive rights. When a copyright owner allows someone to use their work without objection for a period of time, it may be seen as a sign of agreement with that usage. Courts often consider whether the copyright owner was aware of the infringement and yet failed to act over a significant period. This could lead to the conclusion that they accepted the situation, ultimately diminishing the strength of their infringement claim. In contrast, providing proper citations, allowing public use by executives, and showing the work to a small group do not inherently destroy a copyright infringement claim. Proper citations can actually support claims of fair use, and showing work to a small group might still fall under fair use or other acceptable practices, while public use with permission does not unequivocally negate an infringement claim unless the rights are explicitly granted.

7. What is required by law if a journalist wishes to use material obtained through subterfuge?

- A. They must notify their newsroom**
- B. They should seek legal counsel**
- C. It must be approved by a senior editor**
- D. It should be justified as necessary for public interest**

The requirement that a journalist must justify the use of material obtained through subterfuge as necessary for the public interest is rooted in ethical journalism practices and legal considerations surrounding privacy and consent. Subterfuge often involves deceptive practices to gather information, which raises significant ethical dilemmas and potential legal issues related to privacy rights. To protect both the integrity of the journalism and the rights of individuals, journalists are generally required to demonstrate that the information gained through deceptive means is crucial for exposing matters of public concern. This justification acts as a safeguard to ensure that the use of such methods is not taken lightly and that there is a compelling reason to prioritize the public's right to know above challenges to individual privacy. In many jurisdictions, failing to provide this justification can result in legal repercussions, such as defamation claims or violations of privacy laws. Therefore, ensuring that the use of subterfuge is justified in the context of serving the public interest is essential for a journalist's legal and ethical responsibility.

8. Under what condition can police seize film or cameras from journalists?

- A. When there is a public safety concern**
- B. When they suspect evidence of a crime is present**
- C. When they receive a complaint from a citizen**
- D. When they are conducting routine inspections**

Police can seize film or cameras from journalists when they suspect that evidence of a crime is present. This aligns with the principle that law enforcement has a duty to investigate potential criminal activity and preserve evidence that may be crucial to the prosecution of crimes. Journalists, while protected under certain rights regarding freedom of expression and press, are not immune from lawful police actions when there is probable cause to believe that their materials contain relevant evidence. The act of seizing such materials typically requires law enforcement to follow specific legal procedures, including obtaining warrants in many cases, to ensure that the rights of individuals, including journalists, are balanced against the need to uphold the law and gather evidence effectively. This condition aims to ensure that the police can fulfill their responsibilities to society while still respecting journalistic integrity and the role of the media.

9. Who owns the copyright to a speech?

- A. The audience who hears the speech**
- B. The organization that hosted the speech**
- C. The speaker**
- D. The event organizer**

The copyright to a speech is owned by the speaker. This is because, under copyright law, the creator of original works is typically considered the owner of those works upon their creation. In this context, when a speaker delivers a speech, they are expressing their ideas and creativity, which are protected by copyright. As such, the speaker holds the rights to control reproduction, distribution, and public performance of the speech. In contrast, the audience; the organization that hosted the speech; and the event organizer do not automatically gain copyright ownership simply by virtue of their roles in the speech's presentation or distribution. Even if the organization supported or facilitated the speech, the rights to the intellectual property of that speech remain with the individual who created it, unless there is a prior agreement that assigns those rights elsewhere.

10. Which of the following is NOT an acceptable reason for hiding a journalist's identity in a story?

- A. For personal safety reasons**
- B. To protect their source of information**
- C. To maintain a competitive advantage**
- D. To comply with legal obligations**

Maintaining a competitive advantage is not an acceptable reason for hiding a journalist's identity in a story because journalistic integrity and ethics are fundamentally concerned with transparency and accountability. While it is critical for journalists to protect their sources to ensure the free flow of information and to foster a safe environment for whistleblowers, doing so solely for the sake of competition undermines these principles. Ensuring that audiences have trust in the media requires openness about the journalist's identity and the sources they use, except in circumstances where legal or ethical obligations demand otherwise, such as protecting sources or fulfilling safety concerns. In contrast, personal safety and legal compliance are widely recognized as valid reasons for shielding a journalist's identity, as these are crucial for the safety of individuals and adherence to the law. In summary, hiding a journalist's identity for the sake of competitive advantage does not align with the ethical standards that govern responsible journalism.

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://nctjessentialmedialaw.examzify.com>

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

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