

POLICE STANDARDS AND TRAINING COUNCIL (PSTC) PRACTICE TEST (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. Which statement best describes an Amygdala hijack?

- A. It slowly assesses risk before acting.
- B. It functions as emotional traffic controller, rapidly activating fight/flight/freeze.
- C. It triggers memory recall of past events.
- D. It stabilizes logical reasoning under stress.

2. Which of the following is a Secondary Dimension?

- A. Race
- B. Education
- C. Appearance
- D. Language and communication skills

3. Integrity means

- A. You always do the right thing
- B. You never lie
- C. You always win
- D. You are highly productive

4. Which statement best describes a passive bystander?

- A. Takes immediate action to stop misconduct
- B. Fails to intervene and communicates acceptance
- C. Always reports to a supervisor
- D. Actively discourages witnesses

5. Which behavior is recommended to convey attention during an interaction?

- A. Avoid eye contact
- B. Speak loudly
- C. Make direct eye contact
- D. Check your phone

- 6. Which amendment states that enumeration of rights shall not deny others retained by the people?**
- A. Seventh Amendment
 - B. Ninth Amendment
 - C. Tenth Amendment
 - D. Eighth Amendment
- 7. Which term refers to slow, effortful, logical thinking involving reflection and planning?**
- A. System 2 Deliberative thinking
 - B. System 1 Automatic thinking
 - C. Attitude
 - D. Bias-Based profiling
- 8. Which is a cross-cultural trap?**
- A. Assuming cultural phrasing and imitate dialects
 - B. Trying to fit in by emulating the lifestyle of group members
 - C. Working too hard not to offend can be offensive
 - D. All of the above
- 9. What makes immediate decision-making possible for officers during high-stress incidents?**
- A. Weather conditions
 - B. External noise
 - C. Training and culture
 - D. Public opinion
- 10. Which of the following is NOT listed as an effect of primary and secondary trauma?**
- A. Chronic stress
 - B. Hypervigilance
 - C. Aggression
 - D. Increased physical stamina

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. Which statement best describes an Amygdala hijack?

- A. It slowly assesses risk before acting.
- B. It functions as emotional traffic controller, rapidly activating fight/flight/freeze.**
- C. It triggers memory recall of past events.
- D. It stabilizes logical reasoning under stress.

The main idea here is that an amygdala hijack happens when the brain's emotional center takes over in a perceived threat, producing an immediate, automatic fight/flight/freeze reaction that bypasses slower, logical thinking. That's why the statement describing the amygdala as an emotional traffic controller that rapidly activates fight/flight/freeze is the best fit: it captures both the speed and the emotional takeover that defines a hijack. In contrast, slow risk assessment, memory recall, or maintaining logical stability under stress describe different brain processes and don't reflect the rapid, emotion-driven override that characterizes an amygdala hijack.

2. Which of the following is a Secondary Dimension?

- A. Race
- B. Education
- C. Appearance
- D. Language and communication skills**

Secondary dimensions are traits that influence how we interact with others but aren't immediately visible and can be changed or developed over time. Language and communication skills fit this category because they shape how we convey and understand information, affect day-to-day interactions, and can be improved with practice and training. In contrast, race and appearance are primary dimensions—visible and largely fixed aspects of identity. Education is also a secondary dimension since it's learned and can vary, but language and communication skills most directly reflect a secondary dimension in how we engage with others.

3. Integrity means

- A. You always do the right thing**
- B. You never lie
- C. You always win
- D. You are highly productive

Integrity is acting in accordance with ethical principles and professional standards, choosing the right thing even when it's difficult and staying trustworthy across different situations. The best answer reflects that ongoing commitment to doing what's right, across diverse circumstances. While honesty (never lying) is a part of integrity, integrity encompasses a broader pattern of conduct—upholding values, fairness, and accountability—not just truth-telling. The other options focus on outcomes or performance rather than character, so they don't capture what integrity truly means.

4. Which statement best describes a passive bystander?

- A. Takes immediate action to stop misconduct
- B. Fails to intervene and communicates acceptance**
- C. Always reports to a supervisor
- D. Actively discourages witnesses

A passive bystander is someone who does not take steps to stop misconduct and remains quiet, which can be read as acceptance of what's happening. In real-life scenarios, this silence can unintentionally reinforce the behavior, signaling to others that it's tolerated. The contrast is clear with an active bystander, who intervenes in some way—directly addressing the behavior, creating a distraction to halt it, or finding help to remove the person from the situation. Understanding this helps you act more effectively: even if you can't intervene directly, showing support, documenting what you witnessed, or reporting it are ways to engage that reduce harm. Silence and non-intervention are the hallmarks of a passive bystander, which is why the described statement best fits that role.

5. Which behavior is recommended to convey attention during an interaction?

- A. Avoid eye contact
- B. Speak loudly
- C. Make direct eye contact**
- D. Check your phone

Direct eye contact signals that you are paying attention and actively listening, which helps establish engagement, respect, and trust in the conversation. In police interactions, this nonverbal cue supports credibility and aids in reading the other person's responses and intent by allowing you to notice micro-expressions and shifts in behavior. Avoiding eye contact can make you seem evasive or uninterested; speaking loudly can come across as aggressive rather than attentive; and checking your phone shows distraction and lack of engagement. So, making direct eye contact is the best way to convey attention during an interaction.

6. Which amendment states that enumeration of rights shall not deny others retained by the people?

- A. Seventh Amendment
- B. Ninth Amendment**
- C. Tenth Amendment
- D. Eighth Amendment

This item tests understanding of how rights are protected beyond those that are written. The language states that the enumeration of rights in the Constitution shall not be construed to deny others retained by the people. In plain terms, listing some rights does not imply that other rights don't exist; people retain unenumerated rights, and the government can't use a written list to limit them. This idea was added to reassure supporters of fundamental liberties that unlisted freedoms remain protected. Therefore, the ninth amendment is the one that addresses enumeration of rights. Other amendments cover different protections: the seventh deals with jury trials in civil cases, the eighth restricts cruel and unusual punishment and excessive fines, and the tenth reserves powers to the states or the people, none of which address how listing rights interacts with rights not written.

7. Which term refers to slow, effortful, logical thinking involving reflection and planning?

- A. System 2 Deliberative thinking**
- B. System 1 Automatic thinking
- C. Attitude
- D. Bias-Based profiling

This is System 2 deliberative thinking. It refers to slow, effortful reasoning that requires focused attention, reflection, and planning. Unlike fast, automatic judgments (System 1), System 2 kicks in for tasks that need careful analysis, weighing evidence, and weighing different options to form a deliberate conclusion or plan. In practice, you'd use this level of thinking when solving a complex problem, evaluating a tricky decision, or mapping out steps before taking action, especially when accuracy matters and instinctual answers could lead astray.

8. Which is a cross-cultural trap?

- A. Assuming cultural phrasing and imitate dialects
- B. Trying to fit in by emulating the lifestyle of group members
- C. Working too hard not to offend can be offensive
- D. All of the above**

Cross-cultural interactions work best when you aim for genuine understanding rather than performing culture. Assuming cultural phrasing and imitating dialects can misrepresent how people actually speak and behave, and it can come off as mocking or disrespectful rather than collaborative. Trying to fit in by emulating the lifestyle of group members can feel inauthentic or stereotype-driven, leading to misreads about what's appropriate and eroding trust. Working too hard not to offend can backfire as well, because excessive caution can shut down honest dialogue, create distance, or make you seem insincere or patronizing. Because these patterns undermine trust, communication, and respectful engagement, all of these are cross-cultural traps. A better approach is to listen carefully, ask respectful questions, and focus on shared goals and safety rather than performing cultural cues.

9. What makes immediate decision-making possible for officers during high-stress incidents?

- A. Weather conditions
- B. External noise
- C. Training and culture**
- D. Public opinion

Immediate decision-making in high-stress incidents comes from the training and culture that underpin how officers think and act under pressure. When responses are practiced repeatedly through realistic drills and scenario-based exercises, officers develop fast, automatic patterns for recognizing threats, applying decision rules, and invoking standard procedures. This mental readiness—shaped by ongoing training and a shared organizational approach—lets them act quickly and consistently, without needing to deliberate from scratch in the moment. The culture reinforces when to escalate, when to de-escalate, how to communicate, and how to coordinate with teammates, so responses are coordinated and proportional even under intense stress. Weather conditions or external noise may affect the environment, but they don't provide the ready-made decision framework that trained officers rely on. Public opinion lies outside the immediate decision process and shouldn't drive actions in the moment, though it matters for after-action reviews and policy considerations.

10. Which of the following is NOT listed as an effect of primary and secondary trauma?

- A. Chronic stress
- B. Hypervigilance
- C. Aggression

D. Increased physical stamina

Trauma exposure tends to produce ongoing stress-related responses in both mind and body. Chronic stress and hypervigilance are classic effects, reflecting a persistent state of heightened alertness and strain on the nervous system. Aggression can emerge as a defensive reaction in some individuals who have experienced trauma. Increased physical stamina, however, does not fit trauma's typical pattern; while adrenaline might briefly boost performance, sustained stamina generally declines with prolonged trauma exposure due to fatigue and burnout.

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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:

<https://pstc.examzify.com>

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

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