

RACC CERTIFIED RESEARCH ADMINISTRATOR (CRA) 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. Which statement best describes a modular application?**
 - A. Is the term for the budget approach with detailed line-item budgets
 - B. Applies to grant applications requiring no budget
 - C. Involves line-item budgets across specific categories
 - D. Uses budget modules instead of detailed line-item categories
- 2. Which scenario would identify as human subjects?**
 - A. There is interaction with participants or identifiable private information
 - B. No interaction and no identifiable information
 - C. Data only from public sources
 - D. Data are anonymized
- 3. In grant management, which term describes overlap when effort exceeds the allowed 100 percent?**
 - A. Schedule drift
 - B. Budget overrun
 - C. Commitment overlap
 - D. Personnel overlap
- 4. Are coded data human subjects research if no key access?**
 - A. No
 - B. Yes
 - C. Only if the data include direct identifiers
 - D. Only if the dataset is linked to a health record
- 5. When confronted with unusual changes, which step best ensures proper governance?**
 - A. Evaluate for change in scope
 - B. Wait for the next annual review
 - C. Increase funding to cover speculation
 - D. Terminate the project immediately

- 6. Which agency was the first to establish a web-based proposal submission system?**
- A. National Institutes of Health
 - B. National Aeronautics and Space Administration
 - C. National Science Foundation
 - D. Department of Energy
- 7. ITAR is administered by which federal agency?**
- A. Department of State
 - B. Department of Commerce
 - C. Department of the Treasury
 - D. Department of Homeland Security
- 8. Does exceeding the 25 percent rebudgeting threshold automatically require NIH approval?**
- A. No, it is only an indicator of potential scope change
 - B. Yes, always
 - C. Only if funds exceed 75 percent
 - D. Only for new awards
- 9. Agency responsible for EAR**
- A. Department of State
 - B. Department of Commerce
 - C. Department of Defense
 - D. Department of Homeland Security
- 10. Which term describes the formal agreement that sets an institution's indirect cost rates?**
- A. Pre-award
 - B. Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement; establishes institution's F&A rates
 - C. Fiscal appropriations agreement
 - D. Administrative rate schedule

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. Which statement best describes a modular application?

- A. Is the term for the budget approach with detailed line-item budgets
- B. Applies to grant applications requiring no budget
- C. Involves line-item budgets across specific categories
- D. Uses budget modules instead of detailed line-item categories**

Modular budgeting is a streamlined approach that groups costs into modules rather than itemizing every expense. In practice, the budget is presented in blocks (often fixed increments) that cover direct costs for the project period, rather than listing detailed line-item categories. This helps focus on the overall funding needs and project scope, reducing administrative detail while still conveying essential cost information. That's why describing a modular budget as using budget modules instead of detailed line-item categories fits best.

2. Which scenario would identify as human subjects?

- A. There is interaction with participants or identifiable private information**
- B. No interaction and no identifiable information
- C. Data only from public sources
- D. Data are anonymized

The key idea is that research involves human subjects when you either interact with people or collect information that can identify them. In this scenario, there is interaction with participants or identifiable private information, which means the research involves human subjects. If there's no interaction and no identifiable information, it's not human subjects research, because you're not obtaining data about individuals in a way that can identify them. Data from public sources can still be about people, but without interaction or private identifiers it typically isn't considered human subjects. Data that are anonymized remove identifiers, so the individuals are no longer identifiable, which also means they are not human subjects under standard definitions.

3. In grant management, which term describes overlap when effort exceeds the allowed 100 percent?

- A. Schedule drift
- B. Budget overrun
- C. Commitment overlap**
- D. Personnel overlap

This item tests how overlapping effort across multiple grants is described when the total commitment exceeds a full-time workload. The correct term is commitment overlap, which happens when the sum of effort assigned to all awards for an individual goes beyond 100 percent of their available time. This signals overcommitment and raises compliance and reporting risks, since sponsors require accurate reflection of how much time is actually devoted to each award and may not permit exceeding 100 percent without approval. Schedule drift describes delays in project timelines, budget overrun refers to spending above the allocated budget, and a generic "personnel overlap" isn't a standard grant-management term. To prevent commitment overlap, institutions track total effort across all awards, adjust allocations so the total does not exceed 100 percent, and obtain necessary approvals if any adjustments are required.

4. Are coded data human subjects research if no key access?

- A. No**
- B. Yes
- C. Only if the data include direct identifiers
- D. Only if the dataset is linked to a health record

The key idea is identifiability. Under federal rules, research involving human subjects hinges on whether the information used can identify the person. If data are coded but the investigator has no access to the key that would link codes to identities, the investigator cannot identify individuals from the data. In that situation, the data are not identifiable to the researcher, so the activity isn't considered human subjects research. If someone with the key could re-identify, or if the researcher later gains access to the key, the data could become identifiable and would then fall under human subjects research. But with no key access, the defined research activity isn't about human subjects.

5. When confronted with unusual changes, which step best ensures proper governance?

- A. Evaluate for change in scope**
- B. Wait for the next annual review
- C. Increase funding to cover speculation
- D. Terminate the project immediately

When unusual changes appear, the governance response is to evaluate whether they involve a change in scope. This matters because scope changes trigger the formal change-control process, requiring assessment of impact on schedule, budget, risks, and deliverables, plus stakeholder approvals and possible re-baselining. By confirming a scope change, you ensure the project stays aligned with objectives and governance policies, and that any adjustments go through the proper channels rather than being made informally. Waiting for the next annual review is too slow and bypasses the necessary checks. Increasing funding without a formal change request risks budget overruns and improper accounting. Terminating the project is an excessive reaction to intermediate changes and ignores the possibility of realigning scope and objectives through governance procedures.

6. Which agency was the first to establish a web-based proposal submission system?

- A. National Institutes of Health
- B. National Aeronautics and Space Administration
- C. National Science Foundation**
- D. Department of Energy

Adopting online proposal submission represents an early move to digital grant management, replacing paper mail with a centralized web system. The National Science Foundation was the first to establish such a web-based submission process, introducing a portal that let researchers prepare, submit, and track proposals electronically. This innovation built in checks for completeness and formatting, sped up routing and reviews, and paved the way for integrated grant administration. Other agencies later developed their own online submission tools, but NSF led the way with the initial web-based system.

7. ITAR is administered by which federal agency?

- A. Department of State
- B. Department of Commerce
- C. Department of the Treasury
- D. Department of Homeland Security

ITAR is a defense trade control regime, and its administration falls under the Department of State, specifically through the Directorate of Defense Trade Controls. It regulates the export, temporary import, and brokering of defense articles and defense services listed on the United States Munitions List, with licensing and compliance managed by DDTC. This means that licenses, registrations for manufacturers and exporters, and enforcement actions tied to ITAR are all handled by the State Department rather than by the other agencies listed. The Department of Commerce, by contrast, oversees the Export Administration Regulations for dual-use items; Treasury handles sanctions programs; and Homeland Security participates in enforcement in various capacities, but not as the primary ITAR regulator. Therefore, the correct agency is the Department of State.

8. Does exceeding the 25 percent rebudgeting threshold automatically require NIH approval?

- A. No, it is only an indicator of potential scope change
- B. Yes, always
- C. Only if funds exceed 75 percent
- D. Only for new awards

The key idea here is how rebudgeting thresholds are used. The 25 percent figure is a warning signal, not an automatic green light or denial. When you move funds around within an award, that threshold flags a potential change in how the project is carried out. If the proposed reallocation would alter the scope, aims, or overall direction of the project, NIH would require prior approval after reviewing the request. If the changes stay within the originally approved scope and don't amount to a true shift in objectives, they may not automatically trigger prior approval. So, exceeding the threshold doesn't automatically require NIH approval—it prompts review to determine whether a scope change has occurred and whether formal prior approval is needed.

9. Agency responsible for EAR

- A. Department of State
- B. Department of Commerce
- C. Department of Defense
- D. Department of Homeland Security

Export Administration Regulations (EAR) are implemented and enforced by the Department of Commerce through the Bureau of Industry and Security. BIS administers the Commerce Control List, reviews license applications for export, re-export, and transfer of dual-use items, and leads compliance and enforcement efforts under EAR. This distinguishes it from the other agencies: the State Department handles defense-related ITAR controls, the Defense Department focuses on defense policy rather than the civilian dual-use regime, and Homeland Security oversees enforcement at borders but is not the primary regulator for EAR. So the Department of Commerce is the correct agency responsible for EAR.

10. Which term describes the formal agreement that sets an institution's indirect cost rates?

A. Pre-award

B. Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement; establishes institution's F&A rates

C. Fiscal appropriations agreement

D. Administrative rate schedule

The formal agreement that sets an institution's indirect cost rates is the Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, NICRA. This document is negotiated with the federal cognizant agency and establishes the institution's Facilities and Administrative (F&A) rates, along with the bases and methods used to apply them to sponsored projects. Having a NICRA provides the official, binding framework for allocating indirect costs such as facilities, administration, and overhead to grants and contracts, ensuring consistency and compliance across awards. Other terms don't describe this binding agreement: pre-award refers to activities before funding, fiscal appropriations agreement isn't the standardized term for setting F&A rates, and an administrative rate schedule is a general schedule rather than the formal negotiated document with the federal government.

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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://raccra.examzify.com>

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

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