

RESEARCH AND PROGRAM EVALUATION PRACTICE EXAM (SAMPLE) STUDY GUIDE



SAMPLE STUDY GUIDE WITH LIMITED QUESTIONS

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THE FULL VERSION STUDY GUIDE

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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 are the characteristics of good evaluation questions?**
 - A. Clear, focused, relevant, and answerable with available data
 - B. Ambiguous, broad, subjective, and complex
 - C. Vague, open-ended, and difficult to interpret
 - D. Simple, unstructured, and opinion-based
- 2. What is a baseline measure?**
 - A. Data collected after a program's implementation
 - B. Data collected before the implementation of a program, used for comparison during evaluation
 - C. Data that measures participant satisfaction
 - D. Data that outlines program costs
- 3. Which of the following is not a common type of program evaluation?**
 - A. Formative
 - B. Summative
 - C. Descriptive
 - D. Developmental
- 4. What is the primary goal of qualitative research?**
 - A. to test hypotheses
 - B. to understand experiences
 - C. to establish causality
 - D. to collect numerical data
- 5. Which research approach includes both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods?**
 - A. cross-sectional
 - B. quantitative
 - C. qualitative
 - D. mixed methods

- 6. What is the purpose of a logic model in program evaluation?**
- A. To provide a financial breakdown of the program costs
 - B. To visually represent the relationship between program components and intended outcomes
 - C. To summarize participant demographics
 - D. To outline the history of the program
- 7. What term describes the potential influence of an external factor on study outcomes?**
- A. confounding variable
 - B. operational definition
 - C. control group
 - D. independent variable
- 8. Which type of study involves comparisons between groups without formal manipulation and random assignment?**
- A. experimental
 - B. explanatory, nonexperimental
 - C. longitudinal
 - D. cross-sectional
- 9. What is a "mixed methods design"?**
- A. A design that uses only qualitative methods
 - B. A design that focuses exclusively on quantitative data
 - C. A research approach that integrates qualitative and quantitative methods in one study
 - D. A design used solely for descriptive studies
- 10. What does qualitative research primarily focus on?**
- A. Numerical data and statistical trends
 - B. Understanding human experiences and social contexts through non-numerical data
 - C. Financial profitability of programs
 - D. Efficiency metrics of program operations

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What are the characteristics of good evaluation questions?

A. Clear, focused, relevant, and answerable with available data

B. Ambiguous, broad, subjective, and complex

C. Vague, open-ended, and difficult to interpret

D. Simple, unstructured, and opinion-based

Good evaluation questions are essential for guiding the evaluation process effectively and ensuring that the information gathered will be meaningful and useful. The characteristics of clear, focused, relevant, and answerable questions align perfectly with best practices in evaluation. Having questions that are clear eliminates confusion and ensures that everyone involved understands the intended inquiry. This clarity also helps stakeholders grasp the evaluation's goal. Focused questions are crucial because they help narrow the scope of the evaluation, making it easier to gather specific data and draw relevant conclusions. Relevance ensures that the questions being asked directly pertain to the objectives of the evaluation, thus maximizing the insights that can be garnered. Finally, questions that can be answered with available data are vital because they ensure that the evaluation can be conducted within the limits of available resources, leading to viable and actionable insights. This set of characteristics ensures that the evaluation is not only meaningful but also practical, enabling effective decision-making based on the findings.

2. What is a baseline measure?

A. Data collected after a program's implementation

B. Data collected before the implementation of a program, used for comparison during evaluation

C. Data that measures participant satisfaction

D. Data that outlines program costs

A baseline measure represents data that is collected before the implementation of a program. This initial data serves an essential purpose in the evaluation process, as it provides a point of reference against which future outcomes can be assessed. By having these pre-implementation data points, evaluators can better understand the impact of the program by comparing them to data collected after the program has been in place. Having baseline measures allows for a clear indication of what changes occurred as a result of the program, as any observed differences in the outcomes can be attributed to the program's influence, given that the baseline data reflects the conditions prior to any interventions. This is particularly important for establishing causality and measuring effectiveness, as it helps to account for any changes that would have occurred naturally over time without the program. In contrast, other options do not accurately describe a baseline measure; they either refer to data collected at different times or for different purposes within the evaluation framework.

3. Which of the following is not a common type of program evaluation?

- A. Formative
- B. Summative
- C. Descriptive
- D. Developmental

Descriptive evaluation is not typically classified as a common type of program evaluation. The primary types of program evaluations are formative, summative, and developmental. Formative evaluation focuses on the process of program implementation, allowing for adjustments and improvements while the program is still being developed or underway. This type of evaluation is aimed at understanding the effects of various components of a program and ensuring it is being implemented effectively. Summative evaluation assesses the outcomes and impacts of a program after it has been implemented. This evaluation seeks to determine the overall effectiveness and results of the program, often providing data that can inform decisions about continuation, scaling, or replication. Developmental evaluation, on the other hand, is a relatively newer approach that is used in complex, adaptive environments. It is aimed at supporting ongoing program development by providing real-time feedback and learning opportunities. Descriptive evaluation, while it may involve gathering data and reporting findings, does not specifically fall into the major categories that guide the assessment and improvement of program effectiveness. Thus, choosing descriptive evaluation as the answer reflects an understanding that not all forms of evaluation play a central role in program evaluation as commonly defined in practice and literature.

4. What is the primary goal of qualitative research?

- A. to test hypotheses
- B. to understand experiences
- C. to establish causality
- D. to collect numerical data

The primary goal of qualitative research is to understand experiences. This approach focuses on gaining insights into people's attitudes, behaviors, and the ways they interpret their world. It delves into the complexities of human experiences, aiming to provide a deeper contextual understanding rather than simply measuring or quantifying phenomena. Qualitative research often employs methods such as interviews, focus groups, and participant observations, which allow researchers to gather rich, detailed descriptions of individuals' perspectives. By exploring the meanings and interpretations that individuals assign to their experiences, qualitative research contributes to a more nuanced understanding of social phenomena and human behavior. In contrast to establishing causality, testing hypotheses, or collecting numerical data, qualitative research prioritizes understanding the subjective experiences and meanings that participants attribute to their situations. This distinct emphasis is what differentiates qualitative research from quantitative approaches.

5. Which research approach includes both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods?

- A. cross-sectional
- B. quantitative
- C. qualitative
- D. mixed methods**

The mixed methods research approach integrates both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods, allowing for a comprehensive analysis of research questions. This approach is particularly valuable because it leverages the strengths of both methodologies. Qualitative data can provide in-depth insights into participants' perspectives and experiences, while quantitative data can offer statistical validation and generalized findings across larger populations. By combining these methods, researchers can gain a richer understanding of complex issues, explore hypotheses in detail, and triangulate results for more robust conclusions. In contrast, the other options focus exclusively on one type of data. Cross-sectional research often refers to the collection of either quantitative or qualitative data at a single point in time without integrating the two. Quantitative research is strictly concerned with numerical data and statistical analyses, while qualitative research relies on non-numerical data, emphasizing meaning and context. Thus, none of those methods incorporate both qualitative and quantitative approaches, making mixed methods the correct choice for a comprehensive research methodology.

6. What is the purpose of a logic model in program evaluation?

- A. To provide a financial breakdown of the program costs
- B. To visually represent the relationship between program components and intended outcomes**
- C. To summarize participant demographics
- D. To outline the history of the program

The purpose of a logic model in program evaluation is to visually represent the relationship between program components and intended outcomes. A logic model serves as a planning and communication tool that illustrates how a specific program is designed to achieve its goals. It typically includes elements such as inputs (resources), activities (what the program does), outputs (the direct products of program activities), and outcomes (the results achieved). By presenting these elements in a structured visual format, stakeholders can better understand how activities will lead to desired impacts. This clarity helps in evaluating whether the program is operating as intended and if it is likely to yield the expected outcomes. The logic model also facilitates discussions about program effectiveness and informs decisions about improvements or adjustments that may be needed. In contrast, while financial breakdowns, participant demographics, or program history can be important pieces of information for understanding a program, they do not capture the essential causal relationships and intended pathways of change that a logic model provides.

7. What term describes the potential influence of an external factor on study outcomes?

- A. confounding variable**
- B. operational definition
- C. control group
- D. independent variable

The term that describes the potential influence of an external factor on study outcomes is "confounding variable." A confounding variable is an extraneous factor that correlates, either positively or negatively, with both the dependent and independent variables. This means that unless researchers adequately account for confounding variables, it can lead to erroneous conclusions regarding the relationship being studied. For instance, if a study is examining the effect of a new teaching method on student performance, factors like students' socioeconomic status or previous academic performance may also affect their learning outcomes. If not controlled for, these confounding variables can obscure the true relationship between the teaching method and performance. In contrast, operational definitions relate to how variables are defined and measured within a study, the control group serves to provide a baseline for comparison, and independent variables are those that researchers manipulate to observe the effect on the dependent variable. None of those concepts addresses the issue of external influences competing with the primary relationship of interest, which is the critical role of confounding variables.

8. Which type of study involves comparisons between groups without formal manipulation and random assignment?

- A. experimental
- B. explanatory, nonexperimental**
- C. longitudinal
- D. cross-sectional

The chosen answer identifies a type of study that focuses on understanding relationships or differences among groups without the direct intervention or manipulation of variables, which is characteristic of nonexperimental research. In this context, explanatory nonexperimental studies aim to describe or explain phenomena based on observational data rather than altering conditions or assigning participants to different groups at random. In this type of study, researchers might collect data from different groups that naturally differ on certain characteristics or experiences. By comparing these groups, the researchers can gain insights into potential correlations or trends, although they cannot infer causation due to the lack of controlled manipulation or randomization. In contrast, an experimental study relies on the deliberate manipulation of variables and typically involves random assignment to ensure that any observed effects can be attributed to the intervention, rather than pre-existing differences between groups. Longitudinal studies focus on data collected over a period to observe changes over time, while cross-sectional studies provide a snapshot of data at a single point in time. Both the longitudinal and cross-sectional designs, like experimental research, do not fit the criteria of comparing groups without manipulation or random assignment, making explanatory nonexperimental the best fit for the description provided.

9. What is a "mixed methods design"?

- A. A design that uses only qualitative methods
- B. A design that focuses exclusively on quantitative data
- C. A research approach that integrates qualitative and quantitative methods in one study**
- D. A design used solely for descriptive studies

A "mixed methods design" is a research approach that integrates qualitative and quantitative methods in one study. This design allows researchers to draw on the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative data to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem. By combining these methods, researchers can validate and triangulate findings, providing richer context and detail that might not be achievable through a single method alone. For instance, qualitative data can offer deeper insights into human behavior and experiences, while quantitative data can provide statistical validity and generalizability to findings. This dual approach is especially valuable in fields where understanding complex phenomena requires both numerical data and in-depth perspectives. The other options describe more limited or focused research approaches. Solely using qualitative methods does not account for the systematic quantification that mixed methods strive to achieve. Exclusively focusing on quantitative data excludes the rich, narrative-driven insights that qualitative methods can reveal. Lastly, a design meant only for descriptive studies does not encompass the variety and depth of inquiry that mixed methods aim to address, which typically includes both descriptive and analytical components across both qualitative and quantitative data types.

10. What does qualitative research primarily focus on?

- A. Numerical data and statistical trends
- B. Understanding human experiences and social contexts through non-numerical data**
- C. Financial profitability of programs
- D. Efficiency metrics of program operations

Qualitative research is fundamentally concerned with understanding the complexities of human experiences, perspectives, and social contexts. It achieves this by exploring non-numerical data such as interviews, focus groups, observations, and open-ended surveys. The aim is to gain insights into people's feelings, motivations, behaviors, and the meanings they attach to their experiences. This approach allows researchers to capture the depth and richness of human experiences, which quantitative methods, focused on numerical data and statistical analysis, often cannot accomplish. In contrast, other options focus on aspects such as numerical data trends, financial profitability, or efficiency metrics—none of which align with the primary goals and methodologies of qualitative research. Rather, these approaches are characteristic of quantitative research or operational evaluations that seek to measure and assess performance using concrete figures and statistical relationships. Thus, the emphasis on non-numerical data to explore and understand human relationships and social dynamics distinctly defines qualitative research.

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://researchprogrameval.examzify.com>

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

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