



February 10, 2020

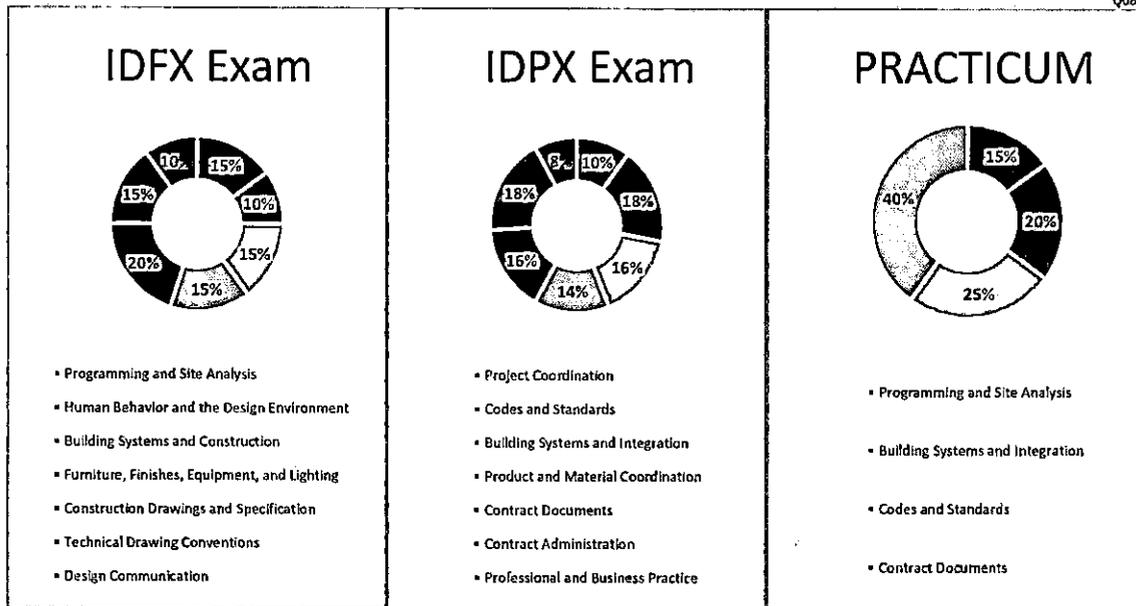
Chairwoman Tracy Kraft-Tharp
House Committee on Business Affairs and Labor
Colorado General Assembly
200 E Colfax Ave
Denver CO 80203

Chairwoman Kraft-Tharp, Ranking Member McKean, and Committee Members,

My name is Thom Banks. I am the Chief Executive Officer for the Council for Interior Design Qualification. Our organization develops and administers the NCIDQ Examination used for the licensure, certification, or registration of interior designers in all 29 regulated jurisdictions in the United States (with the exception of California) and all Canadian provinces. Thank you for this opportunity to provide the Committee information about our examination.

Our organization was formed in 1974. Since that time, over 33,000 interior designers have passed our examination and earned their NCIDQ certificate. The NCIDQ Exam is a three part (IDFX, IDPX, Practicum), 11 hour examination that assesses the competency of candidates to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public through the practice of interior design. Most of our certificate holders practice in commercial, code-based environments like office buildings, hotels, hospitals, schools, etc. NCIDQ Certificate Holders address matters like fire safety, ADA compliance, emergency egress, material flammability and toxicity, slip and fall risks, etc. As a result, these are the types of content areas tested on our examination.

The NCIDQ is a rigorous examination that assesses a range of knowledge areas necessary to engage in competent practice. The "blueprints" for each of our examinations appears below along with their relative question weight within each exam section.



While the exam is not easy, passage is possible with the proper combination of education, experience, and a commitment to appropriate preparation for the examination. We provide the detailed blueprints of the examination content on our website along with references (including International Building Code, Life Safety Code of the National Fire Protection Association, the National Building Code of Canada, and the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines) used in the creation of exam questions.

To ensure the NCIDQ Examination is valid, fair, and reliable, CIDQ complies with the guidelines and standards published in The Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing (published jointly by the American Psychological Association, the National Council on Measurement in Education and the American Educational Research Association).

To develop, administer, and score the NCIDQ Examination, CIDQ works with several professional testing companies that specialize in the development of certification and licensure exams. CIDQ follows accepted procedures for developing such exams and carefully documents each step in the test-development process. For the two multiple choice sections of the NCIDQ Exam (IDFX, IDPX), we follow the development process below. The steps to develop the third section (Practicum) are similar but vary slightly due to the nature of the assessment (demonstration of appropriate knowledge synthesis and application) and the functionality of the measurement platform (hot spot, drag and place, and fill in the blank questions as opposed to multiple choice.)

EXAM DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

1. PRACTICE ANALYSIS

During the Practice Analysis process, a panel of subject-matter experts defines the overall practice areas and distinct tasks, knowledge, and skills required for competent practice as an interior designer. We then validate the job responsibilities developed by the experts through a survey sent to approximately

12,000 practicing interior designers who review and rate the areas and tasks according to their level of importance and criticality to competent practice and protection of public health, safety, and welfare. CIDQ updated its Practice Analysis in late 2019 to capture the most current knowledge and skills that define a competent professional in interior design. These modifications will be incorporated into the exam in the fall of 2020.

2. DEVELOPING A TEST BLUEPRINT

CIDQ uses the results from the Practice Analysis to develop a 'blueprint' (or outline) for the NCIDQ Exam. Information from the analysis is used to determine the importance of each area of practice or task. This then determines the percentage of questions allotted to each domain (or content area).

3. ITEM DEVELOPMENT AND VALIDATION

The question-writing process uses both interior design and testing experts to ensure the appropriate content and form. All exam questions are written and reviewed by volunteer subject matter experts in interior design who are trained in developing questions and problems for the exam. During and after development, these experts review all of the questions to ensure they adhere to accepted principles for multiple choice questions and design problems, as well as grammatical and usage conventions.

Questions accepted for use in the exam are judged, by consensus of the volunteers, to meet the following standards:

- The knowledge tested by the question is essential for competent interior design and the protection of public health, safety and welfare.
- The knowledge tested by the question is either moderately or extremely important in assessing competent interior design.
- A correct response to the question would moderately or clearly differentiate adequate from inadequate performance for the competent interior designer.
- The question has a verified reference.
- The question is appropriate for the competent interior designer.
- The answer or solution is correct.
- The answer or solution can be defended if necessary.
- The other answer choices are incorrect, but plausible to those without sufficient knowledge.

4. PRETESTING TEST QUESTIONS

To verify the validity and quality of exam questions, CIDQ pretests new questions and problems before including them as scored items on the exam. Candidates do not know which questions are scored or unscored. The pretest results are analyzed statistically to ensure the quality and reliability of the overall exam. Even though the test questions change, we use a statistical procedure to ensure that one version of the examination is no harder or easier than another.

5. EXAMINATION ASSEMBLY

Each part of the NCIDQ Exam is created by selecting the appropriate number of questions from each content area, as specified in the test blueprints. A panel of interior designers works with testing experts



during test assembly and validation to ensure maximum quality (in accordance with the considerations listed above) and an appropriate mixture of content.

6. EXAMINATION REVIEW AND REVISION

The draft exams are again reviewed by subject matter experts for technical accuracy and by testing experts to ensure integrity.

7. PASSING POINT

An exam must have a defensible, criterion-referenced passing score. The score that separates candidates who pass from candidates who fail must be based on the minimum competence required to protect the public from harm. CIDQ works with our testing consultants to determine this passing point, which we define as the level of an interior designer's ability to practice independently (without supervision) in a manner that will protect the public health, safety and welfare.

8. TEST ADMINISTRATION

Test administration procedures for the NCIDQ Exam ensure consistent, secure testing conditions for all candidates. Test administration guidelines specify a process for admitting candidates into the exam room, verifying their identity, providing security, allotting testing times, and other important considerations. Testing facilities meet CIDQ guidelines for security, proper room size, ventilation, restroom facilities, accessibility, and noise control. Test administration personnel are thoroughly trained in the requirements for administering the NCIDQ Exam.

9. PSYCHOMETRIC ANALYSIS

Following each exam administration, CIDQ's consultants conduct systematic analysis studies to ensure the proper function of each question and problem and of the examination as a whole. Psychometric analysis also includes extensive reliability analysis as well as other studies that evaluate the quality of the exam.

PASS RATES AND ELIGIBILITY

CIDQ publishes the pass rates for its examination after each administration. These pass rates remain relatively consistent over time. In 2019, the pass rates for each of the three sections of the exam were:

IDFX Exam	IDPX Exam	PRAC Exam
65%	61%	63%

There are multiple pathways by which a candidate can demonstrate eligibility to sit for the NCIDQ Exam, but official education transcripts must include a minimum of 60 semester or 90 quarter credit hours of post-secondary interior design coursework that encompasses a certificate, degree, or diploma from an accredited institution. Few Associate degree programs fulfill that requirement and so the vast majority of our candidates hold Bachelor's degrees or higher in interior design or a related field.



In addition, each candidate must possess a minimum of two years of work experience gained under the supervision or sponsorship of a design professional. Renewing NCIDQ Certificate Holders must meet the Continuing Education requirements of the state in which they are licensed, certified, or registered, those of their professional membership organization, or if those are not applicable, CIDQ's own standard of 6 hours of Continuing Education Unit credit every two years.

CIDQ has 784 certificate holders with Colorado addresses in our database; 404 are active certificate holders, meaning they renew their certificate annually. Colorado has the 14th largest concentration of NCIDQ Certificate Holders in the US (based on 2019 Annual Report numbers).

Legal recognition of interior designers is necessary to permit them to practice to the full extent of their capabilities as demonstrated by education, experience, and examination. The NCIDQ Exam provides a means of competency assessment that offers the state and the public assurance that interior designers are qualified to practice in a manner that protects the health, safety and welfare of the public.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this information. We stand ready to provide additional information about our exam if desired.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas B. Banks". The signature is written in a cursive style with a clear, legible script.

Thomas B. Banks
Chief Executive Officer, Council for Interior Design Qualification

CC: Rep. James Coleman, Rep. Jeni James Arndt, Rep. Shannon Bird, Rep. Monica Duran, Rep. Hugh McKean, Rep. Shane Sandridge, Rep. Marc Snyder, Rep. Rom Sullivan, Rep. Kevin Van Winkle, Rep. Dave Williams.