NCIDQ Examination

NCIDQ Exam Blueprints 2026
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. What is the primary difference between the new exam blueprints and the current (2025) exam blueprints?

2. What does "life safety" refer to in the new exam blueprints?

3. What does "universal design" refer to in the new exam blueprints?

4. What reference standards will be covered on the new NCIDQ exam?

5. In addition to IBC 2021, and the related 2017 Accessibility Code, are there any other Codes candidates will need to know?

6. Will CIDQ still utilize the IBC resource document in the IDIX (formerly PRAC) exam going forward?

7. Will BOMA be tested on future exams? I did not see it referenced on the new exam blueprints.

8. Will Professional Development and Ethics still be on the IDFX exam?

9. Will business structures be covered on any of the exams in the future?

10. Will the new IDIX (formerly PRAC) exam still include Case Studies?

11. How will the vignettes be presented on the exams?

12. Will students still be able to take the IDFX exam in their final year of a bachelor's or master's interior design degree program?

13. If a candidate has taken and passed one or two exam sections in 2025, will they have to retake that section(s) when the exam blueprints change?

14. Is there a particular order in which you should take the exams?

15. Will the IDFX & IDPX exams include images/exhibits on future exams?

16. Will there be other item types added in addition to multiple choice, drag and place, hot spot and fill in the blank?

17. Will candidates continue to receive preliminary exam results for the IDFX & IDPX exams?

18. Which exams will be offered remotely?

19. Will CIDQ be changing the number of exam administrations during which the exams will be offered with the roll out of the new exam blueprints?

20. Will there be any changes to the number of questions on the exams?

Questions with Answers

1. **What is the primary difference between the new exam blueprints and the current (2025) exam blueprints?**
   Each of the exams will be based on the tasks and associated knowledge areas of design as they pertain to health, safety and welfare (HSW), as noted below:

   IDFX—Programming & Conceptual Design and Schematic Design
   IDPX—Construction Administration and Project Management
   IDIX (formerly PRAC)—Design Development and Construction Documentation

   The current 2025 exam blueprints test on similar exam content, but at differing cognitive levels, such as recall, application and analysis.

2. **What does "life safety" refer to in the new exam blueprints?**
   Life safety includes but is not limited to areas such as: accessibility, clearances, egress, fire alarms, fire separation, fire suppression, flammability, slip resistance, and toxicity.

3. **What does "universal design" refer to in the new exam blueprints?**
   Universal design includes but is not limited to areas such as: ability level, accessibility, bariatric, barrier free, gender neutrality, geriatric, aging in place, inclusivity, neurodiversity, pediatric, and special needs.

4. **What reference standards will be covered on the new NCIDQ exam?**
   Candidates must understand and know when certain standards need to be referenced including but not limited to ASHRAE, ASTM, BIFMA, ETL, OSHA, and UL.

5. **In addition to IBC 2021, and the related 2017 Accessibility Code, are there any other Codes candidates will need to know?**
   Candidates will need to have conceptual knowledge of ANSI, NEC and NFPA and when these codes apply.

6. **Will CIDQ still utilize the IBC resource document in the IDIX (formerly PRAC) exam going forward?**
   All three (3) exams will include an updated Code document which will refer to IBC 2021 and the related 2017 Accessibility Code. CIDQ will be posting a Table of Contents of the Code document a bit later this year including the specific Chapters and Sections that candidates may need to reference while taking the exam.

   As exam questions are developed in the later part of 2025 for the 2026 exams and beyond, it may be determined that some additional IBC related codes will be included in the Code document (i.e. IPC, IRC etc.).

7. **Will BOMA be tested on future exams? I did not see it referenced on the new exam blueprints.**
   No, BOMA will no longer be tested on exams beginning in 2026 and beyond. BOMA methods of calculation as related to interior design are more specialized and mostly apply in the leasing world. The new exam blueprint will still cite knowledge of square footage standards. However, this is likely

to include more high-level knowledge such as understanding the difference between rentable and usable square footage, which is used in occupants load calculations, etc.

8. **Will Professional Development and Ethics still be on the IDFX exam?**
    No, the Professional Development and Ethics domain that exists on the current IDFX exam blueprint will no longer be a part of the new exam blueprint as this content is not specific to any of the design phases.

    Professional development is more appropriately demonstrated through continuing education activities which are required to maintain an active certification/license/registration.

    Likewise, professional ethics are principles that govern the behavior of individuals in a particular profession and should be adhered to as part of the industry's professional standards or code of ethics. CIDQ has a code of ethics that certificate holders pledge to adhere to. There is also currently an effort underway between CIDQ and the interior design membership organizations to create a uniform code of ethics for the profession.

9. **Will business structures be covered on any of the exams in the future?**
    No, business structures, such as joint ventures, sole proprietor, partnership, and corporation will not be covered on future exams as this knowledge is not part of a design phase and do not substantially impact HSW.

10. **Will the new IDIX (formerly PRAC) exam still include Case Studies?**
    No, the IDIX (formerly PRAC) exam will no longer include Case Studies. However, there will be vignettes across all three (3) exams which will be based on a scenario and have 3-5 questions associated with the scenario.

11. **How will the vignettes be presented on the exams?**
    CIDQ is still working through how these items will be presented, but likely the vignettes will be in a split screen format so that the scenario will appear on one side of the screen and the associated questions on the other side of the screen.

12. **Will students still be able to take the IDFX exam in their final year of a bachelor's or master's interior design degree program?**
    Yes, the eligibility requirements are not changing. The IDFX exam content includes the design phases that are typically covered in an interior design degree program.

13. **If a candidate has taken and passed one or two exam sections in 2025, will they have to retake that section(s) when the exam blueprints change?**
    No, any exam section that a candidate has passed will not have to be retaken when the exam blueprints change, as long as the candidate has an active exam application.

    However, if an exam application expires at the end of 2025 and not all three (3) exams have been passed, the exam scores for any exam previously passed will be voided and the candidate will have to reapply, meeting the current eligibility requirements, and taking and passing all three (3) exam sections during a new application eligibility period (typically 5 years).

14. **Is there a particular order in which you should take the exams?**
    Candidates can take the three (3) exam sections in any order they like. If candidates want to study for or take the exams in design phase order, it would be as follows: IDFX, IDIX (PRAC), IDPX.

15. **Will the IDFX & IDPX exams include images/exhibits on future exams?**
    Yes, with the additional item types (drag and place, hot spot and fill in the blank) being included across all three (3) exams, exhibits/images will be used as needed to answer the question. FYI, the current IDFX & IDPX exams include some images already.

16. **Will there be other item types added in addition to multiple choice, drag and place, hot spot and fill in the blank?**
    Currently there are no plans to introduce other item types to the exams.

17. **Will candidates continue to receive preliminary exam results for the IDFX & IDPX exams?**
    Preliminary exam results will NOT be provided for at least the first exam administration in 2026.

    When moving to a new exam blueprint, the first exam administration requires a new passing point to be established based on the new content being tested. This cannot be established until after the exam has been administered.

    CIDQ will be working to provide preliminary exam results for all three (3) exams at some point in the future. The timing is still to be determined.

18. **Which exams will be offered remotely?**
    It is CIDQ's intent to offer all three (3) exams remotely in the future. The timing is still to be determined.

19. **Will CIDQ be changing the number of exam administrations during which the exams will be offered with the roll out of the new exam blueprints?**
    CIDQ has no plans to deviate from our current schedule of offering the exams during the months of April and October.

20. **Will there be any changes to the number of questions on the exams?**
    Yes, please refer to the table below for the number of questions and exam times.

Exam	Number of Questions	Exam Time
IDFX	**115** total questions (100 scored + 15 pre-test)	3 hours
IDPX	**115** total questions (100 scored + 15 pre-test)	3 hours
IDIX (formerly PRAC)	**130** total questions (115 scored + 15 pre-test)	4 hours