This book is a practice exam, and the main issue is not how you use it but when you use it. You could take the practice exam at the beginning of your studies to help you decide what subject areas you need to review most, but you will not get the most benefit from using it this way.

The value in this book is in giving you an opportunity to practice your test-taking skills. The best time to take the practice exam is near the end of your studies. This is the only time you will be able to focus on your time management skills without the distraction of trying to recall dimly remembered subjects.

A week or two before you are scheduled to take a division, when you feel you are nearly ready for the exam, do a “dry run” by taking the practice division in this book. The experience will be most valuable to you if you treat each division as though it were an actual exam. Do not read the problems ahead of time and do not look at the solutions until after you have finished. Try to simulate the exam experience as closely as possible. This means locking yourself away in a quiet space, setting an alarm for the exam’s testing time, and working through the entire practice exam with no coffee, television, or telephone—only your calculator, a pencil, and a few sheets of scratch paper. (On the actual exam, an on-screen calculator will be provided.) This will help you prepare to budget your time, give you an idea of what the actual exam experience will be, and develop a test-taking strategy that works for you.

The target times for the divisions are as follows.

• Division 1: Practice Management, 3.5 hours
• Division 2: Project Management, 4 hours
Within the time allotted for each division, you may work on the problems in any order and spend any amount of time on each one. Record your answers for the multiple-choice sections using the “bubble” answer sheet at the front of each division.

Here are some tips for taking the exam.

• Go through the entire exam in one somewhat swift pass, answering the problems that you are sure about and marking the others so you can return to them later. If a problem requires calculations, skip it for now unless it is very simple. Then, go back to the beginning and work your way through the exam again, taking a little more time to read each problem and think through the answer. (Another benefit of initially going through the entire exam is that occasionally there is information in one problem that may help you answer another problem somewhere else.)

• If you are unsure of a problem, pick your best guess, mark it, and move on. You will probably have time at the end of the exam to go back and recheck these guessed answers. But, remember, your first response is usually the best.

• Always answer all the problems. An unanswered problem is counted wrong, so even if you are just guessing, it is better to choose an answer and have a chance of being correct than to skip the problem and be certain of getting it wrong. When faced with four options, use the strategy of eliminating the options that are definitely wrong and then making your best guess among the two or three that remain.

• Some problems may seem too simple. Although ARE 5 includes a few very easy and obvious problems, more often the simplicity should serve as a red flag to warn you to reevaluate the problem. Look for an exception to a rule or for special circumstances that make the obvious, easy response incorrect.

• Watch out for absolute words in a problem, such as “always,” “never,” and “completely.” These are often a clue that some little exception exists, turning what reads like a true statement into a false one or vice versa.

When you are finished with a division exam in this book, you can check your answers quickly against the filled-in answer key at the back of the corresponding Solutions section. Then turn to the solutions and read the explanations of the answers, especially those you answered incorrectly. The explanation will give you a better understanding of the intent of the problem and why individual options are correct or incorrect.

Evaluate your strengths and weaknesses, both in regard to your test-taking skills and your knowledge of subject areas. Look at where your time management worked well and where it can be improved on the actual exam. Plan some extra study in the areas that you have found to be your weakest.