INTRODUCTION

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

The Interior Design Reference Manual: Everything You Need to Know to Pass the NCIDQ Exam (IDRM) gives you a thorough review of the content areas covered by the three National Council for Interior Design Qualification (NCIDQ)1 exam sections: the Interior Design Fundamentals Exam (IDFX), the Interior Design Professional Exam (IDPX), and the Interior Design Practicum. To account for overlapping content areas between IDFX and IDPX, this book is organized by interior design topic rather than by exam section. To help you structure your exam preparation, exam icons are included in both the Table of Contents and at the start of each chapter.

IDFX and IDPX icons indicate exam content areas applicable to each chapter. White circles with blue numbers designate chapters relating to IDFX content areas, and blue circles with white numbers designate chapters relating to IDPX content areas. Practicum icons indicate the exercises, rather than content areas, applicable to each chapter. White squares with blue numbers designate chapters relating to Practicum exercises. The numbers for IDFX correspond to the content areas defined in Table 1 of this Introduction, the numbers for IDPX correspond to the content areas defined in Table 2 of this Introduction, and the numbers for the Practicum correspond to the exercises defined in Table 3 of this Introduction. For example, if you see that a chapter has the exam designations ① b c, you will know that you

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<tr>
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1The National Council for Interior Design Qualification is referred to as “the council” throughout this Introduction, while the National Council for Interior Design Qualification exam is referred to as “the exam.”
should review the chapter when you want to focus on either IDFX content area 1, IDPX content area 2, or Practicum exercise 4.

Begin your exam review by quickly skimming each chapter of this book to get a feeling for the scope of the subject matter. Also, seek out opportunities to talk with people who have already taken the exam. Get a feeling for the exam’s general emphasis and the exam areas that previous candidates found difficult. A good resource is the Interior Design Exam Forum on PPI’s website forums.ppi2pass.com, where examinees discuss the process online.

Because the exam covers such a broad range of subjects related to interior design, your study (and this book) cannot include every area of practice that could possibly come up. Use your prior experience and your brief review of the chapters to determine your areas of existing knowledge and areas needing more review. If, for example, you have used construction documents for several years, you will probably want to minimize your study of that subject and focus on other areas.

Before you tackle the details of the individual subjects, use Table 4 to plan your study schedule. The broader subject areas are broken down into manageable units. So, if you are studying for one section of the exam only, use just the corresponding section of the schedule. Choose a start date, and assign time limits to each study unit. Don’t limit yourself to studying the chapters in the order they appear in this book. Consider first tackling the subjects you are less familiar with. Be sure to schedule extra time for these subjects, wherever you put them in your study schedule.

Once you have planned your study schedule, begin your review. If necessary, seek out additional resources (such as texts, seminars, or design professionals) for help on more challenging subjects. Include the three practice exam companion books (also available from PPI), NCIDQ IDPX Sample Questions and Practice Exam, NCIDQ IDPX Sample Questions and Practice Exam, and NCIDQ Practicum Practice Exam in your study schedule for a realistic practice exam experience.
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INTERIOR DESIGN REFERENCE MANUAL

Sticking with your study schedule will be the most difficult part of the process, and the one that requires the most self-discipline. You will find this much easier if you start studying early and create a realistic schedule, allowing time for recreation and other personal commitments. Stop studying at least a day or two before the exam so that you can take time to relax.

After you pass the exam, this book can serve as a comprehensive general reference for interior design practice. In order to maximize its utility as such, use the Table of Contents, List of Figures, List of Tables, and Index extensively. Every significant term has been indexed, and some subjects appear in more than one chapter. You will find that this book will often suffice as your first and last stop for interior design-related information. When it doesn’t, use the Recommended Readings section of this book to identify the supplemental readings that will provide you with further details on a particular subject.

USING THIS BOOK TO INSTRUCT

If you are teaching a course in interior design and using IDRM as a textbook, PPI offers a free instructor’s manual that includes materials and suggestions to support your teaching.

For each chapter of this book, the Instructor Manual for the sixth edition of Interior Design Reference Manual gives a variety of resources, which are organized into the following sections.

“Notes to the Instructor” gives an overview of the chapter and includes supplementary examples, exercises, and other classwork.

“Class Objectives” includes a list of basic knowledge and skills that can be learned from the chapter and a list of terms that students should know when they have finished the chapter.

“Field Trips/Guest Speakers” contains suggestions for class trips or in-class speakers that will allow students to see how the information in the chapter is put into practice and how practicing professionals conduct their businesses. Also included is a list of questions you can use to spark a classroom discussion around student observations or of questions students can ask the speaker(s).

“Further References” contains lists of websites, books, and other publications that can be useful sources of additional information.

“Exercises” contains design problems or other activities you can assign to your students. For some chapters, examples of possible solutions are shown and discussed.

To request your free instructor’s manual, go to www.ppi2pass.com/IDRMIM.

ABOUT THE NCIDQ EXAM

The exam is divided into three sections: the Interior Design Fundamentals Exam (IDFX), the Interior Design Professional Exam (IDPX), and the Interior Design Practicum. IDFX and IDPX are taken on a computer, while the Practicum is taken on paper. IDFX contains questions testing the knowledge gained in school (e.g., programming, design application, building systems, construction document standards, drawing standards, and design communication). IDPX contains questions testing knowledge gained through work experience (e.g., codes, building systems, specifications, construction document standards, contract administration, project coordination, and professional practice). The Practicum contains exercises testing practical interior design knowledge (e.g., interpreting a program, translating it into schematics, producing plan drawings, and developing appropriate specifications and schedules). There is some content area overlap between IDFX and IDPX. See “Eligibility” later in this Introduction for information on the requirements for each exam. IDFX and IDPX are given over a nine-day window in spring and fall. The Practicum is administered twice a year in April and October.
IDFX and IDPX include text- and illustration-based multiple-choice questions. Each question includes four answer options. For example, a question may ask “Where is information about electrical outlets for portable lamps most likely to be found?” and the options given may be

(A) furniture plan  
(B) partition plan  
(C) power plan  
(D) reflected ceiling plan

You would choose the best answer among the four options by clicking on the appropriate choice. (In the example given, you would choose option C.) Both IDFX and IDPX are machine graded.

IDFX is three hours long with 125 questions (100 of which are scored), and IDPX is four hours long with 175 questions (150 of which are scored). The remaining 25 questions in each are used for developmental purposes and are not scored. (These questions are not identified in advance.) IDFX and IDPX are scored on a scale of 200 to 800 points, with 500 being the minimum number of points needed to pass. Points are not deducted for questions answered incorrectly.

The Practicum is eight hours long and includes seven graded exercises. Each exercise is scored by two NCIDQ graders. Graders give each exercise a score of 0, 1, 2, 4, or 5. There is no score of 3. Scores of 0, 1, and 2 are failing, and 4 and 5 are passing. If the exercise receives one passing and one failing score, a third grader will review the exercise. The two scores for each exercise are added together and multiplied by a weighting factor. The resulting value becomes a percentage of the raw score.

**NCIDQ Exam Specifications**

The council uses its *Analysis of the Interior Design Profession* to develop the exam content areas, which cover the knowledge and skills that interior designers must possess to protect public health, safety, and welfare. For IDFX and IDPX, the number of questions in each content area is related to that content area's relative importance, as evaluated through survey responses from practicing interior designers.

The content areas for IDFX, IDPX, and the Practicum are as follows. The number of questions and the percentage of weight for each content area are given in parentheses. The number of questions (given for IDFX and IDPX only) do not include the 25 unscored questions, which may appear in any content area and are used for future exam development.

**Interior Design Fundamentals Exam (IDFX)**

1. **Knowledge of and skill in programming, sustainability, and site analysis**  
   (20 questions, 20%):
   - research methods (e.g., interviewing, surveying, case studies, and benchmarking/precedent); quantitative analysis tools (e.g., functional program); qualitative analysis tools (e.g., characteristics, special needs, and image); square footage measurement standards; project context, including existing conditions, location, surroundings, views, and geography; indoor air quality; energy conservation; renewable resources

2. **Knowledge of and skill in application of design theory and the relationship between human behavior and the designed environment**  
   (17 questions, 17%):
   - influences (e.g., environmental, social, psychological, cultural, aesthetic, and global), economic factors, ergonomics, anthropometrics (i.e., relationship of object to body), proxemics (e.g., territoriality), programming, acoustics, universal design, aging in place, life safety
Knowledge of and skill in integration with building systems and construction
(10 questions, 10%):
construction types (e.g., steel, concrete, and wood), components (e.g., doors, windows, and studs), mechanical systems, electrical systems, plumbing systems, structural systems, fire protection systems, low voltage systems, acoustical systems, lighting systems

Knowledge of and skill in sourcing and research as it relates to manufacturers’ and vendors’ information regarding furniture, fixtures, and equipment
(10 questions, 10%):
product assembly, installation, production time, furniture delivery, life safety (e.g., flammability and toxicity), window treatments, textiles, detail drawings, technical specifications, warranties and manuals

Knowledge of and skill in development and use of construction drawings, schedules, and specifications
(10 questions, 10%):
prescriptive, performance, and proprietary specifications; detail pages; egress plan; elevation plans; schedules; detailed space plans; lighting plans; as-built plans; demolition plans; reflected ceiling plans

Knowledge of and skill in measuring, drafting, and technical drawing conventions
(12 questions, 12%):
measuring space; inventory of existing furniture, fixtures, and equipment; as-built drawings; construction drawing standards; review and redline of construction drawings

Knowledge of and skill in visual, written, and verbal design communication methods and techniques
(21 questions, 21%):
models, rendering (e.g., 3-D and 2-D), material and color boards, digital media (e.g., graphic software), bubble diagrams, adjacency matrices, charts, stacking/zoning diagrams, block plans/square footage allocations, floor plans, mock-ups and prototypes, presentation techniques and skills, public speaking

Interior Design Professional Exam (IDPX)

Knowledge of and skill in analyzing and synthesizing the programmatic information
(10 questions, 6.7%):
design concept statements, functional parti diagrams, concept models

Knowledge of and skill in application of code requirements, laws, standards, regulations, accessibility, and sustainability
(20 questions, 13.3%):
universal/accessible design, life safety, signage, wayfinding, egress, fire separation, site analysis, indoor air quality, energy conservation, renewable resources, water conservation

Knowledge of and skill in integration with building systems and construction
(13 questions, 8.7%):
construction types (e.g., steel, concrete, and wood), sequencing of work (e.g., plumbing before dry walling), components (e.g., doors, windows, and studs), permit requirements, mechanical systems, electrical systems, plumbing systems, structural systems, fire protection systems, low voltage systems, acoustical systems, lighting systems
Knowledge of and skill in selection, specification, use, and care of furniture, fixtures, equipment, interior finishes, materials, and lighting (22 questions, 14.7%):
research; sourcing; and procurement; cost estimating; purchase orders; prepayment requirements; detail drawings; technical specifications; warranties; manuals; project budget; product assembly; installation; production time; furniture delivery; life safety; window treatments; textiles; acoustics; wall treatments; floor coverings; ceiling treatments; daylighting; lighting sources (e.g., lamping and illumination); fixtures calculations (e.g., foot candle requirements, energy efficiency, codes, and lease requirements); physiological responses (e.g., visual acuity); color rendering; light distribution (e.g., ambient lighting and task lighting)

Knowledge of and skill in development and use of construction drawings, schedules, and specifications (15 questions, 10%):
architectural woodwork; construction and installation standards; general conditions; prescriptive, performance, and proprietary specifications; detail pages; general notes; egress plans; elevation plans; schedules; detailed space plans; lighting plans; as-built plans; demolition plans; reflected ceiling plans

Knowledge of and skill in interior design documentation and contract administration (23 questions, 15.3%): project management, program management, field administration, quality control, problem solving, facilitation/negotiation, change orders, forms, transmittals, punch lists/deficiency lists, addenda, bonds, bid forms/tender forms, bulletins, minutes and field reports, field administration, shop drawings, project meetings/meeting management/meeting protocol, substitutions, purchase orders, payouts, site visits, project close-out, proposals, construction mock-ups, tenant work letter requirements, invoices, project budget/budget review/progress and tracking, project schedule/schedule review/progress and tracking, value engineering, project accounting

Knowledge of and skill in project coordination procedures and the roles of related design professionals (20 questions, 13.3%):
critical path (e.g., design milestones, sequencing); project planning; close-out procedures; architects; electrical, structural, mechanical, and civil engineers; contractors/construction managers; lighting consultants; acoustical consultants; graphics/signage designer; audiovisual consultant; landscape architects; food service consultants; other specialized consultants; decorators; developers; real estate professionals; leasing agents; project planning; project management of consultants; project team dynamics; project budgeting/tracking during design phases

Knowledge of and skill in application of professional ethics and business practices (27 questions, 21.6%):
post occupancy evaluation services; contracts; contract negotiation; contracts with consultants and subconsultants; negotiation strategies; time and fee estimation/proposals; determine scope of work; phases of a project; budgeting principles and practices; human resources; office management; strategic planning (internal); business licenses required by local jurisdictions; accounting principles (office/business); legal considerations (e.g., liabilities and forms of business); insurance; professional licensure, certification, and registration; ethics
**Interior Design Practicum**

1. **Knowledge of and skills in developing a design concept (10%)**:  
   programming, design theory

2. **Knowledge of and skills in design communication methods and techniques (15%)**:  
   written design communication methods and techniques, visual design communication methods and techniques

3. **Knowledge of and skills in measuring, drafting, and technical drawing conventions (30%)**:  
   construction drawings and schedules, architectural woodwork, specifications, lighting

4. **Knowledge of and skills in analyzing and synthesizing the programmatic information (30%)**:  
   theories about the relationship between human behavior and the designed environment, building construction, sustainable design practices, building systems, interior finishes and materials

5. **Knowledge of and skills in space planning (15%)**:  
   code requirements, laws, standards and regulations; site analysis procedures; furniture, fixtures, and equipment, including window treatments and textiles

**ABOUT THE COUNCIL AND THE NCIDQ CERTIFICATE**

The council is composed of representatives from professional design organizations and regulatory agencies from those states and provinces with statutory requirements. Its core purpose is “to protect the health, life safety, and welfare of the public by establishing standards of competence in the practice of interior design.”

With this purpose in mind, the council provides the NCIDQ certificate (which is earned by passing all three exam sections) as a means of identifying interior designers who demonstrate a minimum level of interior design competency. Officially, these individuals are called “NCIDQ certificate holders.”

NCIDQ certificate holders are eligible for membership in most professional interior design organizations, including those represented within the council: the American Society of Interior Designers (ASID), Interior Design Educators Council (IDEC), Interior Designers of Canada (IDC), and the International Interior Design Association (IIDA). Certificate holders are also eligible for advanced professional certification as offered by the Governing Board for Contract Interior Design Standards. In many states and provinces, only NCIDQ certificate holders are eligible to practice interior design and use certain titles (such as interior designer, certified interior designer, and registered interior designer).^2

**HOW TO REGISTER FOR THE EXAM**

Registering for the exam is a multi-step process. First, you must meet the exam’s eligibility requirements, then submit an application and have it accepted. Confirm your eligibility, and begin the application process before the examination date.

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^2Some states require passing additional state-specific building code exams. California, furthermore, has its own exam, the Interior Design Examination (IDEX) California exam, administered by the California Council for Interior Design Certification. *IDEX Essentials: The Power to Pass the IDEX California Exam* is available from PPI for individuals preparing for that exam.
Qualifying

You may take IDFX after you have met the minimum education requirements. You may meet the education requirements by receiving a bachelor of arts or master of fine arts degree from an interior design program accredited by the Council for Interior Design Accreditation (CIDA); a bachelor of arts degree or higher from an interior design program not accredited by CIDA with at least 60 semester (or 90 quarter) credits in interior design coursework; a bachelor of arts degree or higher in another major with at least 60 semester (or 90 quarter) credits of interior design coursework that led to a diploma, degree, or certificate; an associate of arts degree with at least 40 semester (or 60 quarter) units in interior design; or a bachelor of arts or master of fine arts degree from an architecture program accredited by the National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB) or Canadian Architectural Certification Board (CACB).

You may take IDPX and the Practicum after you have met the education and work experience requirements given in this section. Work experience for which academic credit was not received will not count toward the hours required. Passing IDFX is not a prerequisite to taking IDPX and the Practicum, although you must receive a passing score on all three exam sections to earn the NCIDQ certificate.

To be eligible for IDPX and the Practicum with a bachelor of arts or master of fine arts degree from an interior design program accredited by CIDA, you must complete 3520 hours of work experience. At least 1760 of those hours must be accrued after you have met your education requirements.

To be eligible for IDPX and the Practicum with a bachelor of arts degree or higher from an interior design program that is not accredited by CIDA, you must complete 3520 hours of work experience. At least 1760 of those hours must be accrued after you have met your education requirements. In addition, at least 60 semester (or 90 quarter) credits must be in interior design coursework.

To be eligible for IDPX and the Practicum with a bachelor of arts degree in another major, you must complete 3520 hours of work experience. At least 1760 of those hours must be accrued after you have met your education requirements. In addition, at least 60 semester (or 90 quarter) credits of interior design coursework must be completed and must have resulted in a diploma, degree, or certificate.

To be eligible for IDPX and the Practicum with an associate of arts degree of 60 semester (or 90 quarter) units in interior design, you must complete 5280 hours of work experience. All these hours must be accrued after you have met your education requirements.

To be eligible for IDPX and the Practicum with an associate of arts degree of 40 semester (or 60 quarter) units in interior design, you must complete 7040 hours of work experience. All these hours must be accrued after you have met your education requirements.

To be eligible for IDPX and the Practicum with a bachelor of arts or master of fine arts degree from an architecture program accredited by NAAB or CACB, you must complete 5280 hours of work experience. All these hours must be accrued after you have met your education requirements.

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3Hours worked under an NCIDQ certificate holder, a licensed/registered interior designer, or an architect who offers interior design services counts as "qualified" work experience, and accrue at 100%. Hours worked in alternative situations accrue at lower rates. Hours worked under direct supervision by an interior designer who is not registered, licensed, or an NCIDQ certificate holder accrue at a rate of 75%; work sponsored, but not directly supervised, by the same individual accrues at a rate of 25%. Work hours not supervised by a designer (i.e., supervised by someone other than a designer, or not supervised at all in the case of self-employment) accrue at a rate of 25%. The Interior Design Experience Program (IDEP) offered by NCIDQ satisfies your work experience requirement.
Applying

Exam dates and application deadlines are listed on PPI’s website at www.ppi2pass.com/NCIDQfaq. The first step in the application process is submitting the online application form and application fee through MyNCIDQ, a section of NCIDQ’s website (www.ncidq.org). For IDFX, gather the following supporting materials and mail them to the council in a single package.

- **Candidate authorization and consent form:** This form attests to the truthfulness of your application documents, and grants the council permission to evaluate your application. Download and print the form through the council’s website. The signed hard copy must be included in your package of supporting materials.

- **Official transcripts:** Download the transcript request form from the council’s website and submit it to the registrar (along with any fees the registrar requires) for each college or university you attended. The registrar will return the official transcript to you in a sealed envelope which must be included, unopened, in your package of supporting materials.

For IDPX and the Practicum, also include the following items in the package.

- **Letters of reference:** Ask three references (employers, clients, or professional peers, not friends or family members) to complete the letter of reference form (available on the council’s website). Each reference must put the letter in a sealed envelope with his or her signature across the flap and return it to you. The unopened letters must be included in your package of supporting materials.

- **Work experience verification forms:** Submit a separate form for each position you held. Complete the direct supervision work experience verification form for work experience you completed under a direct supervisor. For work experience not directly supervised by a design professional (for example, in the case of self-employment), complete the sponsored work experience verification form. A sponsor is a design professional who can verify your work experience, but was not a direct supervisor and may not have had direct control over or detailed knowledge of your work.

Do not include any additional materials in your package of supporting materials. Any additional documents you include will be discarded. Be sure to have all materials submitted by the relevant deadline; the council will not review a partial application or an application once the deadline has passed.

Registering

If your application is accepted by the council, you will be automatically notified through MyNCIDQ. If your application is not accepted, you may need further education and work experience to fulfill the requirements. If this process takes more than one year, you will need to resubmit your entire application.

If your application is accepted, you may register for as many exam sections as you were accepted for. If you choose not to register for this exam cycle, you will remain an active candidate and will receive email notifications about registering for the next exam cycle. Fees are listed in the registration guide (a brochure you may download from the council’s website) for each exam section.

Registering Through Prometric

To register for IDFX or IDPX, go to Prometric’s website (www.prometric.com/NCIDQ) or call the toll-free number. Choose the exam location and date from those available. All locations accept registrations up to a day before the exam; some locations accept same-day registration. Registration fees are payable by credit card only.
Prometric will send you an email with your registration confirmation and test center information. Bring two forms of identification with you on examination day. One of these must be a government-issued photo ID.

**Registering Through MyNCIDQ**

To register for the Practicum, go to MyNCIDQ and click on “Exam Registration.” Complete the confidentiality agreement and statement of responsibility. Registration fees are payable online by credit card or through the mail by check (this must be received in time for processing).

The council will send you an email with further exam information after receipt of payment and an email with your letter of admission at least two weeks prior to the exam. Print the letter of admission and present it with a government-issued photo ID on examination day.

**TAKING THE NCIDQ EXAM**

Even if you are the most prepared of candidates, the exam can be arduous simply because of its length and the level of concentration needed to get through it. As with any activity requiring endurance, it is important to be well rested on exam day. Stop studying a day or two before the exam, and relax as much as possible. Get plenty of sleep the night before each exam section.

Make sure that you are prepared with all the materials that you will need when you take each exam section. For IDFX and IDPX, you should not bring anything other than your two forms of photo identification. Prometric will provide you with scratch paper and pencils, as well as earplugs or noise-cancelling headphones if you would like them. For the Practicum, you may bring some supplies with you into the exam room. See “Taking the Practicum” in this Introduction for more information.

On the day of the exam, allow yourself plenty of time to get to the exam site to avoid any potential complications in transportation. Enter the exam room early to select a seat with good lighting, as far away from distractions as possible. Arrange your working materials and other supplies to make it easy to begin as soon as allowed. The proctor will review the exam instructions, as well as general rules about breaks, smoking, permitted materials, and other housekeeping matters; you can ask any questions about the rules at that time.

Once the exam begins, quickly review the materials given in the exam booklet. One of the biggest problems you may have in taking the exam is simply completing it in the time allowed. This is especially true of the Practicum. However, most candidates who know the material well and have adequate experience in the field of interior design will find that the time given to complete each exam is adequate. Try to relax as much as possible during the exam. Worry cannot enhance any of your strengths.

**IDFX and IDPX Tips**

Consider the following tips for taking the IDFX and IDPX.

- Try to complete each question in no more than 1 minute 15 seconds to leave a reserve of about 20 minutes to guess at unanswered questions at the end of the exam section.
- Eliminate any obviously incorrect options before attempting to guess. The chances of guessing correctly are better between two choices than among four.
- Look for an exception to a rule or a special circumstance that makes the obvious, easy response incorrect. Although there may be a few easy and obvious questions, it’s more likely that a simple question has a level of complexity that is not immediately obvious.
• Take note of absolute words such as “always,” “never,” or “completely.” These words often indicate some minor exception that can turn what reads like a true statement into a false statement, or vice versa.

• Watch for words like “seldom,” “usually,” “best,” or “most reasonable.” These words generally indicate that some judgment will be involved in answering the question, so look for two or more options that may be very similar.

• If a question appears to be fundamentally flawed, make the best choice possible under the circumstances. Flawed questions do not appear often of the exam, but when they do, they are usually discovered by the council in the grading process. These questions will not negatively impact your score.

Practicum Tips
Unlike IDFX and IDPX, you are allowed to bring certain items with you to the Practicum. The following is a list of items you can (and should) bring to the Practicum.

• a portable drafting board (no larger than 30 in \( \times \) 48 in (762 mm \( \times \) 1219 mm) with a parallel bar
• an architect’s scale (imperial or metric depending on what scale is being used and where the exam is being given)
• 30°/60° and 45° triangles
• templates for shapes such as plumbing, furniture, and circles, including \( \frac{1}{8} \) in and \( \frac{1}{4} \) in ADA templates. Homemade templates are not permitted.
• a pencil pointer and sharpener
• tracing paper (precut sheets to save time)
• several pencils and several types and thicknesses of marking pens (the supplied vellum may smear one type of marker and not another)
• a nonprogrammable, battery-operated calculator to determine area (one that uses feet and inches)
• fresh batteries for your calculator
• erasers
• any other drawing tools that will make your work easier
• survival tools, such as a watch, a water bottle (if allowed), aspirin, tissues, eye drops, and so on

The following is a list of items that are not allowed in the exam room for the Practicum.

• reference materials, including dictionaries
• calculators with advance memory, programming, communicating, or printing capabilities
• cell phones or similar electronic devices
• open food and beverage containers

Consider the following tips while taking the Practicum.

• The Practicum requires you to assimilate, analyze, and communicate a significant amount of information in a short period of time. The council provides on its website advance access to the exam booklet’s code requirements. Take advantage of this access and review them prior to the exam.

• Remember while you’re taking the exam that drawings can be done freehand. The drawings can be rough as long as they show the graders that the problem has been
solved and all the program requirements have been met. In other words, highly refined, drafted drawings are not necessary.

- Do not use a T-square; it is too difficult to use when rushed. Many of the Practicum exercises can be completed simply by marking the location of each item on the plan provided and filling in informational boxes. Only the space planning, egress, and millwork exercises require standard drawings to be produced. For the space planning exercise, allow yourself enough time to develop and draw the concept. Do not attempt something that is complicated or unusual or that requires complex construction. Avoid using shapes and construction elements that require a lot of drawing time.
- Remember that the graders are not looking for innovative, award-winning solutions, just proof that you can respond to a program, work within the context of an existing building plan, and integrate accessible design and health, safety, and welfare issues into a three-dimensional solution.

WHAT TO DO AFTER THE EXAM
Score notifications for IDFX and IDPX will be sent within eight weeks after your test date. Your score report will indicate the number of points you received on the exam, and whether you passed or failed. Score notifications for the Practicum will be sent within 14 weeks after your test date. If you pass the Practicum, you will receive a score report that indicates “Pass.” If you fail the Practicum, you will receive a score report that indicates “Fail,” along with a list of the exercises receiving failing scores. If you fail one or two of the three exam sections, you will only need to retake the failed section(s). Your state or province may impose restrictions on the number of years that you can wait between taking different sections of the exam.

The council will issue you a certificate and a certificate number when you pass all three exam sections. Your certificate number will be unique to you, and is used to distinguish yourself within the interior design field. To identify yourself as an NCIDQ certificate holder on stationery, business cards, and so on, use the following format: “[First name] [Last name], NCIDQ® Certificate No. [######].” For example, “David Ballast, NCIDQ® Certificate No. 9425.”

To maintain your active status as an NCIDQ certificate holder, you must pay a yearly certificate renewal fee. You will receive your first renewal notice one year after your exam date.