

# NCIDQ Candidate Handbook



# How To Use This Handbook

The NCIDQ Candidate Handbook is the primary source of information for the NCIDQ Exam and provides individuals with everything they need to know and understand while going through the certification process. Candidates who are applying for and planning to take the NCIDQ Exam should read this handbook and familiarize themselves with the policies and procedures outlined. All individuals who go through this process must comply with the policies, procedures, and deadlines in this handbook and must attest to the fact that they have read and reviewed the [NCIDQ Exam Candidate Authorization and Consent Agreement](#) when applying. The policies and procedures in this handbook help maintain process integrity and ensure test fairness and validity for all candidates and certificate holders.

CIDQ reserves the right, at its discretion, to change the standards, policies, procedures, application, and/or requirements for the NCIDQ Exam at any time. The most current and accurate information will be posted on the website at [cidq.org](http://cidq.org) and/or will be communicated directly to candidates via email.

## **Nondiscrimination Statement**

CIDQ does not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, sex, gender identity, age, religion, sexual orientation, disability, or any other status that is protected by applicable law.



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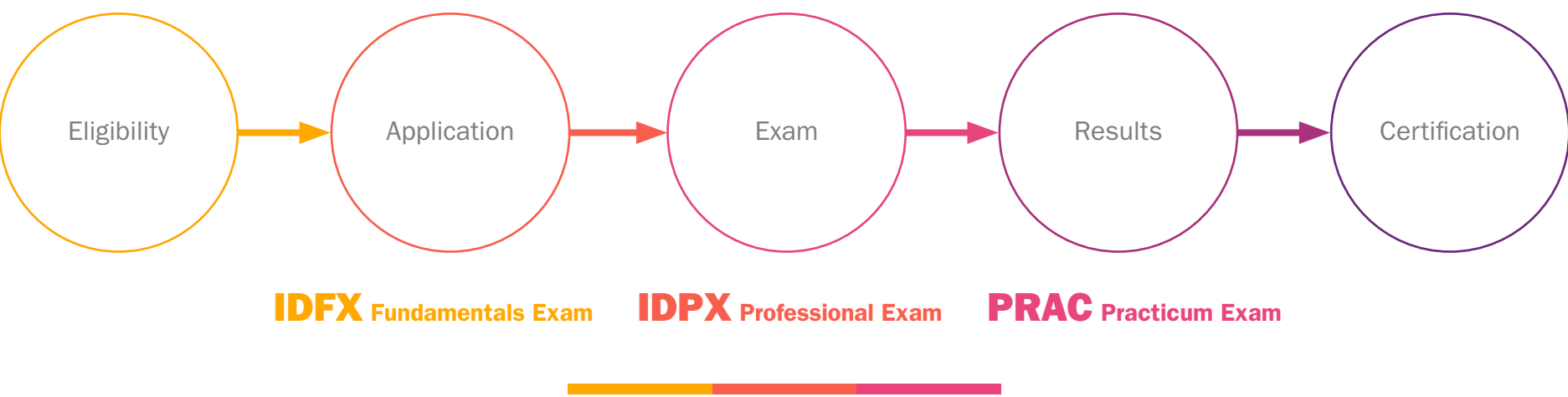




# NCIDQ Certification Process



# NCIDQ Certification Process



The NCIDQ Exam is offered twice a year, in the spring (April) and in the fall (October). To be eligible to sit for the NCIDQ Exam, candidates must meet specific education and work experience requirements.

Once a candidate has been approved to sit for the exam, a candidate’s application eligibility period will begin. For candidates applying for Route 1 (IDFX, IDPX, PRAC), their eligibility period is 10 exam administration periods (about five years). Candidates who do not meet the work experience requirement should apply using the Route 2, Part 1 (IDFX) exam application; their eligibility period is four (4) exam administration periods (about two years). Therefore, it is important NOT to apply until a candidate is ready to begin taking the NCIDQ Exam. A candidate’s eligibility timeline begins with the next exam administration period following application approval.

When taking the IDFX and IDPX exams, preliminary exam results are typically provided to candidates via email within an hour of testing, followed by an official Score Report approximately six (6) weeks after the close of the exam administration period. For the Practicum exam, preliminary results are not provided. The official Score Report will be posted in a candidate’s MyNCIDQ account for access approximately six (6) weeks after the close of the exam administration period.

With a valid approved application on file, after passing all three (3) sections of the NCIDQ Exam within an application eligibility period, individuals will earn their NCIDQ Certificate and receive an NCIDQ certificate number. Certificate holders must renew their certificate annually to remain active.





# Eligibility Requirements

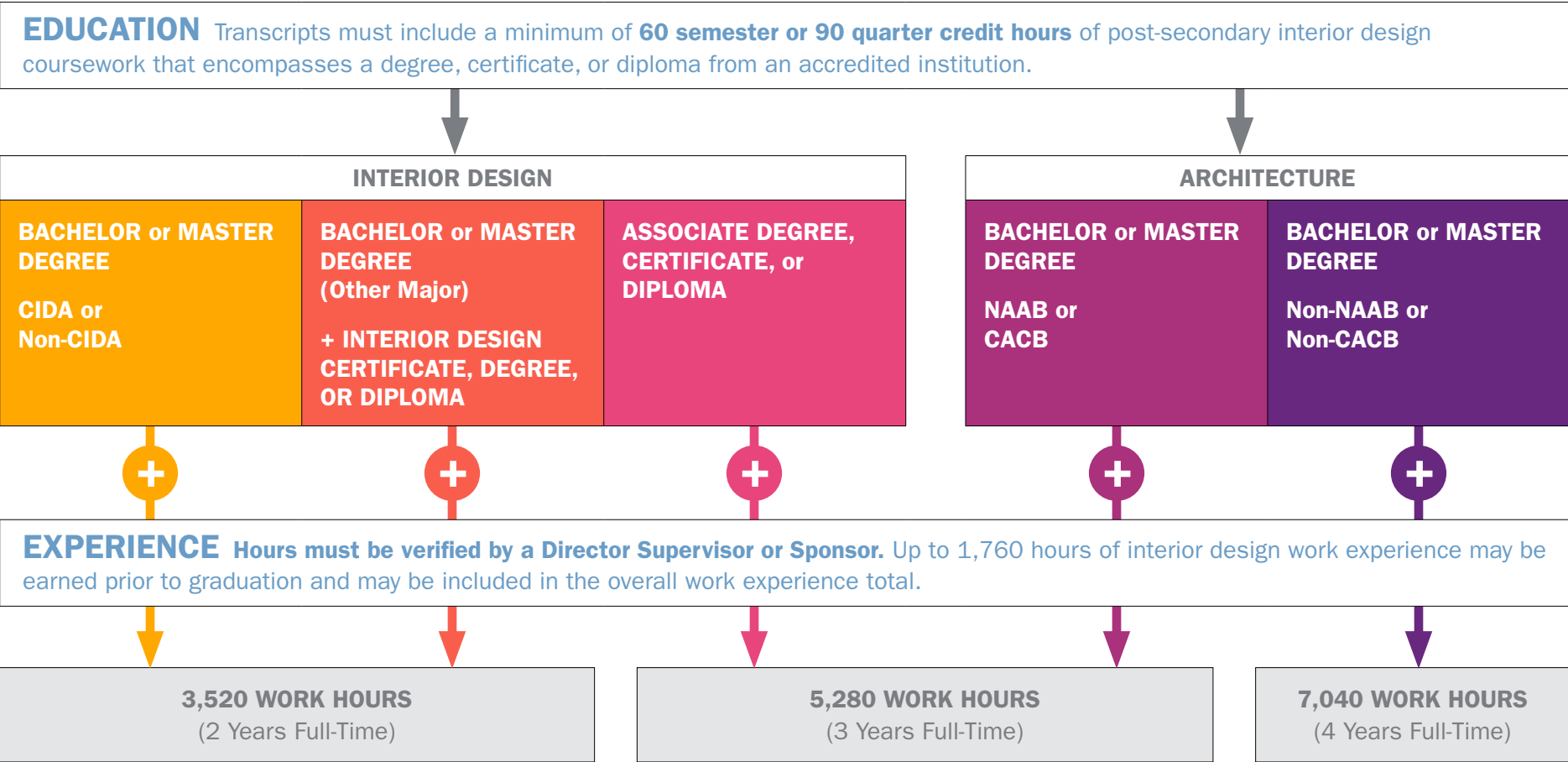
# Work experience requirements are changing

## FEBRUARY 1, 2024

[Click here](#) to learn the new categories & minimum hours

### Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible to sit for the NCIDQ Exam, candidates must meet specific **education** and work **experience** requirements as outlined below.





## WORK EXPERIENCE VERIFICATION

Work experience hours must be earned and verified by a Direct Supervisor or Sponsor who meets one of the following criteria:

- NCIDQ Certified Interior Designer
- State/Provincial Licensed/Registered/Certified Interior Designer in the U.S. or Canada
- State/Provincial Licensed/Registered Architect in the U.S. or Canada who provides interior design services

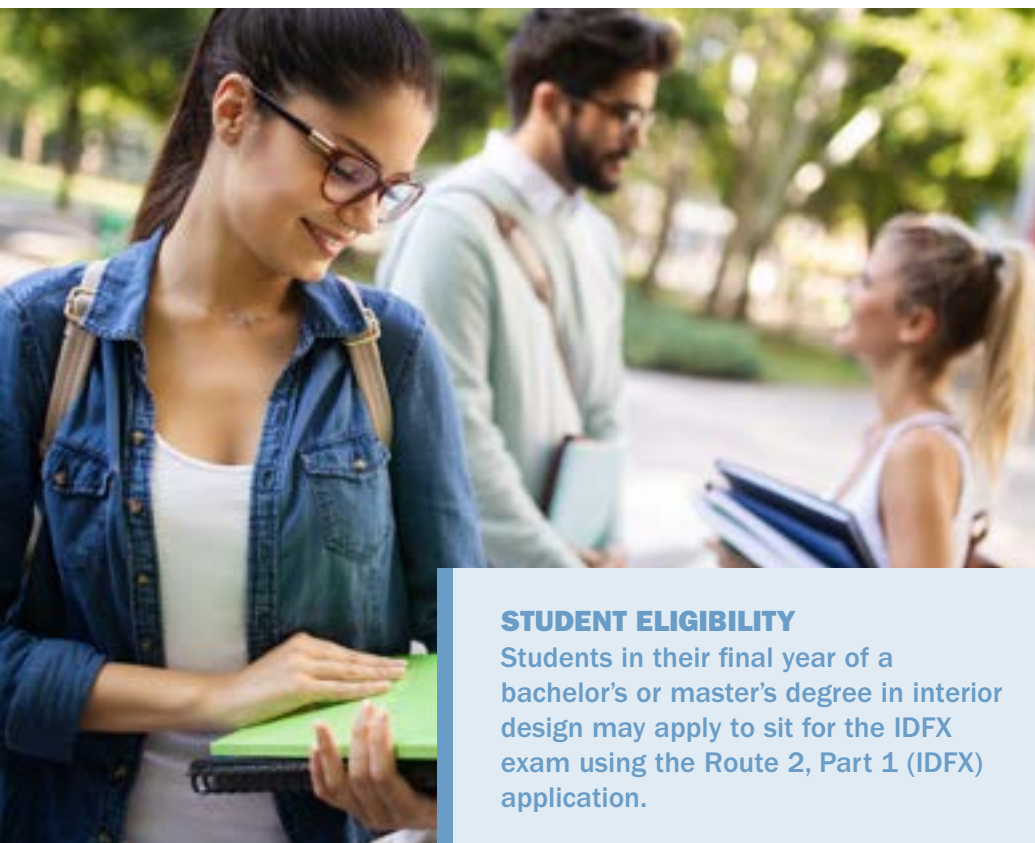
A **Direct Supervisor** is a design professional, who provides substantial oversight and control of a candidate's work and possesses detailed knowledge of the tasks performed.

A **Sponsor** is a design professional, who agrees to review a candidate's professional progress and affirms interior design work experience hours. A sponsor may or may not work within the same firm as the candidate.

A sponsor must determine and be comfortable with the candidate's presented work, whether past or present. This may include a review of drawings and plans; photographs; project tours; and references, as examples.

CIDQ recommends candidates meet quarterly with their Direct Supervisor or Sponsor to discuss and review the candidate's work experience. Meetings must occur via phone, video chat, or in person; email-only is not sufficient. It is the responsibility of the candidate to schedule meetings with their Direct Supervisor/Sponsor. Discussions with Supervisors/Sponsors should focus on the phases of a design project (Pre-Design, Programming, Schematic Design, Design Development, Contract Documents, Bidding/Tendering, Contract Administration, Project Conclusion, Ancillary/Additional Services) and the specific experience being gained. Particularly with sponsors, candidates should be prepared to convey a thorough description of their work and its applicability to the project phases.

Beginning February 1, 2024, candidates will be required to [meet minimum work experience hours in various design categories](#).



### STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

Students in their final year of a bachelor's or master's degree in interior design may apply to sit for the IDFX exam using the Route 2, Part 1 (IDFX) application.



### CANDIDATES FROM OUTSIDE THE U.S. OR CANADA

Candidates with an interior design education (degree, diploma, or certificate) or bachelor's degree (minimum) in architecture earned abroad may qualify for the NCIDQ Exam. Transcripts must be translated and evaluated by an education evaluator such as [World Education Services](#) or [Education Credential Evaluators](#).

Submitted evaluations must include school name, major, degree type and date conferred and course titles with corresponding U.S. credit equivalency and grades to ensure education meets CIDQ's requirements of 60 semester or 90 quarter credit hours of interior design coursework.

### ALTERNATIVE REVIEW PROGRAM (ARP)

Candidates who are unable to document the minimum educational requirements may be able to obtain exam eligibility through the Alternative Review Program (ARP). In order to apply via the ARP, a candidate must have a minimum of 8,800 hours (approx. 5 years) of interior design work experience to offset some formal education requirements. Contact CIDQ at [inquiries@cidq.org](mailto:inquiries@cidq.org) or 202.721.0220 or go to our website for additional information about the [ARP process](#).



Meeting CIDQ's education and work experience requirements **does not** guarantee that a candidate will meet their jurisdiction's requirements to be a licensed/registered/certified interior designer. Please check the [jurisdictional requirements](#) to ensure you meet the requirements to become licensed, certified, or registered in the jurisdiction in which you want to practice.

## APPLICATION ELIGIBILITY ROUTES

Route 1 (IDFX, IDPX, PRAC)		
IDFX	IDPX	PRAC

Candidates who meet both the education and work experience requirements at the time they submit their application, should apply for Route 1 (IDFX, IDPX, PRAC).

**Application requirements for all three sections (IDFX, IDPX, PRAC) include:**

1. Official transcript(s) must be sent directly by educational institution to CIDQ at [transcripts@cidq.org](mailto:transcripts@cidq.org). Once received and uploaded by CIDQ, email notification will be sent to candidate.  
Note: Official transcript must show degree awarded and date conferred.
2. Add work experience to application in MyNCIDQ account and have direct supervisor/sponsor verify. Include separate entry for each position held.
3. Pay application fee and submit.
4. Applications are reviewed within 10 business days of submission. Upon review, an email notification will be sent indicating application status.

Route 2, Part 1 IDFX Only
IDFX

Candidates who meet **only** the education requirement, but have not yet acquired the necessary work experience, should apply for the Route 2, Part 1 (IDFX) exam. Additionally, students in their final year of a bachelor's or master's degree program in interior design are eligible to apply using the Route 2, Part 1 (IDFX) exam application.

**Application requirements for the IDFX exam:**

1. Official transcript(s) must be sent directly by educational institution to CIDQ at [transcripts@cidq.org](mailto:transcripts@cidq.org). Once received and uploaded by CIDQ, email notification will be sent to candidate.
2. Pay application fee and submit.
3. Applications are reviewed within 10 business days of submission. Upon review, an email notification will be sent indicating application status.

\*If a transcript showing a completed degree was previously submitted with the Route 2, Part 1 (IDFX) application, the transcript does not have to be resubmitted and can be found in the library of the candidate's MyNCIDQ account.

Route 2, Part 2 IDPX/PRAC	
IDPX	PRAC

Upon having an approved IDFX exam application and completing the required work experience hours, candidates must submit a new application with an **official\*** transcript, work experience verified by their direct supervisor/sponsor, and application fee paid for the IDPX and PRAC exams.

**Application requirements for IDPX/PRAC exams:**

1. Official transcript(s) must be sent directly by educational institution to CIDQ at [transcripts@cidq.org](mailto:transcripts@cidq.org). Once received and uploaded by CIDQ, email notification will be sent to candidate.  
Note: Official transcript must show degree awarded and date conferred.
2. Add work experience to application in MyNCIDQ account and have direct supervisor/sponsor verify. Include separate entry for each position held.
3. Pay application fee and submit.
4. Applications are reviewed within 10 business days of submission. Upon review, an email notification will be sent indicating application status.



# Application Process





# Application Process

## FOLLOW THE STEPS BELOW TO APPLY FOR THE NCIDQ EXAM

1	Go to <a href="#">cidq.org</a> and create a <a href="#">MyNCIDQ account</a> .
2	In your MyNCIDQ account, enter first and last name as it appears on a valid (non-expired), original government-issued photo ID with signature.
3	Start the application.
4	Select the eligibility pathway that describes your education and/or work experience.
5	Have educational institution(s) email <b>official</b> transcript(s) directly to CIDQ at <a href="mailto:transcripts@cidq.org">transcripts@cidq.org</a> . Official unopened transcripts may also be mailed to CIDQ, 225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 210, Alexandria, VA 22314.
6	Add work experience to application in MyNCIDQ account and have direct supervisor/sponsor verify, if applying for <b>Route 1 (IDFX, IDPX, PRAC)</b> or <b>Route 2, Part 2 (IDPX/PRAC)</b> . Include a separate entry for each position held.
7	Once CIDQ has received and uploaded a candidate's transcript(s), an email notification will be sent to complete the application and pay the application fee.
8	Submit completed application and payment to initiate application review. Applications will be reviewed and results communicated within 10 business days.
9	Once an application is approved, candidates have 10 exam administrations (about five years) to take and pass <b>Route 1 (IDFX, IDPX, PRAC)</b> . If applying for <b>Route 2, Part 1 (IDFX)</b> , candidates have four exam administrations (about two years) to take and pass the IDFX exam.

For expedited handling, official transcripts should be sent electronically directly from the educational institution to [transcripts@cidq.org](mailto:transcripts@cidq.org). When requesting transcripts, please ensure that it does not have any restrictions to avoid access/download issues.

\*If applying for the Route 2, Part 1 (IDFX) exam initially, the Route 2, Part 2 (IDPX/PRAC) application will need to be submitted once the work experience requirements are met.



## POLICIES AND CANDIDATE CONSENT AGREEMENT

The [NCIDQ Exam Candidate Authorization and Consent Agreement](#) is a legally binding contract between the candidate and CIDQ and sets forth the terms and conditions under which CIDQ will permit candidates to apply, register and take the NCIDQ Exam. Candidates are required to review the Consent Agreement and agree to be bound by these policies when completing their application.

### Deficient Applications

Candidates whose applications are deemed deficient during the review process will receive an email identifying the deficiency. They will be able to address/correct their deficiency and resubmit their application for another review. Candidates have until the application deadline date to resolve the deficiency. If the deficiency is not resolved by the deadline date, the application will be open for 3 years. After that time frame, the application will be closed and a new application will need to be created.

### Reasonable Testing Accommodations

CIDQ is fully committed to providing reasonable testing accommodations for a candidate's documented medical condition that constitutes a qualifying disability under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). To request testing accommodations, a candidate must complete the [Testing Accommodations Request](#) form at the same time an exam application is submitted, and **prior to** scheduling an exam appointment with Prometric.

CIDQ is unable to add testing accommodations to an existing exam appointment. If a request for testing accommodations is made after an exam appointment has been scheduled,

the current exam appointment must be cancelled for testing accommodations to be reviewed, approved, and added to an active eligibility. Scheduling an exam appointment prior to receiving approval of testing accommodations may result in limited exam appointment options.

Any information provided regarding the need for accommodations will be treated with strict confidentiality; the need for the accommodation will only be shared by CIDQ with Prometric, our test delivery vendor, to facilitate the accommodation at the testing site. To find out about approved personal items allowed at testing locations without pre-approval go to [www.prometric.com/media/2867/download?attachment](http://www.prometric.com/media/2867/download?attachment).



## EXAM DATES & DEADLINES

The NCIDQ Exam is offered twice a year, in the spring (April) and in the fall (October). Applications are accepted throughout the year with specific deadlines for each exam administration.

	SPRING EXAMS	FALL EXAMS
Applications Accepted	August 1 – January 31 <b>DEADLINE: JANUARY 31*</b>	February 1 – July 31 <b>DEADLINE: JULY 31*</b>
Exam Payment & Scheduling Period	January 3 – March 31	July 1 – September 30
Exam Administration	April 1 – 30	October 1 – 31

\*A complete and paid application must be received by the application deadline date to be reviewed for eligibility for that exam administration period. NOTE: If the application deadline date falls on a weekend, the deadline date will be the next business day at 11:59pm ET.

Once a candidate is approved to take the NCIDQ Exam, exam fees should be paid during the exam payment/scheduling period for which they wish to test.



## EXAM FEES

### Fees if Applying for Route 1 (IDFX, IDPX, PRAC)

(Candidates who meet both the education and work experience requirements should apply for Route 1 (IDFX, IDPX, PRAC).)

Application Fee**	Exams	Exam Fee	Exam Payment & Scheduling Period
\$225	IDFX	\$295	<b>Spring:</b> January 3 – March 31 <b>Fall:</b> July 1 – September 30
	IDPX	\$355	
	PRAC	\$460	

### Fees if Applying in Two Parts

(Candidates who do not meet the work experience requirement and apply for Route 2, Part 1 (IDFX) first, must submit another application for the Route 2, Part 2 (IDPX/PRAC) once the work experience requirements have been met.)

Application Fee**	Exams	Exam Fee	Exam Payment & Scheduling Period
\$95	IDFX	\$295	<b>Spring:</b> January 3 – March 31 <b>Fall:</b> July 1 – September 30
\$145	IDPX	\$355	
	PRAC	\$460	

\*\*All fees are payable in U.S. Dollars. Application fees are non-refundable. Payments are made via credit card, using candidate's MyNCIDQ account. We do not accept check payments.



ADDITIONAL FEES

Fee Type	Fee*	Details
Reschedule Fee	\$45/exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Payable to Prometric.</li><li>• Reschedule requests made between five (5) and 30 days before the originally scheduled exam appointment.</li><li>• Reschedule requests apply to the current exam administration period ONLY.</li></ul>
Cancellation Fee	\$100/exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Exams must be cancelled thru Prometric.</li><li>• A cancellation fee will apply to any exam cancelled after purchase up to five (5) days prior to a scheduled exam appointment.</li><li>• A cancellation fee will apply for exams purchased but no exam appointment made. Exam fees for unscheduled exams cannot be carried forward.</li><li>• The cancellation fee will be deducted from the refund due and will be processed by CIDQ.</li><li>• Exams cannot be cancelled five (5) days or less prior to a scheduled exam appointment.</li><li>• Emergency cancellations** ONLY are permitted less than five (5) days prior to a scheduled exam appointment.</li><li>• Refunds for eligible exam cancellations will be processed weekly beginning mid-March and mid-September through the end of the exam administration period.</li></ul>
Annual Certificate Renewal Fee	\$75/year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Renewal fees due annually (April or October) based on date of exam passage.</li></ul>
Certificate Reinstatement Fee	\$150/year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reinstate inactive certificate</li></ul>

\* All fees are payable in U.S. Dollars. Application fees are non-refundable. Payments are made via credit card, using candidate's MyNCIDQ account. We do not accept check payments.

\*\* Emergency cancellations are medical or personal emergencies that are unplanned events affecting the candidate and arise within five days of a scheduled exam appointment and prevent the candidate from taking an exam. An [Emergency Exam Cancellation](#) form and supporting documentation must be received no later than 10 days following a candidate's scheduled exam appointment. Requests are considered on a case-by-case basis.

## SCHEDULING EXAM APPOINTMENTS

Candidates must be approved to sit for the NCIDQ Exam before being able to schedule an exam appointment. CIDQ partners with Prometric to deliver the three (3) sections of the NCIDQ Exam.

Once approved to sit for the NCIDQ Exam, candidates must pay the exam fee for the exam(s) they wish to take during that specific exam administration period. Once the exam fee(s) is paid, they may schedule an exam appointment by clicking on the scheduling link in their MyNCIDQ account for the testing option they prefer (test center or remotely proctored). This will take a candidate to the Prometric scheduling system. Candidates may schedule an exam appointment in person for any of the three exam sections (IDFX, IDPX and PRAC) or they can select to test remotely, such as at their home or office, for either the IDFX or IDPX exams subject to verification that their computer system and testing environment meet Prometric’s testing requirements.

For in person testing, candidates can search for [available test dates](#) at a Prometric Test Center before purchasing the exam. Candidates are encouraged to schedule an exam appointment sooner rather than later. Scheduling early increases a candidate’s

chance to receive their preferred test date, time, and location. Should a candidate delay scheduling an exam appointment at an in person testing location and thus not find any availability, all fees will be forfeited.

If a candidate is considering the remotely proctored exam option, the following must be reviewed and confirmed before selecting this option.

- Review the [ProProctor User Guide](#)
- Conduct [System Readiness Check](#)
- Ensure location identified to take the exam meets environmental requirements as outlined in the ProProctor User Guide

NOTE: If a computer system is not compatible, a candidate is unable to comply with the environmental requirements, or is taking the PRAC exam, the candidate must choose to test in person at one of Prometric’s test centers.

Candidates will receive an email from Prometric confirming their exam appointment. It is the responsibility of the candidate to confirm the correct date, time, and location (if applicable) of the scheduled exam appointment. CIDQ will not be able to reschedule missed appointments.



### TESTING OPTIONS

Candidates have the option of taking the IDFX, IDPX or PRAC exams in person at a Prometric Test Center OR for the IDFX and IDPX exams from their home or office through remote proctoring. Both options are administered by Prometric, our test administration partner.

### Name Changes

If you need to change your name for any reason once your application has been submitted, you must contact CIDQ to request a name change. To request a name change, follow the process below:

- Complete the [Name Change Form](#).
- Provide appropriate supporting documentation in the form of a driver’s license or passport.
- Email the Name Change Form and supporting documentation to [inquiries@cidq.org](mailto:inquiries@cidq.org)

If you have an exam already scheduled, you must submit a name change request at least three (3) business days prior to your scheduled exam appointment to allow time for processing.

### Rescheduling Exam Appointments

Candidates may reschedule their exam appointment within the same exam administration period based on the following guidelines ONLY.

Time Frame	Reschedule Permitted	Stipulations
Request reschedule more than 30 days before a scheduled exam appointment	Yes	No fee applicable
Request reschedule five (5) to 29 days before a scheduled exam appointment	Yes	\$45 fee paid to Prometric

Request reschedule less than five (5) days before a scheduled exam appointment	No	Candidate will be considered a “no show” and will forfeit all exam fees
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To reschedule an exam appointment, candidates will need to log into their MyNCIDQ account and click on the “Reschedule” button next to the exam section/delivery method that they wish to reschedule.

### Exam Cancellations

Candidates who wish to cancel exam appointments must do so **five (5) or more days** prior to their scheduled exam appointment. To cancel exam appointments, the following must occur:

- Candidates must cancel exam appointment(s) with Prometric by clicking on the “Cancel” button in their MyNCIDQ account next to the exam section they wish to cancel.
- Candidates who cancel an exam appointment for any reason after purchasing an exam will be assessed a \$100 cancellation fee per exam section. The cancellation fee will be deducted from the refund due. Refunds will be processed on a weekly basis beginning in mid-March and mid-September through the end of the exam administration period.
- A candidate who attempts to cancel an exam appointment less than five (5) days before a scheduled exam appointment or does not cancel at all will forfeit all exam fees.

Candidates who purchase an exam but never schedule an exam appointment, must notify CIDQ via email indicating that they



wish to cancel their exam registration to receive a partial refund of exam fee(s) paid. That request must occur no later than the end of the exam administration period for which the exam was purchased. If no notification is received the exam fees paid will be forfeited.

Medical or Personal Emergencies

Medical or personal emergencies are defined as unplanned events affecting the candidate or an immediate family member (spouse, child, or parent) that arise within five (5) days of the scheduled exam appointment and prevent the candidate from taking, rescheduling or canceling the exam.

An event that can be anticipated is not considered a medical or personal emergency. A candidate’s inability to take the exam due to work commitments or insufficient or inappropriate preparation is not considered a personal emergency.

Candidates who experience medical or personal emergencies within five (5) days prior to a scheduled exam appointment must complete the [Emergency Exam Cancellation](#) form. Emergency

Exam Cancellation form must be accompanied by supporting documentation such as emergency medical or accident verification (i.e., hospital documents, police report, death certificate). Emergency cancellations will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and must be submitted no later than 10 days after the scheduled exam appointment. If approved, candidates will be refunded the exam fee, minus a \$100 cancellation fee.

No Show Candidates

Candidates are considered “No Shows” if they:

- Do not appear for an exam appointment
- Arrive for their exam more than 15 minutes after the exam start time
- Do not cancel the exam appointment at least five (5) days before the scheduled exam appointment
- Do not have proper or valid identification
- Do not schedule an exam appointment with Prometric for the exam administration period for which an exam fee was paid



Candidates who do not reschedule or cancel an exam appointment or do not show up for a scheduled exam appointment will be considered a “no show” and will forfeit their exam fees.



# Exam Overview

# Exam Overview

The NCIDQ Exam is made up of three (3) sections: the Interior Design Fundamentals Exam (IDFX); the Interior Design Professional Exam (IDPX); and the Practicum Exam (PRAC). These three (3) sections measure a candidate’s competency in interior design principles and application of knowledge to protect the public health, safety, and welfare.

The NCIDQ Exam sections are administered by Prometric, CIDQ’s test delivery vendor, in person at more than 8,000 testing centers in 180 countries as well as through Prometric’s remotely proctored testing platform, ProProctor. The IDFX and IDPX exams are multiple choice and include both three and four (3 and 4)-option multiple choice questions. The PRAC exam uses alternative item types including hot spot, drag and place, and fill in the blank to assess a candidate’s knowledge of the content.

In addition to alternative item types, the PRAC exam consists of three (3) case studies (large commercial, small commercial and residential/multi-family), as well as a section of standalone items that are not connected to any of the case studies. Each case study

includes a series of resource tabs for reference such as a programming requirements document, floor plan(s), lighting schedule, and building code information. Additionally, some questions may include additional exhibits to supplement the information needed to assist in answering a question.

Exam Name	Format	Number of Questions	Duration
IDFX	Multiple Choice	125*	3 hours
IDPX	Multiple Choice	175*	4 hours
PRAC	Hot Spot, Drag and Place, Fill in the Blank	114*	4 hours

\*The IDFX and IDPX exams contain 25 unscored pre-test questions. The PRAC exam contains nine (9) unscored pre-test questions.



The duration of an exam appointment indicated in the confirmation email is 30 minutes longer than the time allotted to take the exam. The additional time is allocated to review the confidentiality statement, go through a tutorial, and complete an end of exam survey.

EXAM CONTENT OUTLINES

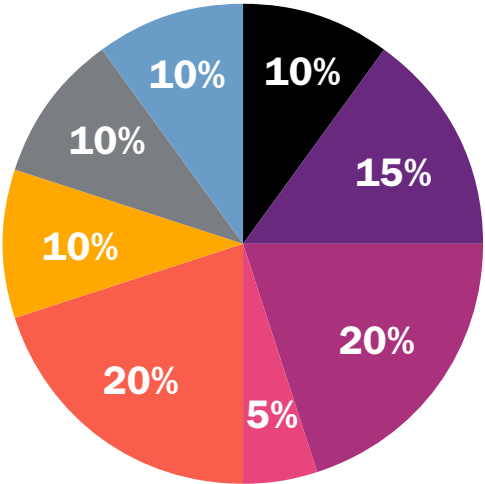
CIDQ most recently conducted a Practice Analysis study in 2019 to identify current knowledge and skills that define a minimally competent professional in interior design. During the Practice Analysis study, subject matter experts define the overall interior design practice areas and distinct tasks, knowledge or skills required for competent performance. A survey is distributed to all active certificate holders asking them to rate the importance of

the task for an interior designer and the importance as it relates to the health, safety, and welfare of the public.

CIDQ uses the results of the Practice Analysis study to develop exam blueprints for the NCIDQ Exam sections, identifying what content is covered on each exam and the percentage of questions allotted for the various content areas.

The **IDFX** exam covers the following content areas:

- I. Programming and Site Analysis**
- II. Relationship between Human Behavior and the Designed Environment**
- III. Design Communication Techniques**
- IV. Life Safety and Universal Design**



- V. Interior Building Materials and Finishes**
- VI. Technical Specifications for Furniture, Fixtures, & Equipment and Lighting**
- VII. Construction Drawings, Schedules, and Specifications**
- VIII. Professional Development and Ethics**

See a complete list of the knowledge and skills covered on the [IDFX Exam](#).





# The **IDPX** exam covers the following content areas:



**I. Project Assessment and Sustainability**



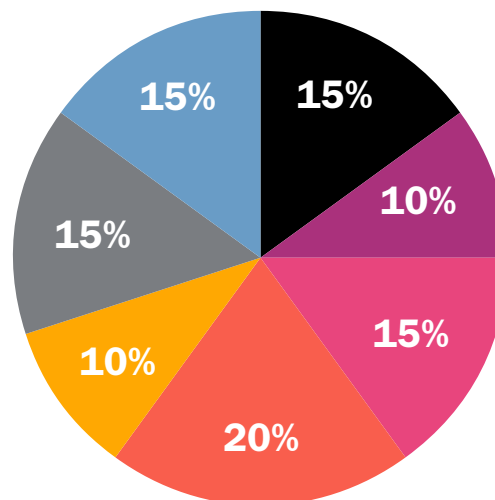
**II. Project Process, Roles, and Coordination**



**III. Professional Business Practices**



**IV. Code Requirements, Laws, Standards, and Regulations**



**V. Integration with Building Systems and Construction**



**VI. Integration of Furniture, Fixtures, & Equipment**



**VII. Contract Administration**

See a complete list of the knowledge and skills covered on the [IDPX Exam](#).



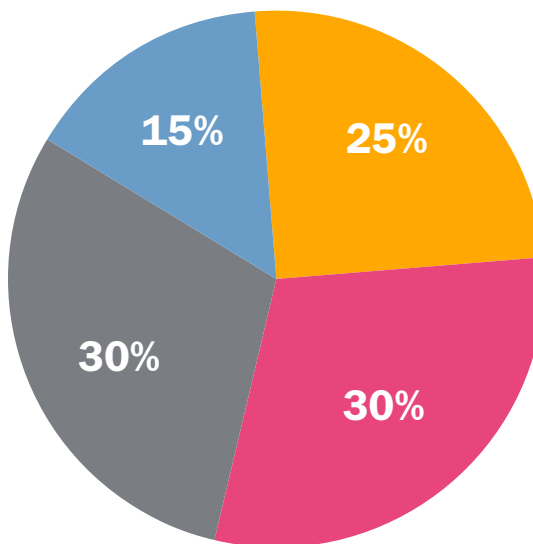
# The **PRAC** exam covers the following content areas:



**I. Programming, Planning, and Analysis**



**II. Code Requirements, Laws, Standards, and Regulations**



**III. Integration with Building Systems and Construction**



**IV. Contract Documents**

See a complete list of the knowledge and skills covered on the [PRAC Exam](#).

## PREPARING FOR THE EXAM

Because CIDQ develops and administers the NCIDQ Exam as part of its mission of public protection, we do not offer or recommend specific study materials. However, CIDQ does have a [Study Page](#) on our website that provides information on available study groups; Test Your Knowledge sample questions for the IDFX and IDPX exams; Practicum Case Study Standards; Practicum Exam Codes, and an Exam Resource List.

## PRE-TEST QUESTIONS

CIDQ is committed to offering fair, valid, and reliable exams. To achieve this goal, CIDQ uses questions (items) that have not been used on previous versions of the exam as pre-test or unscored questions. These questions are used on an exam to gather statistical data about how the items perform before

being included on an exam as a scored question in the future. Pre-test questions are:

- not distinguishable from other questions
- scattered throughout the exam so candidates will answer them the same way they would a scored question
- not counted in determining the final exam score

## TAKING THE EXAM

The NCIDQ Exam is administered in highly secure Prometric testing centers worldwide. Additionally, the IDFX and IDPX exams will also be administered via [ProProctor](#), Prometric’s remote proctoring platform using live proctors as well as supplemental artificial intelligence technology for added exam security.



### Online NCIDQ Exam Study Resources [www.cidq.org/study](http://www.cidq.org/study)

- Exam Blueprints (Content Outlines)
- IDFX & IDPX Practice Questions
- PRAC Exam Case Study Standards & Exam Codes
- Study Group Information



# Exam Day Protocols







# Exam Day Protocols

## IDENTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

All exam candidates will be required to provide proof of identity in the form of **one (1) valid (non-expired) original government-issued photo ID with signature**. The first and last name on the identification must be the same as the first and last name that appears in a candidate's MyNCIDQ account.

### Acceptable Identification (non-expired):

- Valid driver's license with photo
- Valid passport with photo
- Military ID card with photo
- National ID card with photo

If the ID being used does not have a photo or signature, a second form of ID **MUST** be provided that contains the missing information. The name on the secondary ID must match the name on the primary ID.

### Acceptable Alternate Identification (non-expired):

- Valid driver's license
- Valid passport
- Military ID card
- National ID card
- Student ID card
- State/province ID card
- U.S. passport card

## Unacceptable Identification

- ID with no photo (unless accompanied by another form of ID with photo)
- Expired driver's license or passport
- Draft classification card
- Letter of identity from a notary
- Social Security card
- Credit card or bank card of any kind
- Employee identification

If a candidate does not have the proper ID when checking in to take an exam, a candidate may not be allowed to test. If a candidate is unable to test due to insufficient proof of identity, the candidate will forfeit their exam fee and will be unable to test during that specific exam administration period.

## TEST CENTER RULES

Prometric Test Centers are supervised by trained proctors. Irregularities observed or suspected by proctors or identified by subsequent statistical analysis of a candidate's answers on the exam may result in the candidate's removal from participation in the exam or invalidation of exam score. Irregularities include but are not limited to creating a disturbance; giving or receiving unauthorized information or aid to or from other examinees; or attempting to remove materials from the testing room. CIDQ reserves the right to investigate each incident of misconduct or irregularity.



The following rules/guidelines are enforced at all **Prometric Test Centers** to ensure a secure, fair, and consistent testing experience for all test-takers.

- Candidates must present a valid (non-expired), original government-issued photo ID with signature. The name and photo on the ID must be an exact match to the name in a candidate's MyNCIDQ account or they will not be permitted to test.
- Candidates should arrive at the Prometric Test Center at least 30 minutes prior to scheduled exam appointment time. Late arrivals will not be admitted.
- Candidates will be asked to empty and turn out their pockets and may be wanded or go through a metal detector during the check in process for test security purposes.
- Lockers will be provided for candidates to store personal belongings such as purses, mobile phones, jackets, food, drinks, and medical supplies.
- The use of mobile phones, audible beepers or memory-capable devices are prohibited.
- Inspection of eyeglasses, jewelry and other accessories will be conducted. Jewelry other than wedding and engagement rings and watches are prohibited.
- Religious headwear may be worn into the testing room; however, it may be subject to inspection by a test center administrator before entry into the testing room is permitted.
- Accessing mobile phones or study materials after arriving at the testing center or during breaks is prohibited.
- All exams are monitored and may be recorded in both audio and video format.

- For security reasons, Test Center administrators will be conducting physical walkthroughs at least every 10 minutes.
- Smoking is prohibited at the testing center and during breaks.
- Other exams will be administered at the same time as the NCIDQ Exam. Examinees may hear ambient noises, such as typing, coughing, or people entering and exiting the testing room that cannot be avoided. Prometric is unable to provide a completely noise-free environment. However, headphones and/or earplugs may be requested to minimize impact.

## IDFX & IDPX EXAMS

ONLY on-screen calculators may be used for the IDFX & IDPX exams. Candidates cannot request a handheld calculator for those exams, unless it is an approved testing accommodation.

An optional 10-minute break is built into the IDFX & IDPX exams after questions 65 and 90 respectively. The exams are split up into two sections. A candidate must review the questions in the first section of the exam prior to proceeding to the break, as candidates will not be able to go back to section one. The exam clock will continue to run during the optional break.

## PRAC EXAM

On-screen calculators are provided for the PRAC exam, however, handheld calculators can be requested.

Scratch paper will be provided for all three (3) exams at an in person Test Center.

No break is built into the PRAC exam, but unscheduled breaks



can be taken. Please note that the exam clock will continue to run during this time.

## TEST CENTER CLOSURES

There are situations that require Prometric to temporarily close a testing site for a variety of reasons including unforeseen events, such as extreme weather, natural disasters, power outages, technical issues, pandemic impacts, or other circumstances. Prometric tries to provide candidates with as much advanced notice as possible. When possible, such notifications will come in the form of an email and recorded phone message. Should there be a site closure, candidates may go to [prometric.com/sitestatus](https://prometric.com/sitestatus) for updates.

If a test site must temporarily close, a candidate's exam appointment will be cancelled. Prometric will work to reschedule candidates for the next available test date. If a candidate is unable to make the rescheduled exam date, the candidates should contact Prometric directly at 1-800-796-9860 so an alternate date can be obtained, if available. A candidate may also decide to test via Prometric's remotely proctored exam option (applies to IDFX and IDPX exams ONLY), as long as the [system and environmental requirements](#) can be met.

## REPORTING TEST CENTER INCIDENTS

Candidates who experience any testing issues or have any comments or complaints about their testing experience must do the following:

1. Alert the test center administrator/remotely proctor to the incident and have them file an incident report.
2. Contact CIDQ at [inquiries@cidq.org](mailto:inquiries@cidq.org) within 10 days of a candidate's exam appointment to have your incident/issue reviewed.

If the above parameters are met, CIDQ will do its best to investigate the issue and provide an emailed response. CIDQ may not be able to confirm incidents that have not been reported to and witnessed by the administrator/proctor. CIDQ is under no obligation to investigate incidents where the above two criteria are not met.

## VIOLATIONS

If CIDQ receives information that an individual has violated the terms of the [NCIDQ Exam Candidate Authorization and Consent Agreement](#) or the [NCIDQ Certification Appellation Code of Ethics](#), or engaged in any conduct that may compromise the integrity or validity of NCIDQ Certification, CIDQ will investigate the matter to gather all relevant facts. If it is determined that an individual's behavior was not authorized or is prohibited by CIDQ in connection with any NCIDQ Exam, an individual may have their exam scores voided, be sanctioned, and be subject to legal action.



# Remotely Proctored Exams





# Remotely Proctored Exams

Remotely proctored exams are supervised by trained proctors. Irregularities observed or suspected by proctors or identified by artificial intelligence (AI) technology and statistical analysis of a candidate's answers on the exam may result in the candidate's removal from participation in the exam or invalidation of exam score. Irregularities include but are not limited to obtaining unauthorized information or aid while taking the exam. CIDQ reserves the right to investigate each incident of misconduct or irregularity. The following rules/guidelines are enforced during a remotely proctored exam to ensure a secure, fair, and consistent testing experience for all test-takers.

## REMOTELY PROCTORED EXAM RULES

- Candidates must present a valid (non-expired), original government-issued photo ID with signature. The name and photo on the ID must be an exact match to the name in a candidate's MyNCIDQ account or they will not be permitted to test.
- Candidates should log into the Prometric [ProProctor](#) site at least 30 minutes prior to scheduled exam appointment time to complete a self-service check in process; conduct a system readiness check; and ensure their environment is ready for testing. Late arrivals will not be admitted.
- A Prometric Readiness Agent will perform three security checks:
  - Confirmation of personal information (ID verification, etc.) via video chat
  - 360-degree environmental check of room via webcam
  - Person check of candidate by Agent (includes but is not limited to standing up and emptying/turning out pockets, raising pant legs, sleeves and eyeglasses check)
- Testing location must be a walled room, free from noise and distractions.
- Large jewelry, watches, and other accessories should not be worn while testing.
- Religious headwear may be worn; however, the Readiness Agent may ask to inspect before testing is permitted.
- An optional 10-minute break is built into the IDFX & IDPX exams after questions 65 and 90 respectively. The exams are split up into two sections.
- A candidate must review the questions in the first section of the exam prior to proceeding to the break, as candidates will not be able to go back to section one.
- Hair should be pulled back to ensure nothing is attached to ears (i.e., Bluetooth earpiece, headphones).
- Changing location, turning off lighting or audio, speaking to anyone while testing is strictly prohibited.
- No third party may be present or enter the room for the duration of the exam. If this occurs the exam will be terminated and/or results invalidated.
- Eating, drinking, smoking, and chewing gum are prohibited during the exam.
- Candidates will be monitored throughout their time taking the exam.



# Exam Results

# Exam Results

The NCIDQ Exam is designed to measure a candidate’s performance against a predetermined standard of minimal competence of an interior design professional. Meeting the passing standard for all three (3) exam sections and achieving NCIDQ Certification demonstrates that a candidate is competent to practice in a way that protects the health, safety, and welfare of the public. The passing point does not change based on where you are located, the number of candidates taking the exam, or the performance of other candidates taking the exam.

## HOW SCORES ARE DETERMINED

The passing scores for the IDFX, IDPX and PRAC exams are set in collaboration with interior design practitioners, educators, and testing professionals. To determine the passing point of any new version of the exam, CIDQ holds a Standard Setting Meeting. At this meeting, a diverse group of subject matter experts (SMEs), all NCIDQ Certificate holders, work with CIDQ’s test development vendor to analyze the exam using a statistical process known as the Modified Angoff Method. The Modified Angoff Method instructs SMEs to examine the content of each test question on a particular exam and then predict how many minimally qualified candidates would answer an exam question correctly. The average of the SMEs predictions for a test question becomes its predicted difficulty. The sum of the predicted difficulty values for

each question averaged across the SMEs and the total number of questions on an exam is the recommended cut score (passing point). The final passing point for each exam section is formally approved by the CIDQ Board of Directors.

## SCORING INFORMATION

All three (3) sections of the NCIDQ Exam (IDFX, IDPX and PRAC) are scored by computer and are reported as a scaled score. The range of possible scores is from 200 to 800 with the passing point being set at 500.

Candidates will typically receive a preliminary pass/did not pass decision via email to the email address in their MyNCIDQ account within an hour after taking the IDFX and IDPX. Preliminary results for the PRAC exam are not currently available.

Final official exam results for all three (3) sections of the exam are processed within six (6) weeks after the close of the testing period. Candidates will receive an email notification once the official exam scores have been processed and are available in their [MyNCIDQ account](#). The score report will include a candidate’s scaled score, exam date, and a breakdown of performance by content domain. It is recommended that candidates who did not receive a passing score on the exam focus their future preparation efforts on the content area(s) in which they were the weakest.



DATA CONFIDENTIALITY

CIDQ values candidate privacy and endeavors to protect the confidentiality of personal information in accordance with [CIDQ's Privacy Policy](#). Please review this policy for information regarding the use and protection of personal information.

RETAKE THE EXAM

Candidates who are unsuccessful in passing an exam section may retake that section of the NCIDQ Exam as many times as needed to pass the exam during their application eligibility period. Each exam section may only be taken once per exam administration. Candidates who applied using the Route 1 (IDFX, IDPX, PRAC) application have up to 10 exam administrations (about five years) during which to take and pass the exams.

If a candidate does not pass all three (3) exam sections during this time, any exam(s) that the candidate passed will be voided and the candidate will have to submit a new application with supporting documentation (transcripts and verified work experience). The eligibility requirements in place at the time of submitting a new application will have to be met. Candidates will have to pass all three (3) sections during a new 10 exam administration (about five years) application eligibility period.

Candidates who applied using the Route 2, Part 1 (IDFX) application have four exam administrations (about two years) during which to take and pass the IDFX exam. If a candidate does not pass the IDFX exam during this time, they will have to reapply submitting either another Route 2, Part 1 (IDFX) application or Route 1 (IDFX, IDPX, PRAC) depending on which eligibility requirements are met.







# Becoming NCIDQ Certified

# Becoming NCIDQ Certified

## BECOMING A CERTIFICATE HOLDER

Candidates who apply to take the exam directly through CIDQ and pass all three (3) sections of the NCIDQ Exam during their application eligibility period will achieve NCIDQ Certification and receive a certificate and certificate number. They will be able to use the NCIDQ appellation after their name if they maintain active status of their certificate.

Candidates who are approved to take the NCIDQ Exam by their jurisdiction and pass all (3) sections of the NCIDQ Exam will NOT receive a certificate/certificate number. To receive an NCIDQ certificate/certificate number, jurisdiction approved candidates must submit the NCIDQ Exam application along with an official transcript and have their work experience verified by a direct supervisor/sponsor to meet CIDQ’s eligibility requirements and pay the application fee. Once that is received, if approved, a certificate/certificate number will be issued.

## ONLINE CERTIFIED DIRECTORY

Active NCIDQ Certificate holders have the option to be included in a searchable database of NCIDQ Certified interior designers. Certificate holders can be found by using several different criteria including name, certificate number, and state/province. The [searchable database](#) can be found on our website.

## USING NCIDQ CREDENTIAL

Individuals who have earned the NCIDQ Certificate and maintained active status may use the NCIDQ appellation to





display their professional expertise and achievement.

Certificate holders should protect the integrity of their credential. Examples of how to use the NCIDQ appellation properly include:

- John Smith, ARIDO, IDC, NCIDQ
- Amy Smith, FASID, NCIDQ, LEED AP

If the certification is no longer active, immediately discontinue using the appellation.

## MAINTAINING AN ACTIVE CERTIFICATE

For certificate holders to remain active, they must renew their certification on an annual basis by:

- Meeting the continuing education requirements of the state/provincial regulatory board of which the certificate holder is a member.
- If certificate holder:
  - Is not registered with the local state/provincial regulatory board and/or live in an unregulated jurisdiction;

they must complete the required .6 continuing education units (CEUs), equivalent to six hours every two years. Any renewals submitted on or after April 1, 2024, will be required to complete 5 hours of Health, Safety, Welfare focused continuing education.

- Agreeing to abide by the [NCIDQ Appellation Agreement](#) and the [Code of Ethics](#).
- Paying the annual certificate renewal fee of \$75 either in April or October.

Certificate holders need to renew their certification annually by logging into their MyNCIDQ account and following the steps to renew. Renewal payments made after the certification expiration date are subject to an added reinstatement fee of \$75, for a total amount due of \$150.

Renewal notifications are sent to the current email address listed in a certificate holder's MyNCIDQ account. CIDQ is not responsible for misdirected or unopened emails. To ensure receipt of these important notifications, CIDQ recommends using a personal email address to which the NCIDQ Certificate holder will have consistent access and can manage filters and permissions for email delivery. When paying the renewal fee, a receipt will be generated and sent to the email address included in your MyNCIDQ account.

## REPLACEMENT CERTIFICATES

An official, replacement NCIDQ Certificate is available for purchase for \$35 at the [Q Shop](#).

**Any renewals submitted on or after**

**APRIL 1, 2024**

**will be required to complete 5 hours of Health, Safety, Welfare focused continuing education.**





# About CIDQ





# About CIDQ

The Council for Interior Design Qualification (CIDQ) protects public health, safety, and welfare by identifying interior designers who have the knowledge and experience to create interior spaces that are not just aesthetically pleasing, but also functional and safe. CIDQ's mission, since 1974, has been to create, test and promote guidelines for determining competency in the practice of interior design. NCIDQ Certification is recognized globally as the standard for interior design professionalism.

CIDQ develops and administers a three-part NCIDQ Exam (Interior Design Fundamentals Exam (IDFX), Interior Design Professional Exam (IDPX), Practicum (PRAC)), which tests interior designers' knowledge of core competencies required for professional practice in the industry. The exam is based on CIDQ's independent, comprehensive analysis of the profession and the daily practice of interior design in a range of settings.

CIDQ is a membership organization comprised of regulatory boards from across the United States and Canada which oversee the practice of interior design. As such, the organization takes seriously its responsibility to protect the public's health, safety, and welfare. The NCIDQ Certification meets legal and regulatory standards for the interior design profession as established by

more than half of the states across the U.S. and most Canadian provinces.





# Quick Reference Guide

## CIDQ

- Address: 225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 210, Alexandria, VA 22314
- Phone: 202.721.0220
- Website: [cidq.org](https://cidq.org)
- General Questions/Information: [inquiries@cidq.org](mailto:inquiries@cidq.org)
- Transcript submission email: [transcripts@cidq.org](mailto:transcripts@cidq.org)
- To apply for the NCIDQ Exam create a [MyNCIDQ account](#)
- To schedule, reschedule, or cancel an exam appointment, go to candidate's [MyNCIDQ account](#)

## Prometric

- For test site emergency closure information, visit [prometric.com/sitestatus](https://prometric.com/sitestatus).
- Should the need arise to contact Prometric directly, call 800.796.9860.

