

Interior Design Examination



Examination is an elemental component of determining whether or not an individual has met the minimum competency standards to practice a profession. All states and jurisdictions with licensing or registration laws in place use examination as a qualifying measure for the licensure or registration of professions. In order to inform consumers and protect the health, safety and welfare of the public, it is essential that states and jurisdictions recognize an examination that tests the necessary minimum competency for the practice of interior design.

THE NCIDQ EXAMINATION

The National Council for Interior Design Qualification (NCIDQ) is the nationally recognized interior design testing agency and is composed of delegates from state regulatory boards. The NCIDQ examination is the most effective vehicle known for measuring minimum competency in the practice of interior design. It is the only national interior design exam developed and administered in the United States by an agency that is independent from other interior design organizations.

The NCIDQ is currently the only examination that tests minimum competency in the full body of interior design knowledge. The NCIDQ tests six performance areas—project organization, programming, schematics, design development, contract documents and contract administration—that characterize the work of interior design. These performance areas provide the logical and analytical basis for each part of the revised NCIDQ examination program. The NCIDQ examination is entirely directed at public health, safety and welfare.

In order to be eligible for the examination, an applicant must first complete a combination of education plus experience of not less than six years, of which two years must be formal interior design education. Passage of the NCIDQ examination shows that an individual has met the minimum standards of competency to practice interior design.

OTHER EXAMINATIONS

There are currently other examinations which test areas related to interior design: including the Certified Kitchen Designer (CKD) and Certified Bath Designer (CBD), and the Council for Qualification of Residential Interior Designers (CQRID) examination. These exams are specialty examinations developed by specialty organizations primarily to test their own memberships.

The CKD and CBD were created and are administered by the National Kitchen and Bath Association (NKBA) and the CQRID was created by the Interior Design Society (IDS). There is an obvious conflict of interest in examinations that are used for regulatory purposes but that are developed and/or administered by trade and professional membership organizations. By contrast, the NCIDQ exam is developed and administered by an independent testing

organization devoted to protecting the public by identifying those interior designers competent to practice, not to promoting the members of any specific trade or professional association.



Additionally, the CKD, CBD and CQRID examinations test specialty areas. The CQRID tests only residential design. The CBD tests specifically bathroom design and the CKD tests specifically kitchen design. It is perfectly acceptable for interior designers to specialize in one area of interior design. In order to be legally recognized as interior designers, however, they must demonstrate competency in the entire scope of interior design knowledge. The NCIDQ tests minimum competency in the entire body of knowledge of the interior design profession, without regard to specialty.