

# NCARB PDD Questions: Pass Exam With Good Scores [2026]

## NCARB PRACTICE EXAM QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

A developer hires an architecture firm to design a new apartment building. The firm completes construction documents and a building permit is issued. The firm will provide CA services at a rate of \$200 per hour for the principal and \$150 per hour for the project manager. As the firm starts CA, the owner asks for a not-to-exceed fee based on the following:

-Twenty shop drawings, which the project manager will handle at an average of three hours per review.

-Three site visits, which the principal will handle at an average of four hours per site visit.

The firm includes a 10% allowance for unknowns.

What should the not-to-exceed fee be?

A.\$11,400

B.\$12,540

C.\$13,800

D.\$15,240 - Answers :CORRECT RESPONSE

\$12,540

CALCULATIONS

1. Shop drawing review: \$150 per hour (project manager) x 3 hours per review x 20 shop drawings = \$9,000

2. Site visits: \$200 per hour (principal) x 4 hours per visit x 3 visits = \$2,400

3. \$9,000 (shop drawing review) + \$2,400 (site visits) = \$11,400

4. \$11,400 + 10% (allowance for unknowns) = \$12,540

An architecture firm is updating their rules for the proper dimensioning of their architectural drawings. They want to provide their construction personnel with clear and unambiguous aspects of general dimensioning.

Which of the following rules should the firm use? Check the four that apply.

A. Avoid notes on plans when dimensional control of an element is unnecessary so that the lack of information isn't viewed as an error or omission.

B. Provide actual dimension strings even when there is an opportunity to describe an element with a note such as "align."

C. Provide critical dimensions for things that are important in location or that must have a controlled placement.

D. Dimension corridor partitions from the corridor side of the partition with a clear egress width.

E. Dimension toilet room drywall partitions from the toilet room side of the partition.

F. Avoid the use of fractions smaller than "1/8" anywhere on floor - Answers :B. Provide critical dimensions for things that are important in location or that must have a controlled placement.

This is a general basis for all dimensioning in architectural documentation.

C. Dimension corridor partitions from the corridor side of the partition with a clear egress width.

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## NCARB PDD Exam Syllabus Topics:

Topic	Details
Topic 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Codes &amp; Regulations: This section of the exam measures skills of Building Code Specialists and examines how codes and regulations apply at a detailed level during documentation. Candidates are expected to demonstrate knowledge of compliance with the International Building Code (IBC) as well as other specialty regulations, as well as how to interpret and apply these standards to ensure design and documentation meet legal and safety requirements.</li></ul>

Topic 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Project Manual &amp; Specifications:</b> This section of the exam measures the skills of Specifications Writers and emphasizes the importance of developing documentation that goes beyond drawings. Candidates must understand how to identify and prioritize elements needed to prepare, maintain, and refine both the project manual and project specifications. It also assesses the ability to align and coordinate these specifications with the construction documents to ensure consistency and accuracy.</li> </ul>
Topic 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Construction Cost:</b> This section of the exam measures the skills of Construction Managers and focuses on the financial side of project execution. It evaluates the ability to analyze construction cost estimates to confirm that they align with project design intent and budgetary constraints. Although this is the smallest section, it is critical for ensuring projects remain feasible and economically viable.</li> </ul>
Topic 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Construction Documentation:</b> This section of the exam measures skills of Project Architects and addresses the creation and management of project documentation. Candidates are expected to demonstrate knowledge of documenting building design and site features, preparing detailed architectural drawings, and applying industry standards to produce a coordinated set of construction documents. The section also includes understanding how project changes impact documentation and how to communicate these updates effectively to both the design team and the client.:</li> </ul>
Topic 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Integration of Building Materials &amp; Systems:</b> This section of the exam measures the skills of Architectural Designers and focuses on the ability to resolve and integrate various building systems into cohesive project goals. It covers analyzing architectural systems and technologies, determining the size of structural, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems, and incorporating specialty systems such as acoustics, lighting, security, and communications. It also evaluates the ability to detail how multiple building systems work together and to coordinate across disciplines to achieve a unified design.</li> </ul>

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## NCARB - Perfect PDD - ARE 5.0 Project Development and Documentation Exam Guide Torrent

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## NCARB ARE 5.0 Project Development and Documentation Exam Sample Questions (Q94-Q99):

### NEW QUESTION # 94

Where is the proper place to put a vapor barrier in a cold climate?

- A. On the exterior between the metal siding and the sheathing
- B. In the cavity of the framing space
- C. On the exterior between the framing and the sheathing
- **D. On the interior between the gypsum wallboard and the framing**

**Answer: D**

Explanation:

In cold climates, the vapor drive is from the warm interior to the cold exterior during winter. The vapor retarder/barrier belongs on the warm-in-winter side of the assembly-i.e., behind the interior gypsum, before the framing/insulation-to prevent interior moisture from reaching cold layers where it could condense.

PDD references: Psychrometrics & vapor drive; vapor retarder placement (ASHRAE; IBC/IECC guidance; ARE 5.0 PDD-Thermal & Moisture Protection).

### NEW QUESTION # 95

Refer to the exhibit.

Construction document drawings are in the final review stages. The architect needs to coordinate the casework detail with the probable cost estimate.

Click on the drawing note in the casework section that does not align with the cost estimate.

**Answer:**

Explanation:

Explanation:

In the casework section drawing provided, the detail that likely does not align with the cost estimate is the note:

"PLASTIC LAMINATE COUNTERTOP AND BACKSPLASH"

This is often a higher-cost item compared to alternatives like post-formed countertops, solid surface over MDF, or budget composite finishes. If the project is under cost pressure, specifying both a plastic laminate countertop and a separate laminate backsplash can increase material and labor costs due to custom fabrication and edge treatments.

### NEW QUESTION # 96

Which of the following have natural resins that resist termite attack? (Check the two that apply)

- A. Hemlock
- B. Red cedar
- C. Cypress
- D. Southern yellow pine
- E. Oak
- F. Douglas fir

**Answer: B,C**

Explanation:

In wood selection for exterior construction, certain species' heartwoods contain natural extractives/resins that deter decay and insect activity. Western Red Cedar and Cypress are well known for natural durability and termite resistance without chemical treatment. Species such as Douglas fir, hemlock, southern yellow pine, and most oaks are not reliably termite-resistant in their sapwood and typically require preservative treatment for use in termite zones.

PDD References: NCARB ARE 5.0 PDD content area "Materials & Assemblies-Wood" (durability/decay resistance), CSI Div. 06 wood materials selection notes, and IBC Appx. on decay- and termite-prone areas- select naturally durable species or preservative treatment.

### NEW QUESTION # 97

Which of the following admixtures is used to greatly increase the slump of concrete?

- A. Calcium chloride
- B. Air-entraining agent
- C. Water-reducing agent
- D. Superplasticizer

**Answer: D**

Explanation:

Comprehensive Detailed Explanation with all NCARB ARE 5.0 Project Development and Documentation (PDD) Study Guide

References:

In concrete technology, admixtures are used to modify properties of fresh or hardened concrete:

Air-entraining agents: Introduce microscopic air bubbles to improve freeze-thaw resistance; they do not increase slump.

Water-reducing agents: Reduce water content while maintaining slump; increase workability but only moderately.

Calcium chloride: An accelerator, speeds up setting time; does not increase slump.

Superplasticizers (also called high-range water reducers): Significantly increase the slump (workability) of concrete without adding extra water, making the mix more flowable and easier to place.

Thus, to greatly increase slump while maintaining water-cement ratio, the superplasticizer is the correct choice.

Supporting References:

NCARB ARE 5.0 Review Manual, Materials and Assemblies section

Portland Cement Association publications on admixtures  
ACI (American Concrete Institute) guidelines on admixtures

### NEW QUESTION # 98

Which of the following methods of mortar joint finishing has the greatest weatherability?

- A. Raked
- B. Extruded
- C. Weathered
- D. Concave

**Answer: D**

Explanation:

Mortar joint finishes impact water resistance and weatherability.

Concave joint is the most weather-resistant. The joint is compressed and curved inward, forming a dense, compact surface that sheds water effectively.

Weathered joint slopes outward but is less compact than concave.

Raked joint is recessed and can hold water, less weather-resistant.

Extruded joint protrudes and tends to trap water and dirt.

Therefore, concave joints provide the best weather protection.

Reference:

NCARB ARE 5.0 Review Manual, Materials and Assemblies chapter

Masonry construction standards and detailing guides

### NEW QUESTION # 99

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