



NCIDQ Examination Talking Points for IIDA Members

In today's complex world, it is essential to protect the health, life-safety, and wellbeing of the public by requiring interior design professionals, through formal education, monitored and documented work experience, and a qualifying examination which includes a practicum, to demonstrate their competency in all areas of the built environment.

NCIDQ's core purpose is to protect the public health, life safety and wellbeing of the public by establishing standards of competence in the practice of interior design. It does this through an extensive process that demonstrates that the interior designer is uniquely qualified through education, experience, and examination.

Incorporated in 1974, NCIDQ is a non-profit organization. Membership in NCIDQ is restricted to the regulatory boards of the states and provinces within the United States and Canada. There are no individual members of NCIDQ. Individuals who have passed both the examination and received the NCIDQ Certificate may refer to themselves as "NCIDQ Certificate holders."

As of January 1, 2015, there are 26 states and the territories of the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico in the United States, and eight Canadian provinces that regulate the interior design profession. Each of the NCIDQ member boards requires the successful completion of the NCIDQ examination.

The NCIDQ examination is a test of minimum entry-level competence in interior design and focuses on those specific aspects of interior design that affect the public's access, health, life safety, and wellbeing. The examination is used by NCIDQ's member boards as a basis for licensure and reciprocity across North America and is the only examination used by all U.S. and Canadian boards. It is important to possess health, life safety and wellbeing knowledge to be a competent interior designer therefore NCIDQ tests only for competence in those knowledge areas. The NCIDQ examination identifies that Certificate holders have successfully achieved the level of competency in such knowledge areas as:

- Analysis of client goals and requirements
- Application of life safety codes and accessibility regulations
- Knowledge of environmental and sustainability guidelines
- Formulation of scaled drawings, specifications, and other documents
- Selection of furniture, materials, finishes and colors to convey design concepts and meet project requirements
- Preparation of construction documents, contract administration, and collaboration with allied design professionals

NCIDQ works with a professional testing and psychometric consultant specializing in certification and licensure examinations to develop, administer, and score its examinations for interior designers. NCIDQ conducts a Practice Analysis of the profession every five years and updates the examination to reflect current practice. NCIDQ follows all widely accepted testing standards for professional examinations to ensure that the examination is valid, reliable and defensible in determining entry-level competence.

Beginning in 2013, NCIDQ changed its policy to allow applicants to take the IDFX portion of the exam directly after completing formal interior design education. Applicants do not have to have completed their work experience before taking this section.

For additional information on the National Council for Interior Design Qualification, please contact NCIDQ at (202) 721-0220 or visit www.ncidqexam.org.