

“surviving the ARE 4.0 CDS exam”: or what i finally did after spending more time and money and frustration than i want to remember

note that i did not take the time to include a URL for linked documents available on line. for these listed references should be possible to google and find the actual document. also, i have tried to indicate with an asterix anything i think is “mission critical”.

STATED CDS EXAM GUIDE “TOPICS” (with appended notes)

1. “codes and regulations” [10%]
 - ‘building codes’ (presumably accessibility and egress)
 - ‘specialty codes’ (presumably ADA/formerly ADAAG)
 - ‘zoning’
 - ‘regulatory requirements’ (huh?)

2. ‘sustainable design principles’ [10%]
 - “sustainable design principals’. (whatever)
 - ‘universal design’. (huh? two pages in AHPP i guess?!)
 - ‘adaptive reuse concepts’. (whatever)
 - ‘alternative energy systems’. (kinda broad dontcha think)
 - ‘new material technology’. (based upon the study guide material? where is this?!)
 - ‘hazardous material mitigation’.

3. “construction drawing and project manual” [45%]
 - ‘general and supplementary conditions’
 - ‘technical specifications’
 - ‘building systems’
 - ‘product selection’
 - ‘constructibility’

4. “project and practice management” [45%]
 - ‘estimate of construction cost’
 - ‘cost effect on design decisions’
 - ‘project schedule’
 - ‘coordinate all contract documents’
 - ‘consultants’
 - ‘project delivery method’
 - ‘contract administration, documentation and services’
 - ‘risk management’
 - ‘professional and business ethics’

STATED CDS EXAM GUIDE “RESOURCES”

architect’s handbook of professional practice

CSI masterformat

the project resource manual: CSI manual of practice

rules of conduct (NCARB)

architectural graphics standards (seems more applicable to programming planning and practice and not useful for CDS IMHO)

cracking the codes: an architect’s guide to building regulations (ncarb: yatt, john wiley and sons) (seems more applicable to site planning and design and not useful for CDS IMHO)

PRINTED STUDY MATERIALS

* ballast ARE review manual, second edition (PPI).

section 8: construction documents and services

ch 48 construction drawings and details

ch 49 the project manual and specifications

ch 50 the primary contractual documents

ch 51 bidding procedures and documents

ch 52 construction administration services

ch 53 project and practice management

ch 54 solving the building section vignette

INEXPLICABLY (well not exactly inexplicably but...) chapter 55 building codes and regulations and chapter 56 barrier-free design are in a SEPARATE CHAPTER than the rest of CDS and are contained in “section 9 building regulations”. easy to miss. don’t. these Chapters are also applicable to CDS even though they are not in the CDS Section.

ADDITIONAL STUDY MATERIALS

NALSA subscription

building section print outs (3 kinds)

building section practice exam

(note: they should have fixed the location of the section cut line. it is in a confusing location and this makes their practice exam much, much less worthwhile than it could have been. the plan graphics for the ncarb online exam is confusing enough as it is and if you do a test exam with a confusing section cut line it makes things really unpleasant. at the same time their responsiveness and kindness in the face of this exam was really helpful).

* norman dorf nalsa video (almost worth the cost of subscription on it's own). if you actually work in the field of architecture the ncarb vignettes are so "out of this world" it is like trying to learn to play gold on the moon with a martian numbering system. to my mind dorf is the only guy that could explain this exam sensibly.

PRIMARY RESOURCES

* building codes illustrated: a guide to understanding the 2015 international building code (ICC)

- ch 1 building codes
- ch 2 navigating the code
- ch 3 use and occupancy
- ch 5 building heights and areas
- ch 6 types of construction

the international building code 2006 (ICC). available as digital or paper.

- ch 3 use and occupancy classification
- ch 6 types of construction
- ch 10 means of egress
- ch 11 accessibility

the international building code 2015 code commentary (ICC). available as digital or paper.

- ch 1 scope and administration
- ch 2 administration
- ch 3 use and occupancy classification
- ch 5 general building heights and areas
- ch 6 types of construction
- ch 10 means of egress
- ch 11 accessibility
- appendix E supplementary accessibility requirements

AIA contract documents

*A101 standard form of agreement between owner and contractor

*A201 general conditions of the contract for construction

A305 general contractor qualifications

A310 bid bond instructions

A312 performance bond and payment bond

A503 guide for supplementary conditions

A701 instructions to bidders

*B101 standard form of agreement between owner and architect

C401 standard form of agreement between architect and consultant

G612 owner's instructions to the architect regarding the construction contract

G701 change order

G702 application and certification for payment

G704 certificate of substantial completion

AIA contract documents commentary

B101 standard form of agreement between owner and architect: document commentary

HELPFUL LINKS

*schiff harden lectures by michael j. hanrahan (audio and printed classroom notes)

AIA contract documents: contract relationship diagrams (april 2017)

the risk in CM "at risk" (warner strang)

"project delivery for governmental entities: cities, counties and river authorities"

ncarb rules of conduct

united states national CAD standard - V6

ARE coach thread "RE: MasterFormat...???"

CSI masterformat: masterformat groups subgroups and divisions

CSI masterformat: applications guide

"masterformat" via wikipedia

*construction canada: standards for specifications: masterformat, sectionformat, pageformat and you. excellent resource. i would also recommend getting your hands on ACTUAL text of some actual examples. i am not sure if this is in the CSI masterformat book listed in the CDS references or not since that book is cheap paper, small spacing and mashed together info.

ALSO, try to find some actual masterformat specs so you can easily understand division 0 and division 1 without reading about it second hand.

for a commons sense overall take on ARE 4.0. helpful for getting a handle on the tortured and (apparently) deliberately confusing syntax of the exams (courtesy of ben rudgers) see the following:

[http://brudgers.com/arefaq/arefaqblog/:](http://brudgers.com/arefaq/arefaqblog/)

* <http://www.brudgers.com/arefaq/arefaq-public-docs/100304GeneralTestDirections.pdf>
(general test directions)

* <http://www.brudgers.com/arefaq/arefaq-public-docs/10225SiteZoningStudyGuide.pdf>
(site zoning study guide)

* <http://www.brudgers.com/arefaq/arefaq-public-docs/101007StructuralStudyGuide.pdf>
(structural systems)

NCARB CDS EXAM GUIDE STATED REFERENCES:

ncarb/ cracking the codes: an architect's guide to building regulation (john wiley and sons)

ch 5 massing: establishing massing. meh

ch 7 fundamentals; design overall configurations. didn't read it.

ch 9 circulation: horizontal and vertical openings between spaces. didn't read it.

the project resource manual: CSI manual of practice, 5th edition (mcgraw hill).

tried to find info on master format general conditions and division 01. couldn't find it and gave up.

* the architects handbook of professional practice, fifteenth edition (wiley).

ch 9. design project delivery

ch 10. design project management

ch 13. building codes, standards, and regulations
ch 15. project definition
ch 17. agreements and AIA document program

* architectural graphic standards, twelfth edition (AIA)

p 19 universal and accessible design
p 142 drawings
p 146 construction specifications

that's an awful lot of coin for not many pages for this exam. also, for some reason they have decided to bind this tome up to within an 1/8" of the text on either page. this made it impossible to xerox even for my own use after buying the book. i ended up photographing the areas i needed to use and then printed out the photos. just a heads up.

NOTES

construction documents and services study notes (by caroline joseph). very precise. very well laid out. highly recommended. based upon kaplan and AIA documents so nice complement to ballast study material as well.

jenny PDX CDS notes. a little hard to find. helpful for organizing exam materials.

rich's construction document study notes

"helpful links for the architectural registration exam 4.0"

my CDS, PPP and SDP study notes to refresh the smaller percentage portions of this exam.

FINAL NOTE

i took this exam three times. failed twice with one in vignette and one in codes and regulations. so the asterix are for what i studied after the second fail in order to make sure i passed. i don't think you necessarily need all these but if you wanted to kill it with a stake this is what i would study.

also, the exam reports are very deceptive. a "level 1" means next to nothing in terms of how to study. this is hard to explain but you could easily get a level 3 (worst) in codes and regulations (approx 10% of total multiple choice questions), then get a level 1 in an

courtesy of formpig.com [posted 2.2018]

area that has 40 - 45% of the MC questions and get AS MANY questions wrong in the section you got a level 3 in. long story short, don't rely on the score reports to determine what you did well in without parsing them very closely.

END