

CADC Examination Study Guide

IC&RC Alcohol and Drug Counselor (ADC) Exam

About This Study Guide

This study guide provides essential information about the IC&RC Alcohol and Drug Counselor (ADC) examination for CADC certification. It is designed to help you understand the exam format, domains, and preparation strategies.

Important: This is a summary guide only. For complete, detailed information, official candidate guides, practice exams, and additional study resources, please visit the IC&RC website at www.internationalcredentialing.org.

About the CADC Certification

The Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor (CADC) credential recognizes the core competencies required for counselors addressing substance use and addiction issues.

- **Areas of Focus:** Substance use assessment, counseling, and case management.
- **Target Audience:** Entry-to-mid-level professionals working directly with individuals struggling with addiction
- **Your Role:** As **"The Builder,"** you are the foundation of the recovery system, working directly with clients to help them rebuild their lives.

Exam Format

Exam Component	Details
Scored Questions	125 questions
Pre-test Questions	25 questions (unweighted or unscored)
Total Questions	150 questions
Exam Duration	3 hours

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Important Notes

- **No Penalty for Guessing:** There is no penalty for incorrect answers, so answer every question even if you're unsure.
- **One Answer Per Question:** Mark only one answer for each question.
- **Read Carefully:** Read each question and all answer choices completely before selecting your answer.

CADC Domains

The Alcohol and Drug Counselor (ADC) certification is structured around key performance domains that define the knowledge, skills, and responsibilities essential to competent practice. These domains serve as the foundation for training, supervision, and the IC&RC Alcohol and Drug Counselor Examination. Each domain includes specific tasks, and each domain is assigned a weight indicating its importance in the examination.

To ensure candidates always have access to the most current and accurate information, Living Vines Certification Board does not list the domains or exam weightings in this Study Guide. These are subject to change by IC&RC to reflect current standards and emerging best practices in the field. Applicants are required to review the latest Alcohol and Drug Counselor Candidate Guide, which can be found on [IC&RC's ADC Minimum Standards](#) page, to understand the performance domains and their respective weights on the exam.

General Exam Preparation Strategies

Create a Study Plan

- **Start Early:** Give yourself at least 6-8 weeks to prepare for the exam.
- **Set a Schedule:** Dedicate specific times each week for studying.
- **Cover All Domains:** Ensure you study all domains, with emphasis on higher weighted areas.
- **Use Multiple Methods:** Read, take practice tests, join study groups, and review your work experience.

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Use Official Resources

- **IC&RC Candidate Guide:** Download the complete ADC Candidate Guide from [IC&RC's ADC Minimum Standards](#) page.
- **Practice Exams:** Take official IC&RC practice exams to familiarize yourself with question format and identify weak areas.
- **Reference List:** IC&RC provides a reference list of recommended study materials (available separately on their website).
- **General Candidate Guide:** Review the IC&RC General Candidate Guide for exam policies and procedures.

Review Your Training and Experience

- **Education Materials:** Review notes, handouts, and textbooks from your addiction counseling training.
- **Work Experience:** Reflect on your clinical work and how it relates to exam domains.
- **Case Examples:** Think through real cases you've worked with and how you applied counseling principles.

Take Practice Tests

- **Simulate Exam Conditions:** Take practice tests in a quiet environment with a timer.
- **Review Incorrect Answers:** Understand why you got questions wrong and study those topics.
- **Identify Patterns:** Notice which domains or topics you struggle with and focus additional study there.

Prepare Mentally and Physically

- **Sleep Well:** Get adequate sleep, especially the night before the exam.
- **Eat Healthy:** Eat a nutritious meal before the exam.
- **Arrive Early:** Plan to arrive at the testing center 15-30 minutes early.
- **Bring Required Items:** Photo ID, confirmation number, and any other required materials.
- **Stay Calm:** Practice relaxation techniques if you feel anxious.

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Test-Taking Strategies

Time Management

- **Know Your Pace:** You have 3 hours for 150 questions—that's 1.2 minutes per question.
- **Don't Get Stuck:** If you don't know an answer, make your best guess and move on.
- **Mark for Review:** If the testing system allows, mark difficult questions to review later.
- **Save Time for Review:** Try to finish with 10-15 minutes to spare for reviewing marked questions.

Answering Questions

- **Read Carefully:** Read the entire question and all answer choices before selecting.
- **Look for Key Words:** Pay attention to words like "MOST," "BEST," "FIRST," "EXCEPT," "NOT."
- **Eliminate Wrong Answers:** Cross out obviously incorrect answers first.
- **Choose the BEST Answer:** Sometimes more than one answer may be partially correct—choose the BEST one.
- **Trust Your Instinct:** Your first answer is often correct unless you have a good reason to change it.
- **Answer Every Question:** There's no penalty for guessing, so never leave a question blank.

Common Question Types

- **Scenario-Based:** You'll be given a client scenario and asked what to do. Apply your knowledge of best practices.
- **Definition/Knowledge:** Direct questions about terminology, concepts, or facts.
- **Application:** Questions asking you to apply knowledge to a specific situation.
- **Best Practice:** Questions about what is the most appropriate or ethical course of action.

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After the Exam

Receiving Results

- **Immediate Preliminary Results:** For computer-based exams, you typically receive preliminary pass/fail results immediately.
- **Official Score Report:** Official score reports are sent within a specified timeframe (check IC&RC policies).
- **Passing Score:** Passing scores are determined by IC&RC using psychometric standards.

If You Pass

Congratulations! You've met the examination requirement for CADC certification.

Next Steps:

1. Complete any remaining certification requirements
2. Submit final application to Living Vines Certification Board
3. Receive your CADC credential
4. Update your resume and professional profiles
5. Begin practicing as a Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor

If You Don't Pass

1. **Don't Be Discouraged:** Many successful professionals don't pass on the first attempt.
2. **Review Your Score Report:** Identify which domains you scored lowest in.
3. **Develop a Study Plan:** Focus on your weak areas with targeted study.
4. **Seek Additional Training:** Consider taking additional courses in areas where you struggled.
5. **Retake the Exam:** Check IC&RC policies for retake waiting periods and fees.
6. **Get Support:** Talk to mentors, supervisors, or colleagues for encouragement and study tips.

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Important Reminders

This is a summary guide only. For complete, detailed, and up-to-date information:

- Visit the IC&RC Website via www.internationalcredentialing.org
- Download the Full Candidate Guide: [IC&RC Alcohol and Drug Counselor \(ADC\) Candidate Guide](#)
- **Access Additional Resources:** Practice exams, Reference list for recommended study materials, Exam registration information, Retake policies, Accommodation requests for disabilities

Final Encouragement

As “**The Builder**,” you are preparing to join the ranks of certified professionals who serve as the foundation of addiction treatment services. Your work directly impacts individuals, families, and communities affected by substance use disorders.

The CADC examination validates your knowledge and competence, but remember that your true value lies in your compassion, dedication, and commitment to helping others rebuild their lives.

We believe in your ability to pass this examination and make a profound difference in the field of addiction counseling. Good luck!

Contact Information

If you have any questions or require additional clarification, please feel free to contact us using any of the options below:

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