

# NCIDQ Examination

BY THE COUNCIL FOR INTERIOR DESIGN QUALIFICATION

## NCIDQ Examination Eligibility Pathways

**EDUCATION + EXPERIENCE**

Specific education and work experience requirements exist to be eligible to sit for the NCIDQ Examination.



### EDUCATION

Official education transcripts must include a minimum of 60 semester or 90 quarter credit hours of post-secondary interior design coursework that encompasses a degree, certificate, or diploma from an accredited institution to be eligible.

#### INTERIOR DESIGN

**BACHELOR or MASTER DEGREE**  
CIDA or Non-CIDA

**BACHELOR or MASTER DEGREE (Other Major)**  
+ INTERIOR DESIGN CERTIFICATE, DEGREE, OR DIPLOMA

**ASSOCIATE DEGREE, CERTIFICATE, or DIPLOMA**

Must include a minimum of 60 semester hours in interior design

#### ARCHITECTURE

**BACHELOR or MASTER DEGREE**  
NAAB or CACB

**BACHELOR or MASTER DEGREE**  
Non-NAAB or Non-CACB



### EXPERIENCE

Hours must be earned and affirmed by a Direct Supervisor and/or Sponsor\*

Up to 1,760 hours of interior design work experience, earned prior to graduation, may be included in overall work experience total.



**3,520 WORK HOURS**  
(2 Years Full-Time)

**5,280 WORK HOURS**  
(3 Years Full-Time)

**7,040 WORK HOURS**  
(4 Years Full-Time)

Meeting CIDQ's education and work experience requirements does not guarantee that a candidate will meet their jurisdiction's requirements to be a licensed/registered/certified interior designer. Individuals are reminded to check with their jurisdiction regarding those specific requirements.

#### Eligibility for Candidates Outside of the U.S. and Canada

Candidates with an interior design education (degree, certificate, or diploma) or Bachelor's degree (minimum) in architecture earned abroad may qualify for the NCIDQ Exam. These candidates must have their transcripts translated and evaluated by an education evaluator such as World Education Services or Education Credential Evaluators and may be eligible if the evaluation matches one of the eligibility paths. Submitted evaluations must include course titles with corresponding U.S. credit equivalency to ensure education meets CIDQ requirements of 60 semester credits of interior design coursework.

#### Alternative Review Process (ARP)

The Alternative Review Process is for candidates who are unable to document the minimum educational requirements. Candidates in Canada or the state of Nevada should contact the regulatory agencies in their jurisdiction prior to submitting an ARP application in order to comply with local.

#### Work Experience

Verification of work experience is required to sit for the IDPX and Practicum Exam sections.

# Qualified Work Experience Requirements

## DIRECT SUPERVISOR/SPONSOR REQUIREMENTS

### Who can be a Direct Supervisor and/or Sponsor?

A direct supervisor and/or sponsor must be a design professional, defined as someone who meets at least one of the following three criteria:

1. NCIDQ Certified Interior Designer
2. State/Provincial Licensed/Registered/Certified Interior Designer in the U.S. or Canada
3. State/Provincial Licensed/Registered Architect in the U.S. or Canada who provides interior design services

A **Direct Supervisor** is a design professional, as defined above, who provides substantial oversight and control of a candidate's work and possesses detailed knowledge of the tasks performed.

A **Sponsor** is a design professional, as defined above, who agrees to review a candidate's professional progress and affirm interior design work experience hours. A sponsor may or may not work within the same firm as the candidate.

### Direct Supervisor/Sponsor — Candidate Relationship Expectations

CIDQ recommends the candidate meet quarterly with their direct supervisor and/or sponsor to discuss and review the candidate's work experience. Meetings must occur via phone, video chat, or in person; email-only is not sufficient. It is the responsibility of the candidate to schedule meetings with their direct supervisor/sponsor.

Conversations should focus on the phases of a design project, including those described below.

Successful candidates should have work experience and exposure in a variety of interior design areas to be well-rounded for professional practice. If the candidate is lacking experience in one or more areas, it would benefit them to gain more experience as they continue to improve their interior design knowledge and skills.

A sponsor must determine and be comfortable with the candidate's presented work, whether past or present. This may include a review of drawings and plans; photographs; project tours; and references, as examples.

Value For Work Hours	DIRECT SUPERVISOR	SPONSOR
NCIDQ Certified Interior Designer	100%	100%
State (U.S.) or Provincial (Canada) Licensed, Registered, or Certified Interior Designer	100%	100%
State (U.S.) or Provincial (Canada) Licensed or Registered Architect Who Provides Interior Design Services	100%	100%

## WORK EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS

**EFFECTIVE FOR ALL APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED ON & AFTER FEBRUARY 1, 2024**

**Minimum hours will be required in each of the following categories for all candidates:**



Total work experience hours needed remain unchanged.  
Remaining hours required beyond these minimums may be earned in any of the above categories.

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