

## **Level Three BOABC Five Examination Format – Questions and Answers**

The following information may be helpful to BOABC members who are planning to take Level Three examinations in the Five Examination format.

### **What are the main differences between the new Five Examination format and the previous Ten Examination format?**

The content of the Five Examination format has been consolidated from ten exams into five exams. This fulfills BOABC Policy 1.3 on Examination Content which states that: *“It is also the intent of the BOABC through the development of examinations which are computer generated and marked, to reduce the number of examinations for level three by combining several content areas”* and *“to complete the conversion of examinations to the computer based format”*, Key Element of the BOABC Corporate Strategy and Business Plan.

It should be noted that the Five Examination format is comprehensive and covers the complete range of code knowledge required to perform the job of a Level Three building official. Also, exams in the Five Examination format are as rigorous as the exams in the Ten Exam format.

The exams in the Five Examination format are multiple choice, timed exams, graded by computer, similar to the design of the BOABC Level One and Level Two Examinations. Unlike the Ten Examination format examinations, code references or other written responses will not be required to answer a question in the Five Examination format. As a result, oversights and the possibility of errors occurring in writing a code reference or other information will not be subjective factors affecting the grading of an exam in the Five Examination format.

Another benefit of the Five Examination format is that the content outline for each of the five examinations is provided. Also included are the number of questions, which will be asked in each content area. This information can be used as an examination preparation study guide. The five examination outlines are available on [www.boabc.org](http://www.boabc.org) under Exams.

### **What is the best way to prepare for a BOABC open-book examination?**

The best way to prepare is to study the 2006 BC Building Code. An examination candidate could also take one of the related BOABC Building Code Study sessions, or study with a group who are planning to take exams. Success in taking exams is largely dependent on having experience and code knowledge at the level that will be examined. Candidates with work experience and thorough code knowledge in the examination area should not find the examinations difficult.

### **Each of the Five Examinations has a two-hour time limit to complete the examination. Is that adequate time to answer all of the questions?**

Examinations are designed so that a candidate can answer all the questions within the time limit. The standardized examination time allotted per exam question in an open-book examination is approximately 2.0 to 2.5 minutes. This applies to the BOABC Level One and Two exams as well.

### **What type of question format will be included in the Five Examinations?**

The examinations are open-book, two-hour timed of 50 or 60 questions each. The test questions are in four-option, multiple-choice format, with one answer on each question scored as correct.

### **Because the Five Examinations are new, how do we know if the questions are okay?**

The questions and answers were developed by experienced building officials working in the field and certified to Level Three. In the International Code Council examination development system each question is ‘cut-scored’. The cut score is basically a rating of how difficult a question is to answer. The higher the cut score, the easier the question and the lower the cut score, the more difficult the question is to answer. The BOABC Level One and Two are also standardized timed, cut-scored, multiple-choice and computer graded examinations. BOABC Examination Committee members scrutinized the questions and answers for all exams in the Five Examinations Format.

Working as a committee, building officials review the questions and multiple choice answers to insure that each question is clear, not confusing and that there is one correct answer amongst the multiple choice responses. No question is designed to be a ‘trick’ question. The committee members then vote to give each question a cut score value – a higher value means that it is less difficult to answer than a question that gets a lower value. The cut scoring process helps set a benchmark, which needs to be achieved for a person to pass.

The examinations are so designed that the ‘typical exam taker’ for cut scoring purposes is considered to be a person that has the skills and the knowledge just sufficient, but no more, to work in that level of building code work.

### **How will the Level Three Five Examinations format be scored?**

The exam score in the Five Examination format is reported as a ‘scaled score’, with 80 as the minimum passing score. The number of correct answers to achieve a scaled score of 80 indicates a level of minimum acceptable competency. Building officials developing the questions determined this level. BOABC Level One and Two examinations are also scale scored exams.

It is important to answer all questions. There is no guessing penalty, so it is to the examination candidate’s advantage to answer every question.