

DSA PROJECT INSPECTOR EXAMINATION FAQs

1. Does DSA provide training for prospective inspectors?

The DSA has developed an Academy of classes to educate project inspectors on the rules, regulations, and standards that apply to the inspection of schools. The DSA Project Inspector Overview Class is mandatory for all DSA project inspectors, as part of the recertification process.

2. What kind of experience do I need to qualify for each class of examination?

The Qualification Matrix provided in form DSA 175 lists the qualifications and documentation required for each classification.

3. How can I determine if my education will qualify?

If you are unsure if a specific type of education you possess, or particular courses will or will not qualify, contact the DSA Project Inspector Unit at inspector@dgs.ca.gov prior to submitting your application. The Inspector Unit will review the information provided and determine whether it can be used as qualifying education in an application for the DSA Project Inspector Examination.

4. I am already a DSA certified Project Inspector. How can I upgrade to a higher class of certification?

You may apply for a higher class of certification by submitting an examination application if you meet the qualification criteria outlined in the Qualifications Matrix. The qualification criteria have different options; some are better suited for new applicants while others are more applicable to already certified project inspectors wishing to upgrade their certification.

5. I received a letter stating that additional information is required to qualify; what should I do?

The Application Review Pending letter explains what additional information is required. Most applications are returned for further detail on the applicant's experience. The following suggestions may help to clarify your experience:

- Fill out the Experience Record Form with detailed information on your experience on a project-by-project basis; attach additional pages as required (resumes are not acceptable).
- Include pertinent information such as start and finish dates for each project and the percentage of time spent on separate tasks such as inspection or supervision of construction.
- Overlapping projects will only count once (if you did ten different projects over a three-month time frame you will be credited with three months of experience, not thirty).

6. Do I have to complete the Project Inspector Overview before applying for an exam?

No. DSA does not require the Project Inspector Overview for new and re-testing applicants prior to passing the exam. The Project Inspector Overview is still a required component for recertification. However, applicants without prior DSA project inspector certification must demonstrate they have adequate knowledge and experience to perform required duties for the project. The Project Inspector Overview provides this background. Furthermore, applicants without prior DSA project inspector certification who successfully pass the examination must attend the Project Inspector Overview prior to being approved to inspect their first DSA construction project.

7. What kind of experience is not acceptable towards meeting the minimum qualifications for the DSA Project Inspector Examination?

Non-building experience (bridges, dams, mechanical plant installations, roads, railways, etc.) as well as experience not related to construction (for example, electrical work on automobiles) does not meet the qualification requirements for the DSA Project Inspector Examination.

8. I have experience gained outside of the United States; can I use this experience towards meeting the qualification criteria?

The minimum qualification criteria for exam applicants do not include experience gained outside of the United States of America.

9. I passed all but one Section of the test. Can I just retake that one Section?

Yes. For the Construction Knowledge Part, you may retake that one section as long as you are within your two consecutive code cycles. For the Plan Reading Part, you may retake that one section unless DSA deems methods for displaying information in construction documents has dramatically changed relative to the examination questions or format.

10. If I take the Class 1 exam and miss passing by a small margin, will I be certified as a Class 2 (or Class 3) inspector?

No, you must decide which exam you want to apply for and pass it. Even if you miss the passing score in one section by only one point you will have to retest and pass the failed sections of the exam to obtain certification; you do not need to retake passed sections again except as noted in the "Re-Application and Re-Taking the Examination" section of DSA's Apply and Maintain Project Inspector Certification webpage.

11. I had qualified for the DSA Project Inspector Examination under the old qualifications and I haven't tested since 2015 or earlier, do I need to requalify under the new qualifications?

Applicants wishing to take an exam after January 1, 2016, must meet the currently effective qualification criteria noted in the Qualification Matrix below and submit the form DSA 175 with supporting documentation and applicable fees.

12. I applied for the exam several years ago and received an Additional Information Letter before January 1, 2016; now that I finally have the necessary experience do I have to requalify under the new qualifications?

Applicants wishing to take an exam after January 1, 2016, must meet the currently effective qualification criteria noted in the Qualification Matrix below and submit the form DSA 175 with supporting documentation and applicable fees.

13. What should I bring to the exam?

Because the examination is based on the 2019 editions of the California Building Standards Code, you should bring applicable reference books from the list provided below, similar to what you would bring to the construction site to perform your inspections. The following is a list of things you **may** need; it is not meant to be an exhaustive list, nor will all reference books be of value during the exam:

You may only bring the following references:

- The 2019 version of California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Parts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10 and 12. Other editions of Title 24 are permitted, but the exam is based on the 2019 edition. *When applicable, the references below are those editions recognized by the 2019 version of Title 24 (refer to Title 24, Part 2, Chapter 35).* Printed versions of references may be utilized provided they comply with copyright laws and match the format of the original references.
- AISI S240: North American Standard for Cold-Formed Steel Structural Framing.
- American Institute of Steel Construction (AISC), Steel Construction Manual, 15th Edition (includes AISC 360 Specification for Structural Steel Buildings; Specification for Structural Joints Using High-Strength Bolts by the Research Council on Structural Connections; AISC 303 Code of Standard Practice for Steel Buildings and Bridges).
- AISC Seismic Design Manual, 3rd Edition (includes AISC 341 Seismic Provisions for Structural Steel Buildings; AISC 358 Prequalified Connections for Special and Intermediate Steel Moment Frames for Seismic Applications).
- American Welding Society (AWS) D1.1, Structural Welding Code – Steel.
- American Concrete Institute (ACI) 318, Building Code Requirements for Structural Concrete and Commentary.
- The Masonry Society (TMS) 402 and 602, Building Code Requirements and Specification for Masonry Structures.
- American Wood Council (AWC) National Design Specification (NDS) for Wood Construction; NDS Supplement (Design Values for Wood Construction).
- American Wood Council (AWC) Special Design Provisions for Wind and Seismic (SDPWS).
- American Wood Preserver's Association (AWPA) Standard U1 Use Category System: User Specifications for Treated Wood.
- West Coast Lumber Inspection Bureau (WCLIB) Lumber Grading Rules, Standard No. 17, 2018.
- National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 13, 14, 17, 17A, 24 and 72.
- American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) A6, A615, A706, C94, F1667.

Other/Miscellaneous:

- Post-It Flags only (no larger than 1" X 1.75")
- A simple calculator (non-printing, self-contained, silent. Palm top computers, smart phones, tablets and similar devices are not allowed)
- Magnifying glass/reader

Do NOT bring the following:

- Any electronic device that has the ability to store, communicate or transfer information, such as, but not limited to cell phones, Bluetooth devices, MP3 players, tablets, and iPods.
- Seminar or class handouts of any type (including DSA seminar binders).
- The DSA "IR Manual" or any other material downloaded from any website.
- Ring-bound notebooks (ring-bound codebooks are allowed), spiral-bound books, loose or blank paper of any kind, including Post-It® notes (Post-it Flags ok as indicated above).

Do not insert **any** additional pages into your codebooks or other reference books. This includes indexes, quick reference guides, or similar assistive references. (ICC, Builders Books tabs are acceptable.)