

DSA PROJECT INSPECTOR EXAMINATION FAQs

1. Does DSA provide training for prospective inspectors?

DSA has developed 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 newly certified DSA project inspectors without prior project inspection experience. It can be taken prior to or after passing the examination but is required prior to project approval for a **newly** certified project inspector (refer to *IR A-7: Inspector Certification and Approval* available on [DSA's Publications webpage](#) for additional information).

2. 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 applying for an exam. Newly certified project inspectors without prior DSA project inspector certification and experience must demonstrate they have adequate knowledge and experience to perform required duties prior to being approved to inspect his/her first project. Completing the Project Inspector Overview satisfies part of this required background.

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

The Qualification Matrix provided in form *DSA 175: Project Inspector Examination Application* lists the different available options for qualifications and documentation required for each inspector classification. Only one of the available options can be utilized when applying.

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 a form DSA 175 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. Only one of the available options can be utilized when applying.

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

The Application Pending email 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).

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 previously passed examination section questions or format. Refer to the “RETESTS” subsection under “TAKING THE PROJECT INSPECTOR EXAM” section on DSA’s [Apply and Maintain Project Inspector Certification webpage](#) for further information.

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 take 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 section of the exam to obtain certification; you do not need to retake passed sections again except as noted in the “RETESTS” subsection under “TAKING THE PROJECT INSPECTOR EXAM” section on DSA’s [Apply and Maintain Project Inspector Certification webpage](#) for further information.

11. After previously taking the examination but not passing all parts, with my last attempt several years ago, do I need to requalify under the 2022 California Administrative Code qualifications?

Applicants previously approved under the 2013-2019 California Administrative Code (CAC) qualifications do not need to requalify. Applicants previously approved under the 2010 or earlier CAC editions 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. Additionally, if you have failed to pass the “Construction Knowledge” over the last two code cycles or more, refer to question 9 above for requirements.

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

If your application was based on 2013-2019 CAC qualifications, you do not need to requalify under the 2022 CAC qualifications. If your application was based on 2010 or earlier CAC editions, you must meet the currently effective qualification criteria noted in the Qualification Matrix and submit the form DSA 175 with supporting documentation and applicable fees.

13. What should I bring to the exam?

A valid form of identification (e.g., driver’s license, passport, etc.). Because the examination is based on the 2022 editions of the California Building Standards Code, DSA will provide the references listed below. The list is similar to what you would use on a construction site to perform your inspections.

Examination references, including, but not limited to, the 2022 version of the California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Parts 1-6, 8, 9, 10, and 12 and applicable adopted reference standards, will be provided by DSA during the exam in electronic format.

Do NOT bring the following:

- Any examination references, even if previously allowed during past examination administrations.
- **Any** electronic devices into the examination room including but not limited to cellular phones or smart watches.
- Your own writing instrument. A pencil will be provided to you.
- Loose paper of any kind.
- Hats and watches into the examination room.
- Food or beverages (water is ok).