

Your Ultimate Guide to the EPE Journey
December 10, 2025 Edition

THE EPE TOOLKIT

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PREFACE

Congratulations, Entry-to-Practice Exam (EPE) Candidates, you're just one step away from becoming a licensed Regulated Canadian Immigration Consultant (RCIC).

This is likely your first time writing the EPE, and you might not be fully familiar with how it works. Even if this the 2nd/3rd/last attempt, something might be still unknown. It's normal to feel a bit anxious. But don't worry: if you made it through the rigorous pre-requisite academic program, there's no reason you can't succeed on the EPE after proper preparation.

That said, don't underestimate this exam either. The EPE is different from any test you've taken: the registration process is unique; the content, format, and timing of the EPE are unlike any of your course exams. If you don't take it seriously, there's a real chance you might not pass on the first try. Keep in mind: you may only get 4 attempts to pass the EPE: use them wisely.

That's why we created this Roadmap — a practical, no-nonsense guide to the EPE from start to finish. It covers almost most important thing you need to know about the EPE: eligibility, registration, exam format, structure, and pre-exam preparation. Our goal is to help you quickly understand the logistics and focus your time where it really matters.

This book is co-written by Sid and Henry. Sid is a senior RCIC-IRB with extensive experience in EPE preparation. He is the founder of [ImmiMentor](#). He has a deep understanding of the exam's evolution and the common challenges faced by test-takers. Since 2022, he has organized EPE preparation groups 13 times (Click [here](#) to join the WhatsApp group), promoting collaborative learning and resource sharing. His targeted prep strategies have consistently earned praise from participants which are acknowledged by the participants.

Henry is a newly licensed RCIC-IRB who passed the EPE on his first attempt in March 2025. Prior to that, he worked in communications for 10 years and now works as an AI programmer. He's passionate about breaking down complex ideas into simple language, creating visual explanations, and leveraging AI effectively for learning.

We're offering this guide for free of cost because we've both been there: feeling overwhelmed and uncertain before the EPE. We've been rained on, and now we want to offer you an umbrella. We hope this book helps you save time, focus on what matters most: preparing for the content, and ease the anxiety that often comes from the unknown. RCICs form a professional community, and we want to do our part to make that community stronger.

All content in this guide has gone through human + AI review for accuracy. This book will be updated for every EPE cycle. Current edition is for the **December 2025 EPE** (Current version: **V202512-01**). You can find the up-to-date version [here](#) or the backup [here](#).

Sid Rahman & Henry Wu

Disclaimer

None of the third-party preparation materials, including our own, are endorsed by the College of Immigration and Citizenship Consultants (CICC), Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), or any academic institution. It is solely the responsibility of the user to choose the resources that best suit their needs. Please also note that no preparation material can guarantee success.

The Entry-to-Practice Exam (EPE) is administered by CICC, so the most authoritative source of information is always CICC itself. Here are some of their direct sources related to EPE:

- [Entry-to-Practice Exam \(EPE\) Info](#)
- [EPE Candidate Guide](#)
- [Essential Competencies for RCIC Practice](#)
- [Exam Dates, Fees & Deadlines](#)

This book includes direct summaries or quotes from the CICC official materials, also includes interpretations and advice based on authors' own experience. The reader bears the sole responsibility for independently verifying the accuracy, reliability, and completeness of the information provided before taking any action based on it. While every reasonable effort has been made to ensure that the information is accurate, up-to-date, and provided in good faith, no express or implied representations, warranties, or guarantees are made regarding its accuracy or completeness.

If there's any discrepancy between this book and official CICC materials, the CICC version always takes precedence. We would greatly appreciate it if you could email us (email address is listed below) with details of the discrepancy, so we can ensure it is corrected in the next version.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE.....	1
1. EPE INTRODUCTION	4
1.1 Overview of the EPE	4
1.2 Eligibility and Exam Logistics	5
1.3 Fees	6
1.4 Question Format	7
2. EPE REGISTRATION.....	8
2.1 Overview of the Registration.....	8
2.2 Step 1: Register for the College Portal.....	8
2.3 Step 2: Submit the Qualification Form	9
2.4 Guarantor Form	9
2.5 Step 3: Submit the Registration Form	12
2.6 Step 4: Book Your Exam Time on ProctorU	12
3. PROCTORU PLATFORM	13
3.1 Overview of the ProctorU Platform	13
3.2 Setting Up ProctorU for the Exam	14
3.3 Pre-Exam Requirements and Setup	14
3.4 What You CANNOT Do During the Exam.....	16
3.5 What You CAN Do During the Exam.....	17
3.6 Houston, We Have a Problem.....	17
3.7 Tips for Exam Day Success	18
4. PREPARATION STRATEGY.....	19
4.1 EPE features	19
4.2 Preparation Tips.....	21
4.3 Exam Skills	22
4.4 Paid Resources & Free Resources	23
5. EPE CHEATSHEET (SAMPLE).....	24

1. EPE Introduction

The Entry-to-Practice Exam (**EPE**), administered by the College of Immigration and Citizenship Consultants (**CICC**), is the final milestone toward becoming a licensed Regulated Canadian Immigration Consultant (**RCIC**).

“The purpose of the EPE is to confirm that candidates have the required knowledge, skills, and judgment to provide competent and ethical consulting services to the public.”¹ — CICC

Note: There are two versions of the EPE — the **English version** is for graduates of the Graduate Diploma in Immigration and Citizenship Law (GDiplCL) program from Queen’s University, and the **French version** is for graduates of the Université de Montréal DESS.

This book is specifically designed for candidates writing the English version of the EPE.

1.1 Overview of the EPE

What Exactly Is the EPE?

The EPE is an **online, closed-book, multiple-choice** exam administered quarterly by CICC (usually takes place in March, June, September, and December). It consists of **135** single-answer questions, and you’ll have **3 hours** (180 minutes) to complete it. The result — either pass or fail — will be released approximately 8 weeks after the exam. You may attempt the EPE up to **4 times** within 3 years of graduate, and the first attempt costs \$425.

Key Facts About the EPE

Format	Online, closed-book
Duration	3 hours (180 minutes)
Question Type	Multiple-choice question with single answer
Question Number	135 (includes 10 unscored questions — you won’t know which)
Passing score	Not fixed; determined using the Bookmark method
Attempt Limit	4 times within 3 years of graduate
Fee	\$425 for the first attempt; \$325 for each additional attempt

When’s the Next EPE? (Important Dates)²

Qualification Application Deadline	November 4, 2025
Registration Application Deadline	November 19, 2025
Deferral Request Deadline	December 5, 2025
Exam Date	December 10, 2025
Approximate Release of Results	January 28, 2026

How Do I Find Out My Result?

You'll get an official email from CICC on the evening the results are released. Results may also appear in your CICC portal account earlier in that day — so it's worth checking there first.

The screenshot shows the CICC/CCIC portal interface. At the top, there are navigation links: Dashboard, Professional Information, Ongoing Education, Invoices & Receipts, and My Complaints. The main content area is titled 'Initial Licence' and features a progress bar with five steps, all marked as 'Completed':

- Submit EPE Qualification Application
- Submit EPE Registration Application
- Take EPE
- Apply for Licensing
- Business Name Registration

Below the progress bar is an 'Exam Results' section with a table:

Exam	Exam Start Date	Result
EPE - Online- Mar 12, 2025 l'EAP - En ligne - 12 mar 2025	12/03/2025	Pass

Screenshot shows the EPE result

1.2 Eligibility and Exam Logistics

Who Can Take the EPE? ³

- "Be at least 18 years of age;
- Have completed one of the following within 3 years of your intended EPE date:
 - Graduate Diploma Program in Immigration and Citizenship Law offered by Queen's University.
 - D.E.S.S. en réglementation canadienne et québécoise de l'immigration offered by the Université de Montréal.
 - Previously accredited Immigration Practitioner Program (IPP).
- If you obtained your IPP certificate more than 3 years before your intended EPE date and did not complete the refresher course or write the exam prior to December 31, 2022, the College will not accept a letter from the former IPP educational organization you graduated from." — CICC

When Can Take the EPE?

- Have your grades officially posted for all your courses
- Submit both the Qualification and Registration forms, and receive approval from CICC

Note: You must wait until your final grades are officially released before registering. CICC won't accept or process your application without confirmation of program completion.

How Many Times Can I Write the EPE?

You can attempt the EPE up to **4 times** within **3 years** of completing the pre-requisite academic program.

Can I Take the EPE Outside Canada?

Yes. The EPE is conducted entirely online through the **ProctorU** platform, so you can take it from anywhere — as long as your setup meets technical and environmental requirements. You'll need:

- A stable internet connection
- A quiet, distraction-free room
- A working webcam and microphone

What Kind of Content Is on the EPE?

The EPE tests your practical readiness to become an RCIC. It's not just about memorization — it's about applying your knowledge in realistic client scenarios.

Topics include legal analysis, case studies, ethics, client interaction, and compliance — you can see more details in [Chapter 4: Preparation Strategy](#) of this book.

1.3 Fees

Fees Related to EPE Exam⁴

Application Fee	\$75
First Attempt at Exam	\$425
Subsequent Additional Attempts	\$325
First Attempt at Exam – Paralegal	Waived
Administrative Fee – Deferral	\$75
Administrative Fee – No Show	\$150
Administrative Fee – Exam ID Infraction	\$150

Important Payment Information⁵

- Payment is to be made by credit card.
- The fee must be paid by the deadline listed in the CICC [website](#) or within 30 days of the date the invoice is issued, whichever is sooner.
- If you do not pay your fees in a timely manner, your exam application will be declined.

1.4 Question Format

Sample Question of the EPE⁶

"John is a permanent resident currently living on employment insurance (EI) benefits. John intends to apply for sponsorship for their spouse who lives in abroad with a dependent daughter from a previous marriage. John's most recent tax return shows an income that is below the LICO requirement. What are John's options?

- A. Wait another year before filing the sponsorship application.
- B. Co-sponsor the spouse with John's sister.
- C. Apply for a bank loan to make up for the shortfall.
- D. Submit proof of current income from the spouse's employer." — CICC

How Are EPE Questions Structured?⁷

- Each question includes 4 options: 1 correct answer and 3 plausible but incorrect choices, known as distractors.
- Don't worry if the answer you expected isn't listed—focus on selecting the best possible answer among the options given.
- Distractors are designed to seem reasonable and are often based on common misconceptions.

Is There Penalty for Incorrect Answer?

No. There's no penalty for guessing. That means: **Always answer every question**, even if you're unsure. Leaving it blank guarantees zero points but guessing gives you at least a 25% chance.

Can I Flag Questions to Review Later?

Yes. You can flag any question you're unsure about. This allows you to easily return to those questions during your review time.

Can I Go Back to Previous Questions?

Yes. The exam platform allows you to move freely between questions — forward or backward — at any time during the 3-hour session.

Where Can I Try an Exam Demo?

You can try a free demo to see what the exam platform may look like: click [here](#).

Disclaimer: This demo is provided by a third-party platform and is not affiliated with or endorsed by the College of Immigration and Citizenship Consultants (CICC).

2. EPE Registration

2.1 Overview of the Registration

The EPE Registration Process

- Log into the College Portal
- Submit your Qualification Application
- Pay the non-refundable \$75 application fee
- Submit your Registration Application
- Pay the exam fee: \$425 (first attempt) or \$325 (subsequent attempts)
- Once approved, book your exam time via **ProctorU**

The EPE Registration Requirements

To register for the EPE, candidates must meet the **education, identity, and language** requirements. Click the links below to view the official details on the CICC website:

- [Education Requirements](#)
- [Identity Proof](#)
- [Language Requirements](#)

2.2 Step 1: Register for the College Portal

What is College Portal

College Portal (<https://portal.college-ic.ca/>) is the platform you will use not only to register for the EPE but also to manage your licensing status as an RCIC after certification. Make sure your login credentials are secure and accessible.

Sign in Français

CICC  **CCIC**
College of Immigration and Citizenship Consultants / Collège des consultants en immigration et en citoyenneté

Create an Account

Already registered? [Sign In](#)

*Account Purpose

Licence Application (please read our [privacy notice](#))

File a Complaint (please read our [privacy notice](#))

CPD Provider Application (please read our [privacy notice](#))

Prefix

*First name

Middle name

*Last name

*Email

2.3 Step 2: Submit the Qualification Form

When Can I Submit the Qualification Form?

You can only submit this form after your final grades from your school are officially released.

Note: Finishing your last exam is not enough: wait for final marks on your transcript.

Key components of the Qualification Form

- Your personal and contact details
- A copy of a government-issued ID, verified by a **Guarantor or Referee**
- A signed **Guarantor Form** (provided by the College as a PDF)
- A **\$75** non-refundable fee (payable at submission)

2.4 Guarantor Form

What Documents Do I Need to Submit for Identity Verification

You need to submit **two** signed documents as part of your Qualification Application:

- Certification of Identity Form (Download [here](#))
- A clear copy of your government-issued photo ID (See the sample below).

Both documents must be **signed** by your Guarantor.

Who can be a Guarantor or Referee?

As part of your **Qualification Application**, you'll need a **Guarantor or Referee** to verify your identity. A Guarantor is someone other than yourself who can confirm your identity and may be contacted by the College to verify the information. This person must:

- Work in a federally, provincially, or territorially regulated profession in Canada, such as lawyer, doctor, notary, RCIC, etc.
- Be in good standing with their professional body
- Be able to provide a license or registration number, if applicable

Tip: If you've worked with an RCIC, lawyer, or notary for other immigration or legal matters, they may be a good person to ask.

Photo ID Submission Instructions

Please provide a government-issued photo ID, such as a **Passport, PR Card, Driver’s License, or Provincial ID**. Kindly follow the instructions below to ensure your submission meets CICC requirements:

- Insert a clear, colored scanned copy of your photo ID into a Microsoft Word document. Blurry or low-quality copies will be rejected by CICC.
- At the bottom of the photo, include the following declaration (see sample format below). The Guarantor will sign and date it afterward.
- Once completed, convert the entire page into a PDF and email it to Guarantor along with your Guarantor Form.

Note: If you only send the photo without the required declaration, Guarantor will not be able to sign or attest it.

The image shows two pages of a 'CERTIFICATION OF ID: GUARANTOR, REFEREE OR AUTHORIZED PERSON' form from CICC (College of Immigration and Citizenship Consultants). The form is divided into two main sections. The left page contains definitions and instructions for guarantors, referees, and authorized persons. The right page contains a form for providing personal information and declarations. Red arrows point to three specific areas: 'Your Full Name' in the 'Candidate/Applicant/Licensee Information' section, 'Guarantor's Signature' in the 'Declaration of Guarantor, Referee or Authorized Person' section, and 'Your Signature' in the 'Declaration of Candidate/Applicant/Licensee' section. The form includes fields for name, address, date of birth, and signature, along with checkboxes for various declarations.

Sample of Guarantor Form

Note: The red text is for instruction only. Please delete it in the final version.

PHOTO ID OF _____ (Your FULL NAME)



(Photo ID can be Passport, PR Card, Driving License, or Provincial ID, your name MUST match your ID)

I confirm that this is a true likeness of XXXX XXXX (Your FULL NAME (Printed))

Guarantor's Signature: _____

Guarantor's Full Name (Printed): YYYY YYYY

Guarantor's Professional Title: _____ (e.g., RCIC-IRB; Lawyer)

License/Registration Number (if applicable): _____

Date: _____

Sample of Guarantor Signed Photo Identification

2.5 Step 3: Submit the Registration Form

Key components of the Registration Form

Once your Qualification Application is approved, you may proceed to the Registration Form. This form requires:

- Personal and contact information
- Selection of the upcoming EPE sitting
- Attestation to abide by the College's Academic Integrity Policy, including:
 - No cheating or impersonation
 - No sharing of exam content
 - Compliance with exam-day rules

Do Not Cheat

"Passing the EPE Exam is not a guarantee of licensing." "The College conducts ongoing investigations into allegations of cheating and other misconduct surrounding the EPE. Candidates who are found to have cheated or acted inappropriately will have this addressed during the Good Character and Good Conduct review of their application." — CICC

EPE Exam fee

- \$425 for the first attempt, \$325 for each subsequent attempt
- Payment is by credit card only, and must be completed by the deadline listed or within 30 days of invoice, whichever comes first.

2.6 Step 4: Book Your Exam Time on ProctorU

Book your exam time

Once Qualification Form and Registration Form are approved, you'll receive access to **ProctorU**, where you can book your specific exam time slot.

- Choose your exam time slot within the official EPE exam date
- Select a time that works for your time zone and availability
- Upon booking, you'll receive a confirmation email from **ProctorU**.
- The confirmation email contains your official exam access credentials
- Didn't receive a confirmation? Contact **ProctorU** or the College right away.

3. ProctorU Platform

The EPE is administered online via the **ProctorU** platform (<https://www.proctoru.com/>), a secure, remote proctoring third-party system used by CICC. In recent semesters, the academic program has started incorporating ProctorU into course exams to help students gain familiarity with the system.

If you've already used **ProctorU** during your program, this chapter will serve as a refresher.

3.1 Overview of the ProctorU Platform

What is the ProctorU

ProctorU is a live proctoring platform that:

- Monitors you through webcam, microphone, and screen sharing
- Uses trained **human proctors** to observe your behavior in real time
- Records your entire session for post-exam review

What to Expect on Exam Day

- When the countdown on your EPE booking page in **ProctorU** reaches zero, the launch button will become clickable.
- A human proctor will verify your ID and check your test environment.
- A quick system check will be performed.
- The proctor will then launch the EPE in a locked-down browser (the Guardian Browser).

Official ProctorU FAQs

ProctorU has a comprehensive Test-Taker Help Center, covering almost every question you might have about the platform:

<https://support.proctoru.com/hc/en-us/categories/115001818507>

Make sure to review this page in advance—it includes detailed guides, troubleshooting tips, and platform walkthroughs.

3.2 Setting Up ProctorU for the Exam

Technical Requirements

To avoid technical issues on exam day, your system must meet **ProctorU**'s minimum technical requirements:

	Minimum Requirements
Operating System	Windows 10 or later Mac OS 11.0 or later All recent compatible versions of ChromeOS (Extension workflow only)
Browser (extension workflow only)	Chrome
Connectivity	3 Mbps (3072 Kbps) Upload & Download Speed (mobile hotspots and tethering are discouraged)
Webcam	640x480 resolution
Microphone	All microphones other than those built into headphones are permitted.
Speakers	Built-in or external speakers are required.
RAM Capacity	8GB
CPU	4 cores at 2.4ghz
Monitor Resolution	1366x768
Ports	UDP/TCP 80 UDP/TCP 443

Minimum Requirement⁸ of **ProctorU**

Installing and Using Guardian Browser

The EPE requires a special locked-down browser called the Guardian Browser, which ensures secure exam conditions. You can download the browser on the official website:

<https://guardian.meazurelearning.com/>

3.3 Pre-Exam Requirements and Setup

Room and Desk Setup

“You are not expected to remove large furniture from the exam room. The room should be clean and as free of clutter as possible, with the designated workstation being clutter-free. You should not interact with any other objects in your room.”⁹ – CICC

Your exam space should be:

- **Private** (no other people in the room)
- **Well-lit** (your face must be clearly visible)
- **Clutter-free** (no notes, books, or materials nearby)

Room Check by the Proctor

Before the exam begins, the proctor may ask you to use your webcam to:

- Scan the entire room
- Show your desk surface
- Confirm that all doors and windows are closed

You may also need a **mirror** or **phone camera** to help scan around your computer.

ID Verification Requirements

Before the exam begins, the proctor will verify your identity. Be prepared to:

- Present a valid government-issued photo ID (passport, driver's license, PR card)
- Hold it up to the webcam so the name and photo are visible
- Complete facial recognition or a short live interview with the proctor

Your ID must:

- Match your full legal name on file with CICC
- Be unexpired and undamaged

Don't Be Late!

Timing is crucial. Here's how to stay on track:

- Turn on your computer at least **10 minutes** before your scheduled exam.
- Log in to the **ProctorU** platform **2–3 minutes** before your scheduled start time.

Important:

- The launch button will remain unclickable until your scheduled time.
- If you are more than **30 minutes late**, your session will be forfeited.

3.4 What You CANNOT Do During the Exam

- You will not be permitted to test with remote control software running on your computer. Applications like TeamViewer, GoToMyPC, AnyDesk, etc.
- You will only be permitted the use of a single monitor when testing, all others must be disconnected.
- Mobile devices, such as tablets or cell phones, are not supported.
- Headphones are generally not permitted. Check with your testing organization to determine if you are allowed to use headphones.
- You will not be permitted to take your exam from within a virtual machine. You will be asked to reconnect using your host operating system to take your exam.
- You will not be permitted to use Apple Bootcamp to take your exam.
- Unlicensed/inactive versions of Windows and Test Builds/Modes are not permitted.
- External monitors connected to a closed laptop should be set to mirror display and should be connected directly to the computer. Avoid using a docking station.

Some important caveats and limitations to keep in mind when testing¹⁰

Behaviors That Can Trigger Flags

Here are common behaviors that may result in flagging:

- Looking away from the screen repeatedly
- Whispering or speaking aloud
- Presence of other people or background voices
- Leaving the webcam view
- Using a phone or external device
- Attempting to open other applications or tabs

Each flagged behavior is reviewed by an investigator. Not all flags result in disqualification, but unexplained or repeated violations may lead to consequences.

Can I Use a Second Monitor?

No. Dual monitors or external displays are not allowed. You may use an external keyboard or mouse, a laptop plugged into power. But only one active screen is permitted.

Can I Use Scratch Paper?

No. No physical paper is permitted.

What Items Are Prohibited?

You cannot bring or use the following during the exam:

- Food or drinks, except water in a clear, label-free container
- Any electronic devices: phones, smartwatches, tablets, Bluetooth devices, calculators, etc.
- Books, notes, printouts, or any digital reference materials
- Any other unauthorized items, including bags, headphones, or additional accessories

3.5 What You CAN Do During the Exam

What Items Are Allowed?

- Your **computer** and essential peripherals (e.g., keyboard, mouse, webcam)
- A clear, resealable **water bottle**, with no labels
- A **mirror** or **phone**, used only during check-in to scan your desk and computer (must be put away afterward)

Can I Take a Bathroom Break?

Yes, but there are strict rules:

- You must ask for the proctor's permission before leaving your desk
- The exam timer will continue running while you're away
- When you return, you may be asked to re-scan your room
- Unapproved departures from your exam room may lead to your exam being terminated or submitted early

Important: Leaving without permission may count as misconduct and could forfeit your attempt.

3.6 Houston, We Have a Problem

What If My Internet Fails?

If your internet disconnects:

- Stay calm — the system may **pause the exam**
- Reconnect immediately
- Contact **ProctorU** via **emergency support number**

If reconnection isn't possible, CICC will review the incident. You may be allowed to reschedule if the disruption was beyond your control.

Pro Tip: Use a wired connection if possible. Keep mobile data as a backup.

What If Something Unexpected Happens?

If an unexpected issue arises (e.g., your webcam stops working, loud noise nearby, etc.):

- You can wave your hand and speak to the proctor using your microphone
- You can also use the chat box to contact the proctor immediately

What If I Can't Understand the Proctor?

Sometimes, due to poor audio quality or a strong accent, you might find it hard to understand your proctor. Don't worry: you can use the **message box** to communicate and type your questions or ask for clarification.

3.7 Tips for Exam Day Success

Tips

Here are a few last-minute tips to set yourself up for success:

- Run a system check using **ProctorU** a few days in advance
- Set up your exam space the night before – clean, quiet, and clutter-free
- Have your photo ID and water bottle ready
- Sleep well the night before and give yourself plenty of time before the exam
- Close all background apps and disable notifications on your computer
- Stay calm and focused – you've got this!

4. Preparation Strategy

Passing the academic courses doesn't automatically mean you're ready to pass the EPE. While the content of the academic program and the EPE both relate to the work of an RCIC, the format, scope, and level of application expected in the EPE are very different. You must take your preparation seriously.

4.1 EPE features

How the EPE Differs from Academic Exams

Academic exams are more knowledge-based, while the EPE tests real-world competencies. The EPE focuses on your ability to apply your knowledge ethically, legally, and practically—just like you would in professional RCIC practice.

	Academic	EPE
Course duration	9 courses to be completed within 12, 24, or 36 months.	Typically completed within a few weeks or months of preparation.
Exam objective	Academic evaluation to fulfill program requirements.	Professional licensing exam to assess eligibility for becoming a Regulated Canadian Immigration Consultant (RCIC).
Exam format	Multiple-choice questions Short-answer questions Case studies Written assignments. A mix of open-book and closed-book assessments	135 MCQ CLOSED book 03 hours.
Passing mark	70%	Passing score is unknown
Difficulty Level	Academically rigorous with flexibility in pacing and completion.	Significantly more challenging as it tests comprehensive understanding of immigration law, critical thinking, and real-world application required for RCIC practice.
Pass/Fail Consequences	Failed courses can be retaken individually.	If unsuccessful, the entire exam must be retaken. Candidates must pass within 3 years of graduation and are allowed a maximum of 4 attempts.

How Scoring Works

The CICC does not disclose the exact passing score. Instead, the EPE is scored using a method called **bookmarking**, widely used for professional licensing exams. Here’s a simplified explanation:

A panel of RCIC experts reviews all the exam questions, ordered from easiest to hardest. They decide where a “just-competent” candidate would likely stop getting answers right. That point becomes the cutoff score to pass.

What this means for you:

- You can make mistakes and still pass.
- You don’t need to answer every question perfectly.
- Don’t panic if some questions seem unfamiliar—they may be outside your specialty or even experimental.

90-Day Policy Cutoff

Since IRCC policies change frequently, the EPE adopts a 90-day policy cutoff to ensure fairness:

“Any changes to immigration or citizenship legislation, regulations, policies, or procedures made within 90 days before the exam will not be reflected in exam questions.”¹¹ — CICC

For example:

If your exam date is **December 10, 2025**, then any changes made after **June 24, 2025** will not appear on the exam.

Recommendation:

- Use the most recent study materials that reflect policies up to the cutoff date.
- Avoid relying on outdated materials that may no longer reflect current law.

4.2 Preparation Tips

Tip 1: Less Is More

For most candidates, the problem isn't having too little study material — it's having too much. Many test-takers only have one or two months to prepare and often can't study full-time. That's why it's critical to use your limited time wisely.

Our recommendation: Do **NOT** distribute your study time equally across all subjects. The academic program has 9 courses, but it's not necessary — or even recommended — to review all 9 equally. In fact, since the EPE and academic program differs significantly, you don't need to organize your review by course numbers. Instead, plan your study around EPE's competency categories and your familiarity with each topic.

If you're short on time, be strategic and skip low-frequency or low-impact topics. Spend more time on topics that appear frequently in the exam. For example, it's safe to skip detailed streams of PNP requirements for each province or CRS/EE scoring calculations. You can prioritize topics by referencing CICC's official guide or by consulting third-party prep materials — both free and paid. In short, spend time where it matters.

Tip 2: Don't Just Memorize — Understand

In 2020, the EPE underwent a major transformation: it shifted from a knowledge-based to a competency-based exam. This is a significant change. The focus is no longer on memorizing facts, but on applying knowledge to real-world scenarios. As CICC puts it:

"The competencies tested on the exam are those required for entry-level practice that have the most direct impact on the protection of the public and influence on effective and ethical practice." — CICC

In other words, it's not enough to know what something is — you also need to know why and how to use it in practice.

Tip 3: Reduce Fear of the Unknown

This may be your first time writing the EPE, but many others have taken it before you. If possible, talk to someone who has passed the exam or read their preparation stories. Doing so will help you understand the test better and ease anxiety caused by the unknown.

Remember: Newton saw further by standing on the shoulders of giants — and so can you.

Also, if possible, simulate the real exam by doing a full mock test under timed conditions (3 hours). This will help you get familiar with time management and exam pacing.

How Much Time Do You Need?

There's no one-size-fits-all answer. Some candidates just finished the academic program and still remember most details; others have been away from school for a while. Some work in the field already (e.g., as an RCIC assistant), while others are completely new to immigration.

Based on our experience, with access to good prep materials (e.g., guides and mock exams), the average candidate can prepare reasonably well in **one month with 4 hours of daily study**, which is around **100–120 hours** of focused study.

Of course, adjust based on your situation: Have industry experience or Quick learner? You may need less time. Need to gather your own materials or Need repetition? Allow more time.

4.3 Exam Skills**Time Management! Time Management! Time Management!**

For most first-time EPE writers, completing 135 questions in 3 hours is a new experience. Poor time management is a common reason for failure. Here's the golden rule:

Always finish the exam!

This means:

- You have 180 minutes for 135 questions, which gives you just 80 seconds per question.
- Don't get stuck on any one question — e.g. set a 2-minute limit. If you don't have an answer by then, mark it, make your best guess, and move on.
- Never leave a question blank. There's no penalty for wrong answers, so you have at least a 25% chance of guessing correctly.

Here's another reason not to waste time: 10 of the 135 questions are unscored experimental items — but you won't know which ones. Don't risk wasting time on test questions that don't even count.

Leave Time to Review

Some questions you'll know immediately — great! Answer them quickly and move on. Use the time you save on tougher questions that require more thought.

Ideally, reserve 20–30 minutes at the end to review:

- First, review the questions you marked.
- If time remains, review the rest.

Stay Calm

Your mindset is just as important as your preparation — maybe even more so. Prepare well, and relax during the exam. As the CICC exam guide states, EPE questions aren't designed to trick you. Don't overthink it. This isn't an exam that requires a perfect score — even if we assume a 90% pass threshold, plus 10 unscored questions, you could still get up to 15-20 questions wrong and pass.

So don't panic over any one question. If you've studied well and practiced thoughtfully, you're already on the right track to success.

4.4 Paid Resources & Free Resources

Paid Resources

Since the EPE is offered four times a year and has been running for several years, a variety of third-party prep materials are now available. ImmiMentor is one of them, which is founded by one of this book's authors, Sid, offers personalized tutoring for exam takers, with fees ranging from \$150 to \$320. Full details are available [here](#).

Sid is also collaborating with the co-author of this book, Henry, to launch a paid Cheatsheet and MCQ package. Sample pages are included in this guide's [appendix](#).

Free Resources (webinars)

In addition to this book, Sid regularly offers FREE webinars and study sessions for all candidates. Full details are available at the end of [this page](#).

- These sessions are generously offered by ImmiMentor mentors as a way of giving back to the community. Participation is open to all. You are welcome to join, ask questions, and engage with fellow EPE candidates.
- Please note that these are not formal lectures. The sessions are primarily interactive and focused on Q&A discussions.

Free Resources (WhatsApp Group)

Since 2022, Sid has hosted a **free** WhatsApp prep group for every EPE exam session, with experience supporting over 12 batches of candidates. The most recent group included over 100 candidates actively preparing and sharing resources. This is more than just a mentorship group — candidates help each other with logistics, study questions, and encouragement throughout the process. While Sid and other mentors offer guidance, it's truly a collaborative space where everyone supports everyone.

Joining the group is completely free. Click [here](#) to join, to connect with your peers and start preparing together.

5. EPE Cheatsheet (Sample)

Overview of The EPE Cheatsheet

The EPE Cheatsheet

This book (*The EPE Toolkit*) primarily serves as a guide to the logistics of the EPE exam, aiming to reduce the time and effort you spend on understanding the process. It does not cover specific exam content, key topic selection, or targeted review strategies — those are the focus of our paid publication: *The EPE Cheatsheet*.

As previously mentioned, the EPE covers a wide range of topics, but candidates typically only have one to two months to prepare. To help you manage your time more effectively and improve your chances of passing, the authors — drawing on their own exam experiences and experience mentoring other candidates — are about to release this content-focused companion book, *The EPE Cheatsheet*. The first draft is already complete and will be released soon. Here's a sneak peek at what's inside.

Features of The EPE Cheatsheet

We understand your time is valuable, so we won't overwhelm you with information. *The EPE Cheatsheet* is around 100 pages long and is designed to help you study more efficiently. Though concise, it is comprehensively structured to cover nearly the entire EPE exam scope. More importantly, each topic area highlights key exam-tested concepts and commonly confused ideas, explained clearly to support your understanding and retention.

In short, this book is:

- **Well-structured:** Covers all major areas tested in the EPE;
- **Focused:** Prioritizes high-frequency concepts and avoids wasting your time on less relevant topics;
- **Easy to understand:** Uses simple, clear language to explain complex ideas, with plenty of tables, visuals, and diagrams to help you remember key points;
- **Continuously improved:** We'll keep updating and refining the content to ensure you always get the most accurate and up-to-date material, and we welcome your feedback;
- **Reasonably priced:** It will be sold at an affordable, fair price — delivering excellent value for money.

Table of Contents of The EPE Cheatsheet (Sample)

PART I – INTRODUCTION TO THE RCIC PROFESSION.....

- UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF RCIC
- OVERVIEW OF THE EPE.....

PART II – LEGAL FRAMEWORK & FOUNDATIONS.....

- THE CANADIAN LEGAL SYSTEM
- KEY IMMIGRATION LEGISLATIONS RELATED TO RCIC JURISDICTION
- ADMINISTRATIVE BODIES AND THEIR ROLES

PART III – IMMIGRATION CATEGORIES & PROCEDURES.....

- TEMPORARY RESIDENCE.....
 - Overview of Temporary Residence*
 - Visitor Visa / eTA*
 - Study Permit*.....
 - Work Permits*.....
- PERMANENT RESIDENCE
- Introduction to Permanent Residence in Canada*.....
- Economic Class*
- Family Class Sponsorship*.....
- Refugee and Protected Persons*.....
- Humanitarian and Compassionate (H&C) Applications*.....
- PR Cards and Renewals*
- Admissibility Considerations for PR Applicants*.....
- Application Procedures*.....

PART IV – CITIZENSHIP AND INADMISSIBILITY

- OVERVIEW OF CANADIAN CITIZENSHIP
- ELIGIBILITY FOR CITIZENSHIP
- MINORS AND CITIZENSHIP
- REVOCATION AND REFUSAL OF CITIZENSHIP
- SPECIAL CASES

PART V – PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE.....

- MAJOR AREAS CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT.....
- IMPORTANT AREAS OF CICC REGULATIONS

APPENDICES.....

Excerpts from The EPE Cheatsheet (References omitted)

Client Definition and Written Agreement

The concept of a "client" is central to an RCIC's professional duties. It defines who is entitled to protection under the CICC Code and when an RCIC's obligations begin.

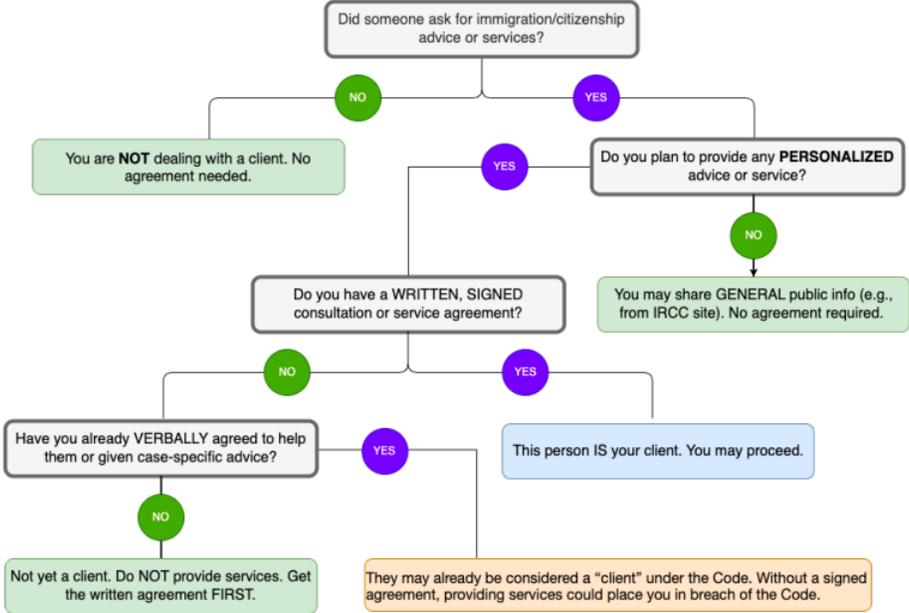
A "client" is anyone who:

- Signs a written agreement with the RCIC, **or**
- Receives or is offered immigration consulting services (verbal or otherwise), **or**
- Reasonably believes the RCIC has agreed to assist

Note: RCICs owe full Code obligations to clients from the moment a client relationship is established—including those who are not yet under formal agreement.

When Is a Written Agreement Required?
 Required before providing any personalized advice or services, regardless of payment.

Situation	Need Agreement?	Notes
General info session	No	As long as no case-specific advice
Paid/unpaid consultation	Yes	Consultation agreement required
Full representation	Yes	Service agreement required
Verbal agreement only	Not sufficient	Breach of code
Advice to potential client	Yes	If that advice is personalized/case specific



Exceptions to the Written Agreement Rule	
Exception	Description
Ongoing Agreement Scope	If you already have a valid contract covering multiple services (e.g., study permit and PGWP) with client, after study permit, no need to sign a new agreement before starting PGWP representation.
Firm Representation	If a contract is signed with a CICC-registered immigration firm and you're the assigned RCIC, no separate contract is needed—but your name, license number, and signature must still appear on the firm's contract.
In-House RCICs	If you're employed full-time by a school (or its representative organization) to help its own international students, you don't need a signed contract with each student. The school is considered your client, not the student (see Section 25 of the Code).

Tips	
Rule	Details
Signed Agreement = Safe Zone	If there's a signed consultation or service agreement → full duties apply, and you may proceed.
No Agreement + Verbal Offer = Risk Zone	If you verbally agree to help, you may have a client but are in violation of Article 17(1).
General Info ≠ Client	You may give public, non-specific info without triggering a client relationship (Article 17(2)).
Reasonable Belief = Client	If someone reasonably believes you agreed to help them, you're responsible — even without a contract.

Understanding Scope vs. Competence

Just because you're an RCIC—and both you and the client are ready to sign an agreement—doesn't automatically mean you're allowed to provide the service. The CICC Code outlines two critical limits on your practice: **Scope** and **Competence**.

Scope	Competence
Scope = What You're Legally Allowed to Do. This is a hard limitation, based on your license class. It defines the legal boundaries of your practice. You cannot operate outside of scope, no matter how capable you feel.	Competence = What You're Personally Able to Do. This is a soft limitation, based on your knowledge, skill, and experience. Even if you're authorized to take a case, you must not accept it unless you're competent to do so.

Key Rules to Remember
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having scope but no competence = breach of duty • Having competence but no scope = unauthorized practice • Both must be met before accepting or continuing a case

Competence Limitations

Competence Limitations (Case-Based / Self-Assessed)

Even if a matter is within your license class, you must not take it on unless you are competent. Competence means having the:

- Technical knowledge
- Practical experience
- Preparation needed to manage the case effectively

This is a judgment call. You must evaluate competence honestly before accepting or continuing a case.

What to Do If a Case is Outside Your COMPETENCE

- Decline if you can't realistically become competent in time
- Gain competence before proceeding (study, CPD, mentorship)
- Collaborate or refer the file to someone more experienced—with informed client consent

Joint Clients

Joint clients are two or more individuals represented under the same retainer agreement—typically spouses, common-law partners, or family members applying together.

Representing Joint Clients

- No confidentiality between them
- All parties must consent in writing

If One Is Absent from Meeting

- Notify all joint clients via writing (email)
- Obtain written consent before proceeding with absent party
- Send written meeting summary to all parties

Conflict Between Joint Clients

If joint clients develop conflicting legal or strategic interests, the RCIC must assess whether continued joint representation is ethical. If the conflict is serious or unresolvable, the RCIC must either:

- Withdraw from representing all clients, or
- Continue with only one client—but only if:
 - All clients give informed written consent, and
 - Continued representation is still ethical and not prejudicial to others.

Scenario	RCIC Action
Spouses pursue different immigration strategies (e.g., one applies independently)	Must not represent both
One client's disclosure harms the other	Must reassess if continued representation is ethical
Minor or procedural conflict	May continue with informed written consent from all parties

Model 1 vs Model 2

Under the *CICC Client Account Regulation*, RCICs must choose one of two models for managing client funds. This choice affects how and where you deposit money—especially earned vs. unearned fees.

Model 1: Deposit Everything	Model 2: Deposit Only Unearned Funds
<p>All client funds, whether earned or unearned, must first go into the Client Account, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retainers • Fully earned and invoiced fees • IRCC fees and third-party disbursements <p>After that, earned fees may be transferred to your Business Account.</p> <p>Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easier to track all client payments in one place • Slower access to earned income (must transfer later) 	<p>Only unearned and unbilled money is deposited into the Client Account. Earned and invoiced fees may be deposited directly into the RCIC's Business Account — skipping the Client Account entirely. You still must use the Client Account for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IRCC/government processing fees • Advance disbursements • Any unearned retainer or prepayment <p>Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gives you more flexibility over earned fees • Requires precise tracking to avoid errors or misclassification

Feature	Model 1 (All Funds Go to Client Account First)	Model 2 (Only Unearned Fees Go to Client Account)
Where does the client's payment go first?	All funds (earned and unearned) must go into the Client Account first.	Only unearned fees, government fees, and disbursements go into the Client Account. Earned fees may go directly to the Business Account.
When can funds be transferred to the Business Account?	Only after services are performed in accordance with the retainer can earned fees be transferred.	Earned and invoiced fees may be deposited directly into the Business Account.
Where do government processing fees go?	Must go into the Client Account first, then be paid to IRCC from there.	Same as Model 1 — must go into the Client Account first, regardless of fee status.
Handling disbursements (e.g., courier, translation)	Held in the Client Account until used or reimbursed.	Held in the Client Account until used or reimbursed.
Flexibility for business operations	Less flexible — all funds pass through the Client Account before becoming accessible income.	More flexible — earned income can be accessed immediately if properly billed.
Best for RCICs who want...	Maximum financial control and simplified audit preparation.	Easier cash flow management and faster access to earned income.

General Rule (Applies to Both Models)

All the following must always be deposited into the Client Account:

- Unearned or unbilled fees
- Overpayments
- Government processing fees (e.g., IRCC application fees)
- Disbursements paid in advance by the client (e.g., courier, translation)

Audit Consistency Rule

Once you choose a model, you must use the same model for the entire audit year.

Use of Staff and Agents

RCICs may delegate certain tasks, but they remain fully responsible for all immigration services provided under their name. This includes oversight of employees, agents, and interpreters.

Key Rules of Staff

Staff: Employees include admin assistants, paralegals, and other directly employed personnel.

- RCICs are 100% responsible for the actions of their staff—even if unaware of misconduct.
- Staff do not require client consent to assist
- Staff must be:
 - directly supervised by the RCIC
 - tasks delegated must be within the staff's skills and training

Key Rules of Agent

Agent: Third parties (non-employees) who assist with immigration services under the RCIC's direction.

RCIC remains fully accountable for: Service quality, Compliance with laws and regulations, Ethical standards.

Conditions for Use Agents:

- Written client consent is required before involving an agent
- RCIC must ensure the agent is:
 - Of good character
 - Qualified and competent for the delegated task
 - Properly supervised

If the Agent Becomes a Problem:

- Terminate the agreement immediately
- Report the issue to the College (email or formal complaint)
- Document everything in your client file

IRB Timelines Cheat Sheet			
Activity	Time Frame	Legal Reference	Comments / Notes
First Detention Review	48 Hours	IRPA s.57	The Immigration Division (ID) must conduct an initial detention review within 48 hours.
Second Detention Review	7 Days	IRPA s.57(2)	A second mandatory review to assess if detention should continue.
Third and Subsequent Detention Reviews	Every 30 Days	IRPA s.57(2)	Detention must be reviewed every 30 days following the second review.
Request to Reschedule Hearing (RPD)	3 Days	RPD Rule 54(1)	Must submit the request at least 3 working days before the scheduled hearing, with valid justification.
Change of Hearing Language Request	10 Days	RPD Rule 17(1)	Must be submitted 10 days before the hearing.
Submit Witness Information (RPD)	10 Days	RPD Rule 44(1)	Provide names, relationships to claimant, and purpose of testimony.
Submit Changes to BOC or New Evidence (RPD)	10 Days	RPD Rule 34(3)	Updates or new evidence must be submitted 10 days before the hearing.
Submit Documents for IAD ADR	10 Days	IAD Rules 64–76	Relevant documents must be submitted 10 days before Alternative Dispute Resolution.
Submit BOC Form (POE Claimants)	15 Days	https://www.irb-cisr.gc.ca/en/legal-policy/procedures/Pages/rpd-pn-procedural-issues.aspx https://www.irb-cisr.gc.ca/en/applying-refugee-protection/Pages/index.aspx	IRB Practice Notices-As per the recent practice notice, claimants making their claim at the POE have 45 days to submit their BOC forms. Inland claimants fill their documents online via the portal and have 90 days to complete this.
File Notice of Appeal to RAD	15 Days	IRPR s.159.91(1)	Deadline starts from the date of RPD decision.
Apply for Judicial Review (in Canada)	15 Days	IRPA s.72(2)(b)	Must apply to Federal Court within 15 days of decision.
Submit PRRA Application	15 Days	IRPR s.164	Deadline to apply for a Pre-Removal Risk Assessment.

Request to Change Hearing Location (RPD)	20 Days	RPD Rule 53(3)	Written justification must accompany the request.
Voluntary Departure after Departure Order	30 Days	RPD Rule 224(1)	Must leave Canada within 30 days to avoid a deportation order.
Judicial Review after IAD or RAD Decision	30 Days	IRPA s.72(2)(b)	Must apply within 30 days of final decision.
File Sponsorship Appeal (IAD)	30 Days	IAD Rule 16(a)	Applies to refused family class sponsorships.
Appeal a Removal Order (IAD)	30 Days	IAD Rule 16	Only available to certain individuals like PRs and protected persons.
Perfect a RAD Appeal	45 Days	https://www.irb-cisr.gc.ca/en/legal-policy/procedures/Pages/practice-notice-extending-time-perfecting-appeal.aspx https://www.irb-cisr.gc.ca/en/refugee-appeals/Pages/RefAppGuide.aspx#s3.01	IRB Practice Notices- Appellant must submit full record within 45 days of filing appeal.
Judicial Review of Overseas Decisions	60 Days	IRPA s.72(2)(b)	Applies to decisions like visa refusals.
RAD Decision Timeline Post Perfection	90 Days	IRPR s.159.92	Ideal timeline for RAD to issue decision after appeal perfected.
Bar on H&C after Failed Refugee Claim	1 Year	IRPA s.25(1.2)(c)	Ineligible for H&C consideration for 12 months unless exception applies.
PR Card Validity	5 Years	IRPR s.54(1)	Ensure PR Card is valid when traveling or re-entering Canada.
Reapplying After Misrepresentation Exclusion	5 Years	IRPA s.40(2)(a)	Individuals must wait 5 years before reapplying after exclusion.

Join EPE prep WhatsApp group for FREE

For EPE Candidates whose Exam Day is December 10, 2025	For EPE Candidates whose Exam Day is March, 2026
 <p>The QR code is for the WhatsApp group 'Mission EPE: Dec 10, 2025'. It features the RCIC EPE logo at the top and a WhatsApp icon in the center of the QR code.</p>	 <p>The QR code is for the WhatsApp group 'Mission EPE: March, 2026'. It features the RCIC EPE logo at the top and a WhatsApp icon in the center of the QR code.</p>
<p>Disclaimer: The above WhatsApp groups are NOT run by any regulator such as CICC, or any schools. They are entirely volunteer-led platforms, and there is NO fee to join.</p>	

Endnote

- ¹ *RCIC Entry-to-Practice Exam Candidate Guide*, Version: 2023-002 (April 2023), p. 2.
- ² https://college-ic.ca/become-licensed/how-do-i-become-an-rcic-/dates-deadlines-and-fees#tabs-dates_december-10-2025
- ³ https://college-ic.ca/become-licensed/how-do-i-become-an-rcic-/epe-registration-requirements?l=en-CA#tabs_education-requirements
- ⁴ https://college-ic.ca/become-licensed/how-do-i-become-an-rcic-/dates-deadlines-and-fees#tabs_exam-fees
- ⁵ <https://college-ic.ca/become-licensed/how-do-i-become-an-rcic-/dates-deadlines-and-fees>
- ⁶ *RCIC Entry-to-Practice Exam Candidate Guide*, Version: 2023-002 (April 2023), p. 12.
- ⁷ *RCIC Entry-to-Practice Exam Candidate Guide*, Version: 2023-002 (April 2023), p. 5.
- ⁸ <https://support.proctoru.com/hc/en-us/articles/24692181239309-Equipment-Requirements>
- ⁹ *RCIC Entry-to-Practice Exam Candidate Guide*, Version: 2023-002 (April 2023), p. 7.
- ¹⁰ <https://support.proctoru.com/hc/en-us/articles/24692181239309-Equipment-Requirements>
- ¹¹ *RCIC Entry-to-Practice Exam Candidate Guide*, Version: 2023-002 (April 2023), p. 4.