

# The Facts about the Certification Exam for Structural Integration<sup>sm</sup>

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September 2009 marks the point whereby 269 Structural Integration practitioners have taken the Certification Exam for Structural Integration. Of those who have taken, 233 candidates have passed and have become the first Board Certified Structural Integrators in the world. That is an 83% pass rate. Yet, CBSI receives questions and concerns about the exam that indicate there is some confusion and misinformation. As a board member I would like to take this opportunity to provide you with information about the most commonly expressed questions and concerns.

## **Why is the certification exam important?**

A psychometrically-valid exam is developed using statistically valid methods. Such an exam is the primary legal tool that helps define the boundaries of a profession. Without a certification exam there is no legal way to protect our profession from untrained or badly trained practitioners claiming competence as Structural Integrators. This type of exam is recognized as valid by licensing agencies, legislatures, insurance agencies and other professionals. The certification exam is developed according to the standards required by the National Organization for Competency Assurance, (NOCA) and the American National Standards Institute, (ANSI). These organizations are the national and international accrediting agencies for these exams. Certification makes the exam legally useful in every country, province and state.

As the exam becomes more widely known throughout the bodywork

professions it will notify bodywork schools, faculties and practitioners that SI is a profession requiring specific training and skills. Creating the exam was the crucial first requirement. Taking the exam is the second step. This validates the exam. The more SI practitioners that take it, the more important the exam becomes, and the more we become able to define ourselves and maintain our integrity as a separate profession.

### **What is the exam like?**

The exam is a multiple choice test consisting of 120 questions. The passing score is 84, which is 70% of the total questions. A passing score would be correctly answering 70% or more of the exam questions. The questions on the test were deliberately designed to have more than one correct response which is how certification exams are required to be written. This aspect is commented on frequently by frustrated candidates. The candidate is asked for the "most appropriate" or "best" choice, which tests for a deeper, analytical understanding of the knowledge base. These types of questions present you with choices that require some thinking and judgment in addition to basic knowledge.

### **I have a lot of anxiety about taking the exam – what if I don't pass?**

At the present time the majority of people taking the Exam are passing. This is considered an excellent indicator of the validity of the exam. We are told this indicates that the exam committee did its job well – they created a fair, but not easy exam. Candidates that pass are notified of "pass" status and awarded the certification, Board Certified Structural Integrator(cm). Candidates that do not pass are notified of their status and receive their scores in each of the five test sections to help them determine in what areas they need further study.

Candidates that did not pass are encouraged to repeat the exam. CBSI does provide an on-line study guide to assist all candidates to prepare themselves for the exam.

Exam scores are diligently safeguarded. Only two of the CBSI(sm) board members know these scores. They are careful to avoid listings or announcements that would in any way embarrass candidates that have not passed the exam.

“Test Anxiety” is normal. Nearly everyone who takes an important examination feels anxious. We would encourage you to remember that the passing score is only 84, and if you should not pass on the first attempt, simply look upon it as a learning curve. The exam is for all practitioners of SI who have graduated from an IASI recognized training program or have met CBSI’s mentored/exceptions training standards. The difficulty level is designed so that most recent graduates should pass.

### **How was the test developed and who developed it?**

Work on this exam began in 2005. In May 2006, IASI hired Dr. Gerald Rosen, a professional psychometrist who works with organizations creating certification exams. He guided us through the difficult and demanding standards of NOCA, and the ANSI.

It was a legal necessity to create an independent division to administer the exam. The Certification Board for Structural Integrators(sm) (CBSI) was created as a separate division of the IASI. The CBSI has its own bylaws, Board of Directors, and is financially independent from IASI. The CBSI started with a grant from IASI of \$100,000 to accomplish this task.

Over 80 Structural Integration practitioners and faculty from all of the SI schools and seven countries participated in the development of this

exam. Participation included development of the Practice Analysis, item writing and review, and exam finalization.

An open invitation was sent at several stages for volunteers to help with the development of this exam. If you missed out on helping with this one, don't worry...in the winter of 2009/2010, we will need another group of volunteers to help write more exam questions. We would like to invite you to contact us to participate in this process. Please visit the *Getting Involved* section on the CBSI website ([www.siexam.org](http://www.siexam.org)) for more information.

Hopefully you now have a much better understanding of what a huge undertaking this has been to develop this exam, and why it is important to the maturation of SI as a profession.

If you have additional questions about the exam please send them to info at siexam dot org.