CDA Council Process

After you apply to the Council, you'll receive **official scheduling notices**. You'll take the **CDA Exam first** once you receive the Council's "Ready to Schedule" notice and the **6-month clock starts**, so scheduling quickly matters

CDA Exam: What it is and how to schedule it

The CDA Exam is a computer-based assessment taken through **Pearson VUE** (not scheduled through the Council). Pearson VUE also posts the guidance for exam scheduling and accommodations.

What to do:

- Wait for your Council **"Ready to Schedule"** notice (then schedule ASAP).
- Schedule your exam through **Pearson VUE** (website/phone listed on their page).
- If you need accommodations, Pearson VUE notes the Council uses a **Special Accommodations Request** process **before** you submit the CDA application

CDA Verification Visit: What to expect (and how to prep)

A CDA **PD Specialist** completes the Verification Visit by reviewing your documentation/portfolio, observing your work, and conducting reflective dialogue.

Before the visit:
The Council's "Stages of the CDA Verification Visit" quick guide notes the PD Specialist will do a pre-visit call (no later than 48 hours before) to confirm your setting/age group match, your portfolio is complete, and that you'll bring a **government-issued photo ID**.

Exam-first reminder:
Your checklist notes that after your **exam score is received**, you'll watch for the Council notice to schedule a Verification Visit **if required**—and some candidates may be awarded **without a visit** if exam results clearly show competence.

Virtual visits:
The Council has detailed procedures for the **Virtual Verification Visit**, including a room tour and technology check.

Classroom prep that actually helps:

- Keep it a normal day (routine, not "performance day")
- Reduce transition stress (extra staff support if possible)
- For virtual: test Wi-Fi, camera angle, and audio ahead of time

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After exam + visit: results and your digital credential

Your checklist notes the Council reviews **training + portfolio + experience + exam + visit (if required)** and then issues the credential decision.
After award, learners can access a **digital credential** (Credly invitation + account + download/share).