

Guide for using 2020 EA-2L Outline

Some of the syllabus items for the EA-2L exam are rarely tested. This guide can be used to help you focus on what are typically the most important parts of the outline.

Pages 1 – 41: Vesting and accrued benefit rules are always tested on this exam. Expect about 4 to 6 questions on this material.

Pages 43 – 46: There are typically 2 or 3 questions dealing with spousal benefits.

Pages 47 – 123: These sections deal with specialized rules that are part of the calculation of benefits that can be distributed to participants. There are typically 6 to 10 questions dealing with these sections.

Pages 125 – 230: This is one of the most tested parts of the outline. A lot of time should be devoted to the nondiscrimination items in these sections. This often makes up about 25% of the exam questions.

Pages 231 – 253: The permitted disparity rules have been rarely tested during the past 10 to 12 years. Although the topic remains on the syllabus, this might be a section to skip until all other sections are understood, as the time spent to understand the topic probably outweighs the probability of a question appearing on the exam.

Pages 255 – 298: Funding based limits (IRC section 436) is typically tested in about 3 – 5 exam questions.

Pages 299 – 336: There are typically 1 – 3 exam questions dealing with multiemployer plan withdrawal liability.

Pages 337 – 442: This is the other really big topic (typically about 25% of the exam – plan terminations and PBGC rules).

Pages 443 – 456: These miscellaneous topics have varying probabilities of being tested. There are never many points devoted to any of these topics. Due to the primarily factual nature of these topics, they are generally best left to the later stages of studying for this exam.

Pages 457 – 463: The MAP-21 stabilization rules might show up in a few questions (usually requiring you to choose whether or not to use the stabilized interest rates). The most important thing to know is when to use MAP-21 rates and when not to use them. The rules have been mentioned throughout the outline, but this section goes into more detail.

Pages 477 – 478: Commutation functions will likely show up in several questions, and this section provides a brief review of how to use them.

Pages 479 – 480: Constructive ownership rules have only been tested a couple of times within the past several years.