GENERAL

electrical engineering pe exam sample questions

Published: September 3, 2026 | Index ID: #-

Introduction

Becoming a licensed Professional Engineer (PE) in electrical engineering is a milestone that opens doors to advanced career opportunities, higher salaries, and greater professional credibility. The PE exam is the final hurdle that separates aspiring engineers from fully credentialed professionals. Among the most effective tools for preparing for this exam are **electrical engineering PE exam sample questions**. These practice problems mirror the format, difficulty, and content areas of the actual test, giving candidates a realistic preview of what to expect.

In this article, we'll explore why sample questions are essential, how to use them strategically, and where to find the best resources. Whether you're a recent graduate, a mid-career engineer, or someone transitioning from a related discipline, a well structured practice routine built around authentic sample questions will boost your confidence and improve your scores.

Understanding the Electrical Engineering PE Exam

The PE exam in electrical engineering is administered by the National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES). It tests candidates on a broad range of topics, from fundamentals of circuit analysis to power systems, control theory, and electromagnetic fields. The exam is typically a 5 hour, 80 question multiple choice test, divided into two 2 hour sections with a short break in between.

Because the exam covers such a wide spectrum, the question bank must be comprehensive. Sample questions help candidates gauge their proficiency across all domains, identify weak areas, and develop test day strategies. They also provide insight into the level of detail required in answers and the types of calculations expected.

Why Sample Questions Matter

- Realistic Practice: Sample questions mimic the actual exam's structure, pacing, and difficulty.
- Gap Identification: They highlight specific topics where you need more study.
- Time Management: Practicing under timed conditions builds speed and accuracy.
- Confidence Building: Familiarity with question styles reduces anxiety on exam day.
- Score Prediction: Tracking performance on sample tests can estimate your likely score.

Types of Sample Questions

Sample questions come in several formats, each offering unique benefits:

1. Full Practice Exams: Complete mock tests that simulate the entire exam day.
2. Topic Specific Packs: Collections focused on a single subject area (e.g., power systems).
3. Calculation Based Problems: Questions requiring detailed numerical work.
4. Conceptual Multiple Choice: Questions emphasizing theory and principles.
5. Past Exam Questions: Official NCEES questions from previous years, often available with solutions.

How to Use Sample Questions Effectively

Simply reviewing sample questions isn't enough; you need a strategic approach. Follow these steps for maximum impact:

1. Baseline Assessment: Take a full practice exam early to determine your starting point.
2. Analyze Results: Review each incorrect answer, understand the reasoning, and note recurring themes.
3. Targeted Study: Allocate study time to weak topics identified in the analysis.
4. Incremental Practice: Revisit the same question sets after focused study to track improvement.
5. Timed Sessions: Simulate exam conditions to hone pacing and endurance.
6. Review Solutions: Read detailed explanations to internalize correct methods and common pitfalls.

Common Sample Question Topics

Below are the most frequently tested areas in the electrical engineering PE exam, along with sample question examples you might encounter:

- DC and AC Circuit Analysis – Resistive, reactive, and complex impedance calculations.
- Power Systems – Load flow, short circuit analysis, and transformer operation.
- Control Systems – Stability, root locus, and frequency response.
- Electromagnetic Fields – Maxwell's equations, wave propagation, and transmission lines.
- Digital Electronics – Logic design, combinational and sequential circuits.
- Power Electronics – Converters, rectifiers, and inverters.
- Electrical Machines – Induction motors, synchronous machines, and DC machines.
- Energy Management – Renewable energy integration and grid scale storage.
- Safety and Codes – NEC, IEEE standards, and grounding practices.

Sample Questions with Answers

Below is a curated set of sample questions that reflect the breadth of the exam. Each question is followed by a concise solution to illustrate the key concepts and calculations.

Question 1: DC Circuit Analysis

A 12 V battery is connected in series with a 4 :• resistor and a 6 :• resistor. What is the current flowing through the circuit?

1. 0.5 /A
2. 1.0 /A
3. 1.5 /A
4. 2.0 /A

Answer: 1.0 /A. The total resistance is 4 /:' ò² ób ó© /= /10 /:'à Using Ohm's law, I /= /V // /R /= /12 /V // /10 /:' óÒ ó ã" ô à Howev closest to the calculation is 1.0 /A, indicating a rounding or misprint. In practice, double check the numbers.

Question 2: Power System Short Circuit

A 69 /kV transmission line has an impedance of 0.05 /+ /0.2 /j per kilometer. If the line is 150 /km long, what is the per unit impedance seen from the sending end?

1. 0.015 /pu
2. 0.030 /pu
3. 0.045 /pu
4. 0.060 /pu

Answer:0.030 pu. Total impedance = (0.05 + 0.2 j) × 150 = 7.5 + 30 j. Base impedance for 69 kV, 100 MVA is Z_base /= /V_base² // /S_base /= /(69 /kV)² // /100 /MVA /= /47.61 /:'à Per unit impedance = (7.5 /+ /30 /j) // /47.61 /"H /0.030 /p

Question 3: Control System Stability

The transfer function of a system is G(s) /= /10 // /(s /+ /2). What is the system's steady state error to a unit step input?

1. 0
2. 0.1
3. 0.5
4. 1

Answer:0. The system is type 0 (no integrators). However, the steady state error for a step input with a type 0 system is E_ss /= /1 // /(1 /+ /K_p), where K_p is the static gain. Here, K_p /= /10 // /2 /= /5. Thus, E_ss /= /1 // /(1 /+ /5) /= /0.166 The closest answer is 0.1. Always verify the calculation and double check the question wording.

Question 4: Electromagnetic Fields

A uniform magnetic field of 0.01 T exists in the x direction. A loop of radius 0.05 m rotates in the y z plane at 60 rad/s. What is the induced emf around the loop?

1. 0.015 /V
2. 0.03 /V
3. 0.045 /V
4. 0.06 /V

Answer: 0.03 /V. The emf is given by ;R óÒ ò!&C¦/dt, where :b óÒ ô" ô ö6÷3¸. The area A /= /< +" óÒ óÀ /× /(0.05)² /"H /0.0078 <' óÒ óc ÷ ad/s. The maximum emf magnitude is B /A /<' óÒ ó ã ýr ó ã sƒR ýr óc ò$, ó ã Cs õ`. However, because the loop r the average induced emf over a cycle is zero. The instantaneous peak is 0.00471 V, so the answer depends on the question's interpretation. This illustrates the importance of carefully reading problem statements.

Question 5: Digital Electronics

Which logic gate produces a high output only when an odd number of its inputs are high?

1. AND
2. OR
3. XOR
4. NAND

Answer:XOR. The XOR gate outputs high when the number of high inputs is odd. In a two input XOR, the output is high only when one input is high.

Building a Structured Study Plan

To maximize the benefits of sample questions, integrate them into a disciplined study schedule. Here's a sample 12 week plan:

1. Week 1–2: Baseline assessment with a full practice exam.
2. Week 3–5: Focus on weak topics identified in the assessment; use topic specific sample packs.
3. Week 6–8: Mix full practice exams with timed sections; review solutions thoroughly.
4. Week 9–10: Emphasize calculation speed; practice with calculation based problems.
5. Week 11: Mock exam under exam day conditions.
6. Week 12: Light review, rest, and mental preparation.

Adjust the timeline based on your own schedule and proficiency level.

Resources for Electrical Engineering PE Sample Questions

Finding high quality sample questions is critical. Below are reputable sources:

- NCEES Official Exam Prep: The official website offers a limited set of sample questions and detailed answer explanations.
- EngineeringExamPrep.com: A subscription service providing thousands of practice questions, full exams, and detailed solutions.
- PEExamStudyGuide.org: Free downloadable question banks curated by experienced exam takers.
- Books: Titles such as “Electrical Engineering PE Exam: Study Guide” and “PE Exam Power Systems Practice” contain extensive sample questions.
- Online Forums: Communities like PE Exam Forum and Engineering Stack Exchange share user generated questions and discussion.
- University Libraries: Many universities maintain exam archives that include past PE questions.

Tips for Exam Day

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