

**LEED
GREEN
ASSOCIATE**

**CANDIDATE HANDBOOK
LEED GREEN ASSOCIATE**

Updated March 2014

LEED Green Associate Candidate Handbook updated March 2014.



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Information in this Handbook represents current policies and procedures for a LEED professional credentialing exam. Information in this Handbook supersedes information contained in any previously published information.



This booklet may not be brought into the examination.



Eligibility standards, exam content, exam standards, fees, and guidelines are subject to change.

Please read and understand the entire Handbook including all policies, procedures, and consequences.

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REGISTERING FOR YOUR EXAM

Registering for an Exam

1. Log in to your [Credentials](#) account using your existing USGBC site user account or create a new account if you do not have one.
2. Verify that the name you enter in matches the name on the ID you will present at the test center. If it does not match, please update your name in your site user account “settings”. Contact GBCI at usgbc.org/help-topic/professional-exams if you experience issues updating your name. *
3. Select the credential exam you wish to apply for and follow the instructions on the screen to complete the application.
4. You will be directed to prometric.com/gbci to schedule your exam date and location.

* If your native language utilizes non-roman characters, be sure to enter your name in roman characters when you register for the exam. Make sure to bring identification, such as a passport that includes your name in roman characters.

Eligibility Requirements

There are no eligibility requirements for the LEED Green Associate exam. However, GBCI recommends that candidates have exposure to LEED and green building concepts through educational courses, volunteering, or work experience prior to testing.

All candidates must also agree to the [Disciplinary and Exam Appeals Policy](#) and credentialing maintenance requirements, must submit to an application audit, and be 18 years of age or older.

Audits

GBCI reserves the right to conduct an audit at any time (including prior to application submission and after accreditation) of all current and past exam applications. Any information contained in a your account may be audited and a request for further documentation of any information or claims submitted by the LEED Professional may be made at any time. GBCI further reserves the right to take disciplinary or legal action (including but not limited to revocation of credential(s)) in the event that any conduct discovered during such an audit violates the LEED Professional [Disciplinary and Exam Appeals Policy](#), GBCI policy, and/or law.

Special Testing Accommodations

If you have a documented disability that would prevent you from taking a LEED professional exam under normal testing conditions, you may request accommodations. Prometric certifies that it shall comply with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Under the ADA, entities that administer standardized examinations must offer the examinations in a place and manner that is accessible to candidates with disabilities. This may require reasonable modifications to the manner in which the test is administered. Prometric will provide candidates reasonable auxiliary aids and services, except where it may fundamentally alter the validity of the exam results. Available accommodations include, but are not limited to, a reader, a scribe, and extended testing time.

If you require special accommodations, you must indicate this when you register. To request accommodations, you and your health care provider will each need to complete one form, the [Candidate Form](#) and the [Provider Form](#), to document the disability and the need for accommodation.

There is no additional charge for special accommodations. Each request will be evaluated individually.

GBCI will review this documentation and, if approved, will alert Prometric of the necessary accommodations. Once you request special testing accommodations you will not be able to schedule an appointment with Prometric until their request is approved. You will be contacted by email regarding the approval status of your special testing accommodations request.

Registration Period

An approved registration is valid for one year from the approval date. You may register for three exam attempts per one-year registration period. After a registration expires, candidates are required to wait 90 days before submitting a new registration to GBCI. If you only passed one part of the exam at the end of a registration period, that part will not carry over to the next registration period. You are responsible for the exam fee for any part of the exam you take.

Registration Extension

You may request an extension of the one year registration period due to extenuating circumstances by submitting a written request which includes the basis for the request and supporting documentation to GBCI at usgbc.org/help-topic/professional-exams. GBCI will only consider requests received within 30 days before the end of the registration period. Extensions are granted only once per registration period with a maximum of a six month extension. GBCI reserves the right to decline a request for a registration period extension for any reason.

Exam Scheduling

1. Access exam scheduling through your [Credentials](#) account.
2. When the exam appointment is scheduled, you will receive a confirmation number on screen and from Prometric through an email.
3. Record your confirmation number. You will need this confirmation number to confirm, cancel, or reschedule your appointment through the Prometric website, prometric.com/gbcj.
4. Once you have scheduled an exam, please print your confirmation notice from Prometric.

Keep your confirmation notice for any communication with Prometric about your exam.

Exam Fees

See the [Exam](#) page on the USGBC website for pricing.

For USGBC members to receive member pricing for your exam, you must have linked your member status to your USGBC account prior to registration.

Failing to Appear for a Scheduled Exam

If you are absent from an exam appointment that you were scheduled to attend, and you did not reschedule or cancel according to the policy, or if you are denied access to an appointment due to a failure to present

proper identification, you must contact GBCI before scheduling another appointment using the same Eligibility ID. Candidates who are denied entrance to the appointment or who miss a scheduled exam appointment are responsible for all exam fees.

To seek an excused absence, contact Prometric's candidate care within 10 days of the original examination date. Please see the Contact Information section for your local Prometric phone number. You may be excused and be allowed to retest without charge for the following reasons:

- Documented illness, either yourself or immediate family member
- Death in the immediate family
- Disabling traffic accident
- Court appearance or jury duty
- Military duty

Group Scheduling

To schedule five or more candidates at one time, please contact usgbc.org/help-topic/professional-exams.

THE EXAM

Exam Development

All LEED exams are developed and regularly updated by a global network of Subject Matter Experts and meet the specifications of a job analysis.

All LEED exams assess candidates' abilities at three hierarchical cognitive levels: Recall, Application, and Analysis.

- Recall Items: These items assess a candidate's ability to recall factual material that is presented in a similar context to the exam references.
- Application Items: These items provide the candidate with a novel problem or scenario that the candidate can solve using familiar principles or procedures described in the exam references.
- Analysis Items: These items assess a candidate's ability to break the problem down into its components to create a solution. The candidate must not only recognize the different elements of the problem, but must also evaluate the relationship or interactions of these elements.

Exam Format

The LEED AP exam is comprised of two parts, the LEED Green Associate exam and the LEED AP w/specialty exam. Each part contains 100 randomly delivered multiple choice questions and each part must be completed in 2 hours. Total seat time for the LEED AP exam will be 4 hours and 20 minutes including a tutorial and short satisfaction survey.

Candidates who have already passed the LEED Green Associate Exam can register for the specialty-only portion of the exam, and do not need to sit for the entire composite exam. Please be aware that the option to take the composite exam in one sitting is not available in all languages and at all test centers. If you cannot find the option to register for a combined LEED AP exam, please register for the two core parts separately.

Exams have both scored and unscored items. All items are delivered randomly throughout the exam and candidates are not informed of an item's status, so candidates should respond to all the items on the exam. Unscored items are used to gather performance data to inform whether the item should be scored on future exams.

The Exam is computer-based. Exam questions and answer options are displayed on screen. The computer records your responses and times your exam. You are able to change your answers, skip questions, and flag questions for later review.

While taking your exam, you may come across test items on which you would like to leave comments. As you are not allowed to leave the test center with any notes from the exam, please make sure to add your comments during the exam by clicking on the Comment button at the bottom of the screen. Be sure to inform GBCI that you have left comments on your exam by going to usgbc.org/help-topics/professional-exams.

Exam Language

The primary language for the exam is English. In the case of any discrepancies between the original English content and the translated content or challenges made to the exams, the English content will be used as the basis of consideration. Translation is offered solely as an aid to non-native English speakers and is currently provided in French, Spanish, Brazilian, Portuguese, Arabic, and Chinese for the LEED Green Associate. The use of translators or foreign-language dictionaries during the examination will not be permitted. Additional time to complete the exam will not be provided.

PRE-EXAM CHECKLIST

Are You Ready?

One Month Before Your Exam

Ensure that your given name (first name) and surname (last name) in your usgbc.org account matches the given name and surname on the identification you will present at the test center. (See next page.) **If the names do not match, you will not be allowed to test and you will forfeit the exam fee.**

Review the address listed in your usgbc.org profile so that, if you successfully pass, your certificate is mailed to the most current address.

One Week Before Your Exam

Confirm that the exam scheduled with Prometric is for the correct date, time, and location. If it is not, contact Prometric online at prometric.com/gbci with your confirmation number or call Prometric's customer service no less than two full days before your exam.

Test Security

To ensure the integrity of the LEED Professional Exams, specific measures are enforced during the administration of your exam:

- Test questions and answers are the exclusive property of GBCI.
- The examination and the items (questions and answers) are protected by copyright law. The exam may **7**

not be copied or reproduced in part or in whole, by any means whatsoever, including memorization.

- Future discussion or disclosure of the content of the exam, orally or in writing, or by any other means, is prohibited.
- Theft or attempted theft of exam items is punishable to the fullest extent of the law.

What to Expect at the Test Center

It is recommended that you arrive at the test center at least 30 minutes prior to your scheduled exam appointment. Candidates who arrive at test site after their scheduled exam times will lose their seat.

You will be escorted to a workstation by test center staff. You must remain in your seat during the exam except when authorized to leave by test center staff. Raise your hand to notify test center staff if:

- You experience problems with your computer
- An error message appears on the computer screen (do not clear the message)
- You need to take a break (testing time will NOT be suspended)
- You need the test center staff for any other reason

Identification Requirements

Candidates must provide valid, unexpired ID with a signature, a photograph that looks like the candidate, and an expiration date. Acceptable examples:

- Identification with photo and signature (to include: passport, driver's license, military ID, signed photo check or credit card)
- Identification with signature (to include: signed check, signed credit card) **AND** identification with photo (alien ID card, employee ID card, student ID)

Unacceptable forms of ID include but are not limited to an expired ID, an ID without an expiration date, and a Social Security Card.

Test Center Regulations

You must abide by Prometric's security rules while at the test center. See [Prometric's FAQs](#) for more information.

Grounds for Dismissal from the Test Center

Any candidate who engages in misconduct or does not comply with the test proctor's warning to discontinue inappropriate behavior may be dismissed from the test site, have exam results invalidated, or be subject to other appropriate sanctions. Fraud, deceit, dishonesty, or other irregular behavior in connection with taking the exam is strictly prohibited.

GBCI will make a ruling based on the consideration of both the candidate's report and Prometric's report of the

incident. To appeal GBCI's ruling, send an email of your formal appeal to GBCI staff at usgbc.org/help-topics/professional-exams. At this stage, the Credentialing Steering Committee will review and make a final ruling on the case.

AFTER YOUR EXAM

Exam Results

All LEED Professional exams are scored between 125 and 200. **A score of 170 or higher is required to pass.** Your exam score will be displayed on screen at the end of the exam and you will receive a printed report of your results from test center staff. **For the LEED AP combined exams, you must earn a 170 or higher on both parts within the same application period to earn the credential.**

Within 72 hours of your appointment, your exam results will be processed, your account will be updated, and, if applicable, your badge will be updated in the usgbc.org People directory.

Passing the Exam

Designating Your Credential

As soon as you have passed the exam, you can use the title "LEED Green Associate" or "LEED Green Assoc" and/or the logo. While LEED is a registered trademark, USGBC and GBCI do not require LEED Professionals to use the '®' or 'TM' symbols in email signatures or on business cards. All other instances should be noted as "LEED® Green Associate" or "LEED® Green Assoc." ("LEED GA" is not an approved abbreviation for the LEED Green Associate credential, and should not be used under any circumstances.)

Certificates

Once your exam results have been processed, you can request your certificate. Certificates are available in two forms: PDF softcopy (available for download at any time for free) and a hardcopy (see [website](https://usgbc.org/help-topics/professional-exams) for pricing and ordering info). If your certificate arrives damaged or does not arrive at all, please request a free replacement at usgbc.org/help-topics/professional-exams.

Credential Maintenance Program

LEED Green Associates must complete 15 continuing education (CE) hours or retest biennially. For more information on credential maintenance, see the [CMP Guide](https://usgbc.org/help-topics/professional-exams).

Retesting for your credential

Once you've earned a credential, CMP guidelines limit retesting on the same exam. See the maintenance through retesting section of the [CMP Guide](https://usgbc.org/help-topics/professional-exams).

Earning the LEED AP after the LEED Green Associate

If you are a LEED Green Associate when you earn the LEED AP credential, your LEED Green Associate credential expires and is replaced by the LEED AP.

Failing the Exam

Retaking the Exam

You have three chances per registration period to pass each part of the exam.

Exam Content Appeals

Following completion of the exam candidates may submit, in writing and in accordance with the [Disciplinary and Exam Appeals Policy](#), comments on any question(s) they believe to contain technical errors in content. In your correspondence include your contact information, test date, the specific concerns about the question, as well as an indication of any comments left on the question during the exam. You are not allowed to copy the question before leaving the test center and are not expected to recreate the entire question in your correspondence. GBCI will review the question and you will be notified of the findings. Because of the need for test security, GBCI will not release exam questions or answers to candidates. GBCI does not respond to complaints or challenges received more than 14 days after the test date and does not respond to complaints sent to organizations other than GBCI.

GBCI provides this process for candidates who believe an exam question contains technical errors in content. The exam challenge process is not made available for complaints about fail scores or exam difficulty.

GBCI does not modify exam scores under any conditions. In the event of a successful exam content appeal, you will be given the opportunity to retest; your score will not be changed. The only way to earn a LEED Professional credential is to earn a 170 on the required exam(s).

Candidate Confidentiality

GBCI recognizes your rights to control personal information. GBCI policy is designed to safeguard this information from unauthorized disclosure. You can change your preference to be contacted through your personal preferences in your usgbc.org account.

To protect your rights to control score distribution, exam scores are released only to you, the test taker and authorized GBCI staff. GBCI does not release test scores except for use in research studies that preserve your anonymity. In addition, GBCI does not release any account details to any third parties without the candidate's written permission.

Official statistics regarding the LEED Professional exams, including all item performance data, individual data, and demographic data, will be considered confidential unless officially released by GBCI. Candidates' scores will always remain confidential unless released with written consent of a candidate.

EXAM SPECIFICATIONS

Specifications

The following outline provides a general description of exam content areas for the LEED AP Green Associate exam.

Task Domains reflect the tasks necessary to perform LEED safely and effectively. These include concepts such as LEED Project and Team Coordination, LEED Certification Process, Analyses Required for LEED Credits, and

Advocacy and Education for Adoption for LEED Rating System.

Knowledge Domains reflect the rating systems' credit categories and what one needs to know. These include concepts such as LEED Process, Integrative Strategies, LEED credit categories, and Project Surroundings and Public Outreach.

LEED Green Associate Exam

The first part of your exam is the LEED Green Associate, which tests your general knowledge of green building practices for both commercial and residential spaces and both new construction and existing buildings as well as how to support other professionals working on LEED projects.

Task Domains

LEED Green Associate Tasks (100%)

- Communicate broad and basic green building concepts to team or colleagues
- Research and create a library of sustainable building materials
- Assist others with sustainability goals
- Create project profiles/case studies/press release
- Serve as a green advocate to clients, team members, & general public (e.g. why green building)
- Stay current on any updates to LEED and green strategies in general
- Navigate in LEED Online
- Assist project leader with LEED correspondence to all project team members (consultants, contractors, owner, etc.)
- Assist in managing documentation process
- Assist in managing timeline of LEED certification

Knowledge Domains

LEED Process (16 Questions)

- Organization fundamentals (e.g. mission/vision; non-profit; role of USGBC/GBCI)
- Structure of LEED rating systems (e.g., credit categories, prerequisites, credits and/or Minimum Program Requirements for LEED Certification)
- Scope of each LEED rating system (e.g., rating system selection; rating system families [BD+C, ID+C, O+M, ND, Homes])
- LEED development process (e.g., consensus based; stakeholder and volunteer involvement; rating system updates/evolution)
- Impact categories (e.g. what should a LEED project accomplish?)
- LEED certification process (e.g. certification levels [Certified, Silver, Gold, Platinum]; LEED Scorecard; 3rd party verification; role of documentation submission; LEED Interpretations; Addenda; awareness of different system versions [e.g., LEED Online]) Components of LEED Online and Project Registration
- Other rating systems – (e.g., in general what other rating systems are out there?)

Integrative Strategies (8 Questions)

- Integrative process (e.g., early analysis of the interrelationships among systems; systems thinking; charrettes) limits; open space; building footprint; development footprint; specific landscaping restrictions)
- Integrative project team members (e.g., architect, engineer, landscape architect, civil engineer, contractor, facility manager, etc.)
- Standards that support LEED (e.g., breadth not depth of American Society of Heating, Refrigeration and Air-conditioning Engineers [ASHRAE]; Sheet Metal and Air Conditioning Contractors National Association

[SMACNA] guidelines; Green Seal, Energy Star®, HERs, Reference Standards listed in ACPs, etc.)

Location and Transportation (7 Questions)

- Site selection (e.g. targeting sites in previously developed and brownfields/high-priority designation area, avoiding sensitive habitat, located in areas with existing infrastructure and nearby uses, reduction in parking footprint)
- Alternative transportation (e.g., type, access, and quality; infrastructure and design)

Sustainable Sites (7 Questions)

- Site assessment (e.g., environmental assessment, human impact)
- Site design and development (e.g., construction activity pollution prevention; habitat conservation and restoration; exterior open space; rainwater management; exterior lighting; heat island reduction)

Water Efficiency (9 Questions)

- Outdoor water use (e.g., use of graywater/rainwater in irrigation; use of native and adaptive species)
- Indoor water use (e.g., concepts of low flow/waterless fixtures; water-efficient appliances; types and quality)
- Water performance management (e.g., measurement and monitoring)

Energy and Atmosphere (10 Questions)

- Building loads (e.g., building components, space usage [private office; individual space; shared multi-occupant spaces])
- Energy efficiency (e.g., basic concepts of design, operational energy efficiency, commissioning, energy auditing)
- Alternative and renewable energy practices (e.g., demand response, renewable energy, green power, carbon offsets)
- Energy performance management (e.g., energy use measurement and monitoring; building automation controls/advanced energy metering; operations and management; benchmarking; Energy Star®)
- Environmental concerns (e.g., sources and energy resources; greenhouse gases; global warming potential; resource depletion; ozone depletion)

Materials and Resources (9 Questions)

- Reuse (e.g., building reuse, material reuse, interior reuse, furniture reuse)
- Life-cycle impacts (e.g., concept of life-cycle assessment; material attributes; human and ecological health impacts; design for flexibility)
- Waste (e.g., construction and demolition; maintenance and renovation; operations and ongoing; waste management plan)
- Purchasing and declarations (e.g., purchasing policies and plans; environmental preferable purchasing (EPP); building product disclosure and optimization [i.e., raw materials sourcing; material ingredients; environmental product disclosure])

Indoor Environmental Quality (8 Questions)

- Indoor air quality (e.g., ventilation levels; tobacco smoke control; management of and improvements to indoor air quality; low-emitting materials; green cleaning)
- Lighting (e.g., electric lighting quality, daylight)
- Sound (e.g., acoustics)
- Occupant comfort, health, and satisfaction (e.g., controllability of systems, thermal comfort design, quality of views, assessment/survey)

Project Surroundings and Public Outreach (11 Questions)

- Environmental impacts of the built environment (e.g. energy and resource use in conventional buildings; necessity of green buildings; environmental externalities; triple bottom line)
- Codes (e.g., relationship between LEED and codes [building, plumbing, electrical, mechanical, fire protection]; green building codes)
- Values of sustainable design (e.g., energy savings over time; healthier occupants; money-saving incentives; costs [hard costs, soft costs]; life-cycle)

- Regional design (e.g., regional green design and construction measures as appropriate, regional emphasis should be placed in Sustainable Sites and Materials & Resources)

The exam contains 15 pretest questions.

References

The primary sources for the development of the LEED Professional Exams are the LEED Rating Systems. The following list of references are not meant to be comprehensive. When combined with the test specifications, the candidate has the material from which the exam is based.

LEED Green Associate Exam

This exam is designed to test the general knowledge of green building practices and how to support other professionals working on LEED projects.

References

- Green Building and LEED Core Concepts Guide. 2nd Edition U.S. Green Building Council, 2011. [Print and Digital](#) versions available. (3rd ed. coming soon)
- Reference Guide Introductory and Overview Sections. LEED Building Design + Construction Reference Guide. v4 Edition. U.S. Green Building Council, 2013. [Web](#).
- LEED v4 Impact Category and Point Allocation Process Overview U.S. Green Building Council, 2013. [Web](#).
- LEED v4 User Guide U.S. Green Building Council, 2013. [Web](#).

Sample Questions

Disclaimer: The items listed here were discarded in the process of creating items for the new LEED Green Associate exam. The items are provided for your convenience to allow you to better familiarize yourself with the format and general content of items on the exam.

The content of these items, while representative of the type of questions on the LEED AP BD+C exam, does not necessarily mirror the content that will appear on the actual exam. Further, your ability to correctly answer these sample items does not in any way predict or guarantee your ability to successfully answer questions on the actual LEED AP BD+C exam.

Exam Part 1: LEED Green Associate Exam Questions

1. When applying for innovation credits, a project team

- (A) Cannot submit any previously awarded innovation credit.
- (B) May receive credit for performance that doubles a credit requirement threshold.**
- (C) May submit a product or strategy that is being used in an existing LEED credit.
- (D) May receive a credit for each LEED Accredited Professional that is on the project team.

This question represents Knowledge Domain A. LEED Process, credit categories and Task Domain A. LEED Green Associate Tasks

2. A developer wants to make a profit by building a new office that maximizes daylighting and views. What actions might the developer take to fulfill all parts of the triple bottom line?

- (A) Restore habitat onsite
- (B) Purchase ergonomic furniture

(C) Pursue local grants and incentives

(D) Provide lighting controllability for occupants

This question represents Knowledge Domain I. Project Surroundings and Outreach, environmental impacts of the built environment and Task Domain A. LEED Green Associate Tasks, assist others with sustainability goals.

CONTACT

Prometric

1501 South Clinton Street, Canton Crossing Tower, 14th Floor, Baltimore, MD 21224

prometric.com/gbci

Prometric's website is available for scheduling, rescheduling, cancelling, and confirming exam appointments 24 hours per day. To schedule an exam, you will need to have first applied and registered with GBCI. To reschedule, cancel, or confirm an exam appointment, you will need your Prometric issued 16-digit confirmation number.

Prometric Call Centers

North America	
Customer service: To schedule, reschedule, cancel and confirm appointments or for general testing information (Monday to Friday, 8:00 to 20:00 PM ET [GMT -5])	888 215 4154
Candidate care: For any problems encountered during your experience with Prometric (Monday to Friday, 8:00 to 21:00 ET; Saturday, 9:00 to 17:00 PM ET [GMT -5])	800 853 6769
Bulk Registration (five or more candidates)	800 774 1292
Special Conditions (Candidates with disabilities)	800 967 1139
Fax	800 853 6781
Latin America	
To schedule, reschedule, cancel and confirm appointments or for general testing information	+1 443 751 4995
Asia/Pacific	
China (Monday - Friday, 8:30 to 19:00 GMT +10:00)	+86 10 62799911
India (Monday - Friday, 9:00 to 17:30 GMT +05:30)	91 124 4147700
Japan (Monday - Friday, 8:30 to 19:00 GMT +10:00)	0120 347737
Korea (Monday - Friday, 8:30 to 19:00 GMT +10:00)	1566 0990
Australia, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand and all other Asia/Pacific countries (Monday - Friday, 8:00 to 20:00 GMT +08:00)	603 7628 3333
Europe, Middle East, Africa:	
Europe	31 320 239 540
Middle East (Sunday to Thursday)	31 320 239 530
North Africa (Sunday to Thursday)	31 320 239 530
Sub-Sahara Africa	31 320 239 593

Green Building Certification Institute

2101 L Street NW, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20037

gbci.org

USGBC's website is available 24 hours per day for exam application and registration, information regarding the LEED Professional Exams, and access to your account.

Call Center: 1-800-795-1746 (within the US) or +1-202-828-1145 (outside the US)

GBCI's call center is available Monday through Friday from 9:00 to 19:00 ET for questions regarding exam registration, USGBC or CaGBC member pricing, My Credentials, the LEED Professional Directory, and the LEED Professional Exams.

Exam Department: usgbc.org/help-topics/professional-exams.

GBCI staff are available for questions, comments, and concerns regarding certificates, LEED Professional Exam records, USGBC or CaGBC member pricing refunds, exam content appeals, exam development, exam scoring, exam format, and all other LEED Professional Exam policies and procedures