

TM

**LEED
AP**

ND

CANDIDATE HANDBOOK

LEED AP[®] Neighborhood Development

Updated July 2017

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REGISTERING FOR YOUR EXAM

Registration

1. Log in to your [Credentials](#) account using your existing USGBC® site user account or [creating 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.” This may be of special concern to candidates who use more than one name (e.g., individuals who use a nickname or those who use different names in different regions). Please update your name with GBCI® at least 5 days prior to your exam. [Contact GBCI](#) if you experience issues updating your name.*
3. Select the LEED AP® ND exam under the credentials section and follow the instructions on the screen to complete the application.
4. You will be redirected to prometric.com/gbci to schedule your exam date and location.
5. When the exam appointment is scheduled, you will receive a confirmation number onscreen and from Prometric through an email.
6. Record your confirmation number. You will need this confirmation number to confirm, cancel or reschedule your appointment through the Prometric website, prometric.com/gbci.
7. 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.

Once you register and pay for your exam, you have one year to schedule your exam session. Upon taking your exam, if your attempt was unsuccessful you may register again in the same way as initial registration. After three unsuccessful attempts, however, you must wait 90 days before submitting a new registration to GBCI. Candidates must pay the registration fee for each exam attempt.

Learn about [GBCI's exam refund/rescheduling policy](#).

To schedule five or more candidates at one time, [contact customer service](#).

*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, to the test center.

Eligibility Requirements

For the LEED AP with specialty exam, prior LEED project experience is strongly recommended. Candidates must be 18 years of age or older and must have earned the LEED® Green Associate™ credential.

Practitioner experience is critical to earning the LEED AP ND credential and, as such, project proficiency will be tested objectively within the exam.

All candidates must also agree to the [Disciplinary and Exam Appeals Policy](#) and credentialing maintenance requirements, and, if audited, must be willing to provide requested information.

Audits

GBCI reserves the right to conduct an audit at any time (including prior to application submission and after credential has been granted) of all current and past exam applications. Any information contained in your [Credentials](#) 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. GBCI complies 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, GBCI's test delivery company, 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 during your registration process by checking the box that says “Yes, I need special accommodations.” 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 have requested special accommodations, you will not be able to schedule an appointment with Prometric until your request is approved. You will be contacted by email regarding the approval status of your special testing accommodations request.

Exam Fees

See the [exam](#) page on the USGBC website for pricing. Your paid exam fee is good for only one exam attempt.

For USGBC members to receive member pricing for your exam, please [link your member status](#) to your USGBC account prior to registration.

Veterans Administration Benefits

The LEED professional exams have been approved by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for reimbursement. The VA, in accordance with the G.I. Bill, has agreed to reimburse veterans, eligible dependents and reservists for the cost, up to \$2,000, of any of the LEED professional exams administered by GBCI since December 3, 2009. [Learn more.](#)

THE EXAM

Exam Development

A LEED AP with specialty credential holder possesses the knowledge and skills necessary to support the LEED certification process. The development of a valid exam begins with a clear and concise definition of the knowledge, skills and abilities needed in order to successfully perform the job of a LEED AP with specialty. All LEED exams are developed by a global network of Subject Matter Experts and meet the specifications of a job analysis. The test specifications are subject to rigorous validation by these experts, which ensures that the exam is valid, measuring what it is intended to measure. Once the exams are launched the test questions are regularly monitored to ensure continued reliability.

The exams assess candidates' abilities at three 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 with specialty exam contains 100 randomly delivered multiple choice questions and must be completed in 2 hours.

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 combined exam. Please be aware that the option to take the combined 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.

The exam has 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. Please make sure to add your comments during the exam by clicking on the comment button located in the navigation bar on the screen. After the exam, [inform GBCI](#) that you have left comments on your exam; in your correspondence, be sure to note the email address used to sign up for the exam, as well as the date on which you took it.

Be prepared to commit 2 hours 20 minutes for a specialty-only exam and 4 hours 20 minutes for a combined exam. Total exam time is broken out as follows:

- For a specialty-only exam, an optional 10 minute tutorial, the 2 hour exam and an optional 10 minute exit survey.
- For a combined exam, an optional 10 minute tutorial, the 2 hour LEED Green Associate exam, the 2 hour specialty exam and an optional 10 minute exit survey. Be aware that if a candidate exits the exam session before completing the exam, the exam cannot be restarted and the exam session and fee are forfeited.

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 provided in Arabic, Brazilian Portuguese, Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Korean and Spanish for the LEED Green Associate. The LEED AP ND exam is only available in English. 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.

Exam Maintenance

Each year, LEED professional exams go through a maintenance process where the questions are evaluated based on performance; poorly performing questions are removed and replaced. This is done to ensure that all exams remain statistically reliable and valid.

In order to accommodate deployment of the maintenance process at test centers globally, exams are not offered from June 15-June 30 of each year.

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.**

One Week Before Your Exam

Confirm that the date, time and location of your exam is correct. If it is not, please visit usgbc.org for information about rescheduling or canceling your exam.

Test Security

To ensure the integrity of the LEED professional exams, you will be required to review and accept a nondisclosure agreement that prohibits any disclosure of exam content:

- Test questions and answers are the exclusive property of GBCI.
- The exam and the items (questions and answers) are protected by copyright law. The exam may 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.
- Failure to comply with the agreement will prevent you from testing.

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 the test site after their scheduled exam time 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 a valid, unexpired ID with a signature, a photograph that looks like the candidate and an expiration date. Acceptable examples include:

- Current government-issued photo ID with signature
- Current credit card photo ID with signature
- Current photo ID without signature plus 1 credit card with signature—first and last names must match on both

Examples of acceptable forms of unexpired photo ID include, but are not limited to:

- Driver's license
- Passport
- Military ID
- Alien ID/Resident Alien Card*

**If the ID has a picture but no signature, it must be provided with a form of signature ID (e.g., a credit card) in the same name.*

See [Prometric's website](#) for more information.

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 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. 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 copy of your results via email. **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 [Credentials](#) 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 specialty exam, you must use the title “LEED AP®” followed by your specialty and/or the corresponding logo(s). For example: LEED AP® BD+C, LEED AP® O+M, LEED AP® ID+C. The term “LEED Accredited Professional” is never to be used.

You should no longer use LEED Green Associate as the LEED AP with specialty credential supersedes the LEED Green Associate credential.

Please review the LEED professional credentials section of the [USGBC Trademark Policy and Branding Guidelines](#) for additional guidance.

Certificates

Once your exam results have been processed, you can download a copy of your certificate through your [usgbc.org account](#).

Credential Maintenance Program

For information on credential maintenance, see the [CMP Guide](#).

Earning the LEED AP with specialty after the LEED Green Associate

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

Exam Content Appeals

Following completion of the exam candidates may [submit 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. GBCI will review the questions 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 10 days after the test date and does not respond to complaints sent to organizations other than GBCI.

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 by updating your personal preferences in your [usgbc.org](https://www.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. Candidates' scores will always remain confidential unless released with written consent of a candidate.

Official statistics regarding the LEED professional exams, including all item performance data, individual data and demographic data, will be considered confidential; however, GBCI may publish aggregate, non-identifying information based on such data.

EXAM SPECIFICATIONS

Specifications

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

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 AP ND Exam

The LEED AP ND specialty exam tests the knowledge and skills necessary to participate in the design process, to support and encourage integrated design and to streamline the application and certification process.

► Knowledge Domains

1. LEED Process (13 Questions)

- A. LEED interpretations
- B. Components of a LEED scorecard
- C. Project boundary/context; LEED boundary; pre-project conditions; site vicinity; previously developed
- D. Prerequisites and/or minimum program requirements for LEED certification
- E. Knowing the evolutionary characteristics of LEED (e.g., development cycles of the rating systems; continuous improvement)
- F. Integrative process (e.g., roles and responsibilities; facilitating collaboration)
- G. Ways to earn Innovation credits:
 - i. Innovative methods (e.g., criteria for new innovative method; using credit that has been used before)
 - ii. Exemplary performance (e.g., which credits have exemplary performance paths; what are the thresholds of exemplary performance)
 - iii. Pilot credits
- H. Identifying development program; nonbuildable and buildable land; building/street frontage

2. Smart Location & Linkage (21 Questions)

A. Preferable locations:

- i. Existing context (e.g., infill sites; adjacent sites with connectivity; transit corridor; nearby neighborhood assets; existing/planned utilities)
- ii. Connectivity (e.g., street design and intersection density)
- iii. Designated high-priority locations (e.g., high-priority redevelopment areas)
- iv. Brownfield (e.g., contaminated soil or groundwater; remediation)
- v. Existing transit service
- vi. Bicycle network (e.g., short- and long-term storage; bikable location; bicycle network)
- vii. Housing and jobs (e.g., jobs-housing balance)

B. Sensitive feature avoidance:

- i. Imperiled species and ecological communities (e.g., habitat conservation plan)
- ii. Wetland and water bodies (e.g., classification of wetlands and water bodies; minor development impacts; buffer delineation)
- iii. Agricultural land (e.g., prime and unique farmland; affected soils)
- iv. Floodplain (e.g., flood hazard, National Flood Insurance Program [NFIP]; ASCE 24)
- v. Steep slope (e.g., restoration and protection of steep slopes)

C. Site design and development: habitat and water body design, restoration, and long-term conservation

3. Neighborhood Pattern & Design (23 Questions)

A. Community resources:

- i. Walkable streets (e.g., functional entry; building height-to-street width ratio; continuous sidewalks; street/building frontages; property setbacks; on-street parking)
- ii. Connected and open community (e.g., surrounding connectivity; internal connectivity; through-connections; gates)
- iii. Tree-lined and shaded streetscapes (e.g., tree-lined blocks; shaded sidewalks; street tree plantings)
- iv. Access to civic and public space, recreation facilities
- v. Local food production (e.g., neighborhood gardens; community-supported agriculture; farmers market)

- vi. Transit facilities and transportation demand management
- vii. Neighborhood schools (e.g., continuous sidewalks; traffic controls/bicycle lanes)
- B. Compactness:
 - i. Compact development (e.g., residential density [DU/acre]; nonresidential density [FAR]; buildable land)
 - ii. Reduced parking footprint (e.g., location and size of parking lots)
- C. Diversity:
 - i. Mixed-use neighborhoods (e.g., specific use types and categories)
 - ii. Housing types and affordability (e.g., Simpson Diversity Index score, housing categories)
 - iii. Visitability and universal design (e.g., Americans with Disabilities Act [ADA]; universal design features)
 - iv. Stakeholder engagement: Community outreach and involvement (e.g., pre-design meeting; charrette; ongoing means of communications)

4. Green Infrastructure & Buildings (21 Questions)

- A. Infrastructure:
 - i. Renewable energy production (e.g., solar; wind; geothermal; small-scale; micro-hydroelectric; biomass)
 - ii. District heating and cooling
 - iii. Infrastructure energy efficiency (e.g., traffic lights; street lights; water; wastewater pumps)
 - iv. Recycled and reused infrastructure (e.g., roadways; parking lots; water retention tanks; water piping)
 - v. Solid waste management
- B. Buildings:
 - i. Certified green buildings (e.g., LEED; ISO-compliant)
 - ii. Energy use (e.g., design; building loads; energy efficiency; ASHRAE 90.1-2010; Energy STAR®/HERs)
 - iii. Indoor water use (e.g., fixture selection)
 - iv. Materials reuse (e.g., building reuse; historic preservation; adaptive use)
- C. Site design and development:
 - i. Construction activity pollution prevention and minimized site disturbance

- ii. Outdoor water use (e.g., reduced potable water use for irrigation) and management of wastewater
- iii. Heat island reduction and solar orientation
- iv. Lighting pollution reduction
- v. Rainwater management (e.g., EPA Technical Guidance Section 438; percentile rainfall event; low-impact development; green infrastructure)

5. Project Surroundings and Public Outreach (7 Questions)

- A. Planning process and local framework (e.g., land use change amendments; public hearings; zoning; transportation)
- B. Government agencies (e.g., Environmental Protection Agency [EPA]; FEMA; HUD; USDA; local/state agency equivalents)

The exam contains 15 unscored 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 AP ND Exam

This exam is designed to test the knowledge and skills necessary to participate in the design process, to support and encourage integrated design and to streamline the application and certification process. You should also be familiar with the content of the U.S. Green Building Council®'s website, usgbc.org, and GBCI's website, gbc.org, including, but not limited to, LEED project registration, LEED certification content and the purpose of LEED Online. [USGBC's website](http://usgbc.org), also has free access to LEED rating systems, LEED Reference Guide Introductions and checklists beyond those listed above.

References

- U.S. Green Building Council. *LEED Neighborhood Development Reference Guide*. v4 Edition. U.S. Green Building Council, 2013. [Print and Digital versions available](#).
- "Green building incentive strategies." U. S. Green Building Council, 2014.
- U.S. Green Building Council. *Guide to LEED Certification: Commercial*. U.S. Green Building Council, 2014.
- U.S. Green Building Council. *Foundations of LEED*. U.S. Green Building Council, 2009.
- U.S. Green Building Council. *LEED v4 for Neighborhood Development Checklist*. U.S. Green Building Council, 2013.
- "LEED Addenda (Corrections + Interpretations)." U. S. Green Building Council, 2014.
- "LEED Online: Register a project." U.S. Green Building Council, 2014.
- "LEED Certification Fees." U.S. Green Building Council, 2014.
- "Rating System Selection Guidance." U.S. Green Building Council, 2014.
- "Addenda Database." U.S. Green Building Council.

Sample Questions

Disclaimer: The exam questions (referred to as “items”) listed here were discarded in the process of creating items for new exams.

The items are provided for your convenience to allow you to better familiarize yourself with the format and general content of items on exams.

The content of these items, while representative of the type of questions you can expect, does not necessarily mirror the content that will appear on the actual exams.

Furthermore, 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 exams.

LEED AP ND Sample Questions

1. The city is building a new botanical garden and is attempting LEED® certification. What could the educational program include to earn an Innovation in Design Credit?

- (A) Present the building’s sustainable features at the grand opening
- (B) Present the building’s sustainable features at a town hall meeting
- (C) Provide on-going weekly tours highlighting the building’s sustainable features**
- (D) Publish a press release to the local newspaper outlining the building’s sustainable features

This question represents Knowledge Domain 1B: LEED Process; LEED system synergies (e.g., energy and IEQ; waste management).

2. How should athletic fields be treated in the calculations for WE Credit, Outdoor Water Use Reduction?

- (A) Must be calculated using 100% potable water
- (B) May be included or excluded from the calculations**
- (C) May be calculated using a standard 20% reduction from baseline
- (D) Must be calculated using at least 20% from an alternative water source

This question represents Knowledge Domain 5A: Water Efficiency; Outdoor water use reduction: irrigation demand (e.g., landscape water requirement; irrigation system efficiency; native and adaptive species).

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, canceling 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

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[USGBC's website](http://www.usgbc.org) 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, your [Credentials](#) account, the LEED professional directory and the LEED professional exams.

Exam Department: <http://www.usgbc.org/help-topic/leed-ap-with-specialty>

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.