

LEED® Professional Accreditation



- The proper use of particular words and acronyms is important for this discussion:
 - LEED (not LEEDS) stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design
 - “Accreditation” and “credentialing” refers to personal, professional development (the focus of this discussion).
 - “Certification” refers to the LEED rating system for buildings.
 - In other words, we credential or accredit people; we certify buildings. (Though I think we all know some people who are “certifiable.” 😊)

Organizational Note 1



- Until 2008 the USGBC (www.usgbc.org) managed all things green from LEED certification (buildings) and LEED credentialing (people) to green building education.
- Since then, a separate entity, the Green Building Certification Institute (www.gbci.org) was formed to manage certifications as well as professional credentialing.
- Today, the USGBC is responsible for continued development of the LEED Rating Systems and for green building education.

Organizational Note 2



- If your company has a national membership in the USGBC, you are entitled to price breaks for purchases that will be mentioned in this discussion.
- You must register for a site user account and affiliate your registration with your company to enable these savings.
- Your company's main USGBC contact will give you a Corporate Access ID to use during site user account registration.



Why Credentials?



- Personal
 - Illustrates desire for growth & improvement
 - Demonstrates knowledge/expertise
 - Looks good on signatures & business cards 😊
- Business/Institutional
 - Demonstrates your industry commitment
 - Advances your collective credibility
 - Puts you in better position to advise and help your customers



- LEED Green Associate is required first step.
 - “For professionals who want to demonstrate green building expertise in non-technical fields of practice, GBCI has created the LEED Green Associate credential, which denotes basic knowledge of green design, construction, and operations.”
- LEED AP now has to specialize.
 - “The LEED AP credential will continue to signify an advanced depth of knowledge in green building practices; it also will reflect the ability to specialize in a particular LEED Rating System. The LEED AP exam is divided into two parts. The first part is the LEED Green Associate exam, which demonstrates general knowledge of green building practices. The second part is a specialty exam based on one of the LEED Rating Systems.”

- Requirements for both:
 - Agree to Disciplinary & Exam Appeals Policy
 - Agree to Credential Maintenance Policy
 - Work on a LEED project, work in a sustainable field, or participate in applicable education.
 - Take & pass the exam
- Requirement for LEEP AP
 - MUST have verifiable experience on a LEED project within last 3 years.

1st Step—LEED Green Associate



LEED Green Associate



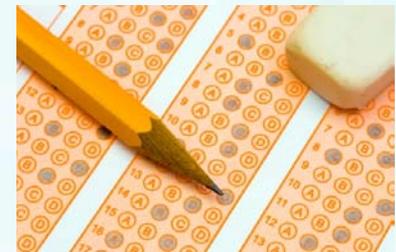
- Register for an account at GBCI.org.
- **IMPORTANT:** When doing so be sure to use your first and last name **EXACTLY** as they appear on your ID (Driver's license, Passport).
- Apply for an exam (\$50; must have requirements documentation ready to upload).
- Wait for approval.
- Schedule an exam (\$200)
 - Giving yourself 4–8 weeks of study time.
- Take & pass exam
- Exam is administered nationwide through Prometric.



Preparing for LEED GA Exam



- Exam is quite challenging.
- 2 hours; 100 multiple choice questions; 200 possible points (but questions are ranked differently); 170 points needed to pass.
- Some questions require simple recall.
- MOST questions require you to both recall information AND apply it to a particular scenario or to analyze a given problem.
- Many questions have multiple answers and there is no partial credit.



Preparing for LEED GA Exam

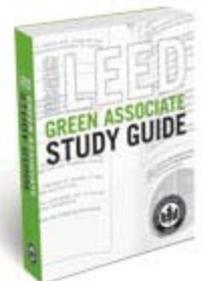
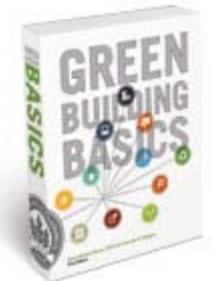


- Seven areas of focus within exam with SOME correlation to the sections of the LEED Rating System:
 - Synergistic Opportunities and LEED Application Process
 - Project Site Factors
 - Water Management
 - Project Systems and Energy Impact
 - Acquisition, Installation, and Management of Project Materials
 - Stakeholder Involvement in Innovation
 - Project Surroundings and Public Outreach

Preparing for LEED GA Exam



- These three documents are essential:
 - Download the free LEED Green Associate Candidate Handbook:
<http://www.gbci.org/ShowFile.aspx?DocumentID=3571>
 - LEED Core Concepts (required \$45/\$55 ebook purchase which cannot be shared with others).
Download here:
http://www.usgbc.org/Store/PublicationsList_New.aspx?CMSPageID=1518
 - LEED Green Associate Study Guide (\$85)
- The Core Concepts & Study Guide will refer to other books, articles, etc. Follow as many of these as you can.
- Other LEED Reference Guides (\$180/\$195) can be beneficial.



Preparing for LEED GA Exam



- Familiarize yourself with these important web sites and their respective purposes:
 - www.usgbc.org
 - LEED Online
(<https://leedonline.usgbc.org/Login.aspx>)
 - www.gbci.org
 - <http://www.greenbuild365.org/>

Preparing for LEED GA Exam



- Third-party exam prep can also be very beneficial
 - Dedicated training courses are available (pricey).
 - There are also numerous web-based test exams and study guides.
 - Some are more credible than others.
 - Here is a trusted one from an organization known as Green Building Education Services (\$50, downloadable pdf and online tests):
<https://www.greenexamprep.com/index.html>

Next Step—LEED AP



LEED AP Project Requirement



- Look for ways to get involved in a LEED project.
- Ideally get involved upfront and become a formal member of the team in the LEED Online records.
- Even if you can't contribute technically to the project, you may be named as an “Administrative” team member.
- Otherwise, you'll have to have the project owner write a letter detailing your “significant involvement.”

LEED AP Exam Preparation



- You can prepare for both exams together (assuming you meet all the requirements) or you can become credentialed as a LEED Green Associate and, later, the LEED AP.
- If you previously earned your LEED Green Associate and keep your accreditation active, you only have to take the LEED AP exam.



LEED AP Exam Preparation



- LEED APs are now required to specialize:
 - LEED AP, Building Design & Construction (new construction)
 - LEED AP, Operations & Maintenance (existing buildings)
 - LEED AP, Interior Design & Construction
 - LEED AP, Neighborhood Development
 - LEED AP, Homes



LEED AP Exam Preparation



- Obtain the Candidate Handbook.
- Study Guides (\$85) are available for each specialization.
- Specific Reference Guide (\$180/\$195) is also needed.
- These guides are available from the USGBC store:



http://www.usgbc.org/Store/PublicationsList_New.aspx?CMSPageID=1518

LEED AP Exam Preparation



- Follow same process as earlier for applying for and scheduling exam.
- Costs are \$100 application fee and \$250 exam fee (or \$450 combined GA and AP exam)

Credential Maintenance



Maintaining Your Credential



- GBCI has instituted disciplined processes not only for obtaining the LEED credentials but in maintaining them.
- Your credential is good for 2 years.
- Maintenance consists of obtaining continuing education hours and paying a \$50 credential renewal fee.
- LEED Green Associates must earn 15 CE hours within the 2 years; LEED APs must earn 30 hours.
- This document explains activities that are appropriate for earning CE hours:
<https://www.gbci.org/ShowFile.aspx?DocumentID=3675>

Conclusion

- An additional level of accreditation, LEED Fellow, has not yet been defined (roughly a PHD).
- Good luck in your endeavor!

