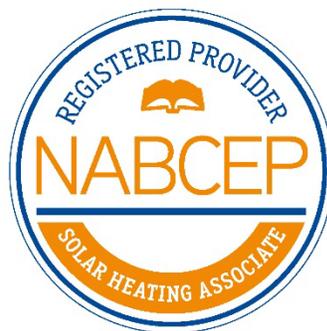
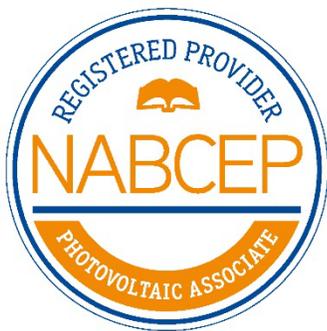


NABCEP™

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NABCEP ASSOCIATE PROGRAM REGISTERED PROVIDER INFORMATION PACKET



Contents

About NABCEP	3
Associate Program Overview	3
Eligible Institutions	4
Instructor Requirements	5
Insurance Requirements	5
Course Requirements	5
Application Process	8
Exam Administration	8
Fees.....	9
Payment Policy	10
Exam Administration And Scoring.....	10
Exam Content	10
Practice Exam	11
Special Accomodations.....	11
Exam	11
Duration.....	11
Score Reports	11
Retake Policy	12
Associate credential Renewal policy	12
Mark Use Policy	12



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NORTH AMERICAN BOARD OF CERTIFIED ENERGY PRACTITIONERS (NABCEP)

NABCEP ASSOCIATE PROGRAM

OVERVIEW, PROCESS, & POLICIES FOR NABCEP ASSOCIATE EXAM PROVIDERS

ABOUT NABCEP

The North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCEP) is the most respected, well-established, and widely recognized national certification organization for professionals in the field of renewable energy. NABCEP is overseen by a volunteer board of directors who are selected based on their experience and involvement in the renewable energy industry. NABCEP's mission is to develop and implement quality credentialing and certification programs for practitioners by supporting and working closely with professionals and stakeholders in the renewable energy and energy efficiency industries.

ASSOCIATE PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The NABCEP Associate Program replaces the NABCEP Entry Level Program, which was administered by NABCEP from 2005 to 2016. References to "NABCEP Entry Level," "NABCEP PV Entry Level," etc., should be updated to "NABCEP Associate," "NABCEP PV Associate," etc. Any existing reference to the NABCEP Entry Level Program, including but not limited to NABCEP Entry Level Exams and NABCEP Registered Entry Level Exam Providers, found on NABCEP's website or other NABCEP documentation should be understood to refer to the NABCEP Associate Program.

NABCEP administers three NABCEP Associate credential programs: NABCEP Photovoltaic Associate (PVA), NABCEP Solar Heating Associate (SHA), and NABCEP Small Wind Associate (SWA), collectively referred to as the NABCEP Associate Program. The NABCEP Associate Program recognizes individuals who have demonstrated knowledge of the fundamental principles of the application, design, installation and operation of Photovoltaic, Solar Heating or Small Wind energy systems. A NABCEP Associate credential (NABCEP Photovoltaic Associate™, NABCEP Solar Heating Associate™, or NABCEP Small Wind Associate™) is earned by passing an examination based on the related NABCEP Associate Learning Objectives. The NABCEP Associate Handbook, available at www.nabcep.org, details the process for individuals seeking to become a NABCEP Associate.

The NABCEP Associate Program is intended for many people who are currently working in, or seeking employment in, the renewable energy industry, including those who are: students in renewable energy programs, workers at an early stage in their renewable energy career, experienced professionals in related industries who have just begun offering renewable

energy products or services, or those in renewable energy jobs for which there is no specific professional certification.

There are three pathways for an individual to obtain a NABCEP Associate credential.

- 1) Take a Photovoltaics, Solar Heating, or Small Wind training course with a NABCEP Registered Associate Provider, and pass the relevant NABCEP Associate Examination.
- 2) Document at least 6 months of full time equivalent work experience in a job that is directly involved with photovoltaics, solar heating, or small wind technologies, by completing an application at www.my.nabceep.org and pass the relevant NABCEP Associate Examination.
- 3) Already have a NABCEP Entry Level Achievement Award for photovoltaics or solar heating, and pay a small conversion fee. If the award was earned more than three years ago, documentation of at least 12 hours of continuing education will also be required.

NABCEP also administers several professional certification programs including the NABCEP Photovoltaic Installation Professional, NABCEP Photovoltaic Technical Sales Professional, and NABCEP Solar Heating Installer. These professional certifications are intended for individuals who have substantial experience in the relevant profession. For more information about NABCEP Certifications please visit www.nabceep.org.

Institutions who want to become NABCEP Registered Associate Exam Providers must apply directly to NABCEP, using the online NABCEP Associate Provider application. Before applying, the Associate Provider application and this Associate Provider Info Packet should be carefully reviewed. As part of the online application, the designated Exam Administrator is required to read the *Exam Administration Manual* (linked within the online Application), which details all policies and instructions for administering the Associate Exam. Registered Providers agree to follow all policies and procedures for every Exam administration.

ELIGIBLE INSTITUTIONS

The NABCEP Associate Program relies on a network of Registered NABCEP Associate Exam Providers to offer courses that prepare individuals to sit for the Associate Exams through the education pathway. NABCEP relies on independent, third party accreditation and/or government recognition to determine an institution's eligibility to provide education and administer Examinations. A condition of registration is that the institution must be accredited, certified, or approved by one of the following:

- 1) Accredited by an agency recognized by the U. S. Department of Education¹

¹ If Canadian, then equivalent governing body

- 2) Approved Apprenticeship Program by the U.S. Department of Labor²
- 3) Interstate Renewable Energy Council (IREC) Accredited Training Program or IREC Accredited Certificate Program for relevant technology (i.e., Photovoltaics, Solar Heating, or Small Wind)
- 4) National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCR) Accredited Training Sponsor for relevant technology (i.e., Solar Photovoltaics for PV Associate or Wind Turbine Maintenance Technician for Small Wind Associate)

INSTRUCTOR REQUIREMENTS

NABCEP has found that courses taught by instructors who have renewable energy related training and experience have higher passing rates than those who do not. As such, NABCEP requires courses taught by registered Providers that confer eligibility for an Associate Exam must be taught by a registered instructor. Each instructor must submit a resume, CV or summary of relevant experience with supporting documentation as necessary to verify training and/or experience in the relevant technology. At least one instructor must be registered during the initial Provider Application, and subsequent instructors shall be registered via the myNABCEP web portal once the institution is registered. Documentation must show proof of completion of an advanced training program in the relevant technology, professional certification in the relevant technology, and/or appropriate work experience in the relevant technology.

NABCEP must be notified and provided with all necessary documentation if there is a change or addition of instructors.

INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

All registered NABCEP Associate Exam Providers must maintain sufficient general and professional liability coverage with respect to the administration of training and examinations. A Certificate of Insurance, or for proof of self-insurance for public institutions, is required to be submitted in the Registered Provider Application.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Registered NABCEP Associate Exam Providers must have programs that include course(s) which have an interactive teacher-learner structure requiring a connection between a learner and a learning source. This format can include classroom time led by an instructor and/or discussion leader. It can also include activities in which a learner is engaged in a planned learning event in which they are separated from faculty and other students but where the

² If Canadian, than equivalent governing body

learner receives feedback and progress is monitored. Examples include computer-assisted instruction, interactive video/CD/DVD and/or web site learning.

Exam Providers agree that they will cover all of the Associate Learning Objectives for the relevant technology in any course that is used to provide eligibility to a NABCEP Associate Exam. The complete Associate Learning Objectives for each credential are posted at www.NABCEP.org. In recognition that different student populations may be able to cover material faster than others, NABCEP no longer has a minimum number of content hours required for each course; however, it is strongly recommended that **at least** 40-60 contact hours be dedicated to each set of Learning Objectives.

NABCEP does not review or approve curriculum, or accredit training programs. Therefore, Providers cannot claim that the course is a “NABCEP Course” or that the course, program, or institution is “approved” or “accredited” by NABCEP. Registered Providers and each Registered Instructor must agree to cover the relevant NABCEP Associate Learning Objectives in a course or courses that provide eligibility to take the examination. The NABCEP Associate Learning Objectives provide the blueprint for each NABCEP Associate Examination. They are the primary resources to reference with regard to which topics may or may not be covered on the Exam. Courses may include subjects beyond the scope of the Learning Objectives but all Providers must agree to cover the subjects outlined by NABCEP before administering an Associate Exam or conferring eligibility to take the exam to a student.

Prerequisite or bridge training and/or experience in electrical/plumbing systems, mathematics, and other subjects may be required for some students to fully comprehend and satisfactorily demonstrate knowledge of all of the Learning Objectives. Students should be encouraged to spend an equivalent number of hours outside of class as spent in the class to review the subject matter, solve problems, and study reference materials prior to taking the Associate Exam. This is particularly important for intensive short courses (e.g., 40-hour, one-week workshops), and online programs, and may require the student to take the exam at a later date rather than immediately following the course.

NABCEP Photovoltaic Associate Learning Objectives

The PV Associate Exam program is based on a set of Learning Objectives developed by a committee of PV subject matter experts. The Photovoltaic Associate Learning Objectives include ten (10) knowledge content domains:

- PV Markets and Applications
- Safety Basics
- Electricity Basics
- Solar Energy Fundamentals
- PV Module Fundamentals

- System Components
- PV System Sizing Principles
- PV System Electrical Design
- PV System Mechanical Design
- Performance Analysis, Maintenance and Troubleshooting

NABCEP Solar Heating Associate Learning Objectives

Similar to the PV program, the NABCEP Solar Heating (SH) Associate Exam is based on a set of Learning Objectives. These were developed by a committee of Solar Heating subject matter experts. The Solar Heating Learning Objectives has six (6) knowledge content domains:

- Conducting a site analysis, including load analysis
- Identifying SH safety practices, standards, codes and certification
- Identifying systems for specific climates and applications
- Identifying proper orientation and installation methods
- Identifying proper use of balance of system components and materials
- Identifying common SH maintenance items

NABCEP Small Wind Associate Learning Objectives

The Small Wind Associate Learning Objectives include ten (10) knowledge content domains:

- Fundamentals of Electricity
- Applications and End Uses
- Fundamentals of Small Wind Turbines (including system components and science and theory)
- Towers, Foundations, and Installation Considerations
- Resource Assessment
- Site Assessment
- System Sizing Principles and Economics
- Operation, Maintenance, and Troubleshooting
- Safety and Best Practices
- Impacts and Challenges of Small Wind

The learning objectives identified in these analyses do not replace electrical, plumbing or HVAC trades, technician, technologist or engineering training. *See the Learning Objectives document posted on the NABCEP website for the full description of these knowledge content areas.*

NABCEP will periodically review the Learning Objectives and make any changes according to changes in codes, standards, technology and best practices in the industry. NABCEP will notify the Provider of any modifications to the Learning Objectives.



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APPLICATION PROCESS

NABCEP accepts online Associate Provider applications year round and reviews applications in the order they are received. Applicants can check the status of their applications on the portal at <http://my.nabcep.org>.

Complete applications, found to meet all criteria set forth by NABCEP, will be approved for registration. The designated Exam Administrator, who will function as NABCEP's main contact for Associate Program related communications, will be notified of acceptance via email and U.S. Mail. Please be advised that an institution may in no way advertise a course or training program as offering a NABCEP Associate Exam or qualifying students to take any of the NABCEP Associate Exams before formal notice of registration has been given.

Incomplete applications will be flagged and returned to the applicant with a deficiency notice outlining any missing, incomplete, or insufficient information. Notice will be sent via e-mail to the applicant and notes in the online application will indicate which sections were incomplete. Incomplete applications will remain accessible until resubmitted, rejected, or withdrawn. Rejected or withdrawn applications will have the application fee refunded.

EXAM ADMINISTRATION

The NABCEP Photovoltaic, Solar Heating and Small Wind Associate Exams are offered in two formats to Candidates who complete coursework with a NABCEP Registered Associate Exam Provider: 1) on-site by pencil and paper, or 2) off-site through an independent Computer-Based Testing (CBT) center. Candidates who qualify by applying directly to NABCEP via the experience based pathway must complete the exam at a CBT center.

Paper and Pencil Exams (U.S. and Canada only): To administer the Associate Exam by Paper and Pencil, the Exam Provider will complete and return a signed Exam Administration Personnel Agreement Form for each staff member that is involved in the administration of the NABCEP Associate Exam. Only one staff member may be designated as the Exam Administrator who will access the Examination and administration forms via our secure online Portal. www.my.nabcep.org. Registered Providers may have more than one designated Exam Proctor. Examinations are printed, administered and proctored by Registered Provider personnel at a time and location determined the Registered Provider. **INSTRUCTORS OF COURSES THAT PREPARE STUDENTS FOR THE EXAM ARE PROHIBITED FROM HAVING ANY CONTACT WITH THE EXAM BOOKLET AND MAY NOT SERVE AS THE EXAM ADMINISTRATOR OR PROCTOR.** Completed examinations, and all other testing materials, are then sent to NABCEP's testing services vendor for scoring. The NABCEP Associate Exam Administration Manual contains full details on administering a NABCEP Associate examination.

Computer Based Testing (CBT): All registered Providers may authorize Candidates to take the NABCEP Associate Exam at an off-site, independent Computer Based Testing center designated by NABCEP. Candidates will have the opportunity to choose the location, date, and time for their Exam once they qualify. *Please note: It is extremely important that Candidate names submitted for CBT authorization match the legal picture identification of Candidates exactly. Candidates whose names are not an exact match will not be allowed to sit for the Exam.*

FEES

Provider Registration Fee: A \$300 annual Provider Registration Fee is required to participate in the Associate Program. The initial \$300 annual fee is submitted with the initial application to become a Registered Provider.

Paper and Pencil Exam (U.S. and Canada only): The Associate Exam fee is \$125 per Paper & Pencil Exam. Registered Providers have to option to pay the Exam Fee(s) online via credit card or e-check, or be invoiced, when submitting candidate eligibility information for each exam administered. At their discretion, Providers may charge their students an additional administration fee of up to \$55.00 per paper & pencil exam administered. Registered Providers are responsible for collecting all exam and administrative fees from students, and submitting prompt payment of examination fees to NABCEP.

Computer Based Testing (CBT): The fee for computer based Exams is \$125 per Exam. Registered Providers have to option to pay the Exam Fee(s) online via credit card or e-check, or be invoiced, when submitting candidate eligibility information for each exam administered. At their discretion, Providers may charge their students an additional administration fee of up to \$25.00 per paper & pencil exam administered. Registered Providers are responsible for collecting all exam and administrative fees from students, and submitting prompt payment of examination fees to NABCEP.

Candidates qualifying through Registered Providers:

Paper and Pencil Exam	\$125
Computer Based Testing	\$125
Re-Exam Fee	\$125
Renewal (every 3 years)	\$150

Candidates qualifying via the Work Experience Pathway (applying directly to NABCEP):

Computer Based Testing only	\$150
Re-Exam	\$125
Renewal (every 3 years)	\$150

PAYMENT POLICY

All payments to NABCEP are due within 30 days of the invoice. Any Provider with 60 day overdue accounts may be subject to suspension. It is NABCEP policy to provide warning letters and statements to Providers whose accounts are 60 days past due. It is the Provider's responsibility to ensure that their accounts are kept current. If special circumstances apply, the Provider should contact the program manager to negotiate acceptable terms. NABCEP reserves the right to suspend and withhold score reports from Providers whose accounts are more than 60 days overdue.

Please note: Additional administrative fees may be charged for processing Provider errors in Exam administration.

EXAM ADMINISTRATION AND SCORING

Exam Providers will be required to sign a NABCEP Associate Exam Provider Agreement Form, agreeing to comply with NABCEP Examination administration policies (as outlined in the *NABCEP Associate Exam Administration Manual*), including those related to maintaining the security of the Examination, confidentiality of the test items and other related issues. The NABCEP Associate Exams are developed according to accepted psychometric standards of measurement; the items are written and reviewed by subject matter experts. The NABCEP Associate Exams are a confidential and secure measurement of knowledge that is not meant to be read, studied, discussed or taught by Exam Administrators, Exam Proctors or Instructors.

After Exam administration, answer sheets and all other Exam materials must be returned to NABCEP's testing contractor for scoring via traceable carrier at the expense of the Provider. Exam Providers are not responsible for, and should not attempt to, score the examinations.

Upon grading of the answer sheets, NABCEP will send score results directly to each Candidate at the mailing address submitted via the online Roster by the Registered Provider. Successful Candidates will receive a letter and a suitable-for-framing certificate. Registered Exam Administrators will have access to scores, via myNABCEP, for each Candidate who does not specifically opt-out of releasing their score to their Provider.

EXAM CONTENT

Each examination consists of seventy (70) multiple-choice questions, with four (4) choices per question. Sixty (60) of the questions are scored and ten (10) of the questions are un-scored pilot questions. The pilot questions are randomly distributed throughout the examination and are not identified.

The NABCEP Associate Exams are written by industry Subject Matter Experts under the guidance of professional psychometricians (testing specialists). The NABCEP Associate Learning Objectives, which are also developed by industry Subject Matter Experts, provide the blueprints for the NABCEP Associate Exams and are the primary documents to reference with regard to what topics may or may not be covered on any exam. All students attending a course that provides eligibility for a NABCEP Associate Exam should be given a copy of these Learning Objectives (found on the NABCEP website under “Associate Credential” and “Learning Objectives”) at the beginning of the course.

PRACTICE EXAM

A practice NABCEP Photovoltaic Associate Examination is available for a fee on the NABCEP website. A practice NABCEP Photovoltaic Installation Professional Examination is also available. Practice exams are not yet available for Solar Heating Associate or Small Wind Associate. The practice exam is intended to provide candidates with an understanding of the types of questions that may be encountered on the exam, a general feel for the level of difficulty to expect, experience with the computer-based test environment, and a sense of the pace that will need to be maintained to answer all questions in the specified time. It is not intended as a study tool for learning the content that will be covered on the exam.

SPECIAL ACCOMODATIONS

All Providers must provide special testing accommodations and comply with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act and with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act and other applicable laws. If a student requires special testing accommodations the required forms must be submitted to NABCEP for review and approval **prior** to granting or providing any special testing accommodations. Approval may take several weeks or more. Please submit any requests for special testing accommodations as far in advance as possible.

EXAM DURATION

Candidates are provided with two (2) hours to complete the examination. Approximately thirty minutes of time is required for pre-Exam administrative activities once all Candidates have arrived; therefore, the room should be reserved for a minimum of three hours.

SCORE REPORTS

Scoring occurs using a scaled process to ensure fairness from one examination to the next. A minimum scaled score of 65, using a 0-99 scale, is required to pass each NABCEP Associate Examination. A Pass or Fail Score Report will be mailed directly to each Candidate after their answer sheets have been submitted and scored. Exam Administrators will have access to Candidate score records via their online account.



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RETAKE POLICY

Candidates are eligible to sit for the Associate Exam for a period of two years from the date they complete the training program (or the date that their application is accepted if applying directly to NABCEP through the experience pathway). Candidates may take the Exam up to 6 times every 12 months. Registered Providers must confirm valid eligibility for each candidate that they resubmit for examination/re-examination. After the 2 year period, individuals must re-qualify by either taking another course with a Registered Associate Exam Provider or documenting 6 months of related work experience in an application to NABCEP.

ASSOCIATE CREDENTIAL RENEWAL POLICY

All NABCEP Associates will be required to renew their credential every three years. NABCEP Associates must document 12 hours of Continuing Education by uploading Course Completion Documents to their individual myNABCEP online accounts. This renewal process is accomplished through NABCEP directly and does not involve the training provider; however, it is important for all applicants to be aware of this requirement.

MARK USE POLICY

Individuals who have achieved a passing score on a NABCEP Associate Examination, and met all other eligibility criteria including renewal requirements, may state that they are a NABCEP Photovoltaic Associate (NABCEP PVA), NABCEP Solar Heating Associate (NABCEP SHA), or NABCEP Small Wind Associate (NABCEP SWA). They may use the title of NABCEP Associate only, and may not refer to themselves as NABCEP Certified, or use any of the specific NABCEP certification designations, such as NABCEP Certified PV Installation Professional. The NABCEP Associate credential, certificate, wordmark, and seal may only be used and displayed in association with the individual who achieved the passing score. The credential is personal and may not be transferred, assigned to, displayed or used by any other individual, organization, business, or entity, unless the use clearly identifies the individuals who have obtained the credential.

If you have any questions about NABCEP, please contact

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