

**SITES**

**AP**

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# CANDIDATE HANDBOOK

**SITES® AP**

Updated May 2020

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# REGISTERING FOR YOUR EXAM

## Registration

1. Log in to your [SITES® Online account](#) using your existing USGBC® site user account or [creating a new account](#) if you do not have one.
  - a. When you register for your exam, make sure your name is entered as it appears exactly on the legal ID that you will use when you take your exam. If your account name does not match your legal ID, please update your name in your [SITES® Online account](#) “settings”. We do not advise candidates to use a nickname when setting up the site user account.
  - b. If your native language utilizes non-Roman characters, be sure to enter your name in Roman characters when you set-up your site user account and when you register for the exam. Make sure to bring identification, such as a passport that includes your name in Roman characters, when you check-in for your exam.
  - c. Please note that if the name in which you register for your exam does not exactly match the ID, you will present when you check-in for your exam either at a Test Center or online for a remote proctored exam you will not be permitted to test. You must [contact GBCI](#) at least ten days before your exam date to change your registration, or you will risk being turned away, and you will forfeit your exam registration fee.
2. Select the SITES AP exam under the credentials section and follow the instructions on the screen to complete the application.
3. Once you have completed the registration process, you are given a unique eligibility ID (EID) and may schedule your exam by visiting [prometric.com/gbc](http://prometric.com/gbc). Prometric is the exam delivery organization for GBCI exams. There are now two ways to take your SITES AP exam. You have the option to take your exam either at a Prometric Test Center or through a remote proctored internet-enabled (online) location of your choice using Prometric’s ProProctor tool.
  - a. If you would like to schedule your exam in a physical test center, [click here](#).
  - b. If you would like to schedule a remote proctored online exam, you will first need to ensure that your computer meets the technical specifications (See Pre-Exam Checklist below) and space within which you intend to take your exam meets the [testing environment requirements](#). Once you have verified your computer meets the minimum system requirements, you can [click here](#) to continue scheduling your remote proctored online exam.
4. On the Schedule Appointment screen, read through the instructions and click on the green forward arrow button located on the right-hand side at the bottom of the page to proceed to the next screen. Read through the Policy Notice and answer the age and consent questions at the bottom of the page and click the green forward arrow. You will then be asked to enter your exam EID and the first four characters of your last name.
5. Once you have successfully scheduled your exam appointment, you will see a confirmation number on the screen, and you will also receive an automated email from Prometric with important details about your exam appointment – **please be sure to read the email in its entirety.**

6. Once you have scheduled your exam, please record your confirmation number and print your confirmation notice from Prometric. You will need this confirmation number to confirm, cancel, or reschedule your exam appointment through the [Prometric website](#). Keep your confirmation notice for any communication with Prometric about your exam. You are not required to bring this information to the test center with you when you check-in for your exam, though it may help should you require any assistance.
7. Once you have scheduled your exam, please record your confirmation number and print your confirmation notice from Prometric. You will need this confirmation number to confirm, cancel, or reschedule your exam appointment through the [Prometric website](#). Keep your confirmation notice for any communication with Prometric about your exam. You are not required to bring this information with you when you check-in for your exam, though it may help should you require any assistance.
8. Once you register and pay for your exam, you have 12 months to schedule and take your exam session. If you fail your first attempt at taking the exam you may register and pay again in the same way as the initial registration. After three unsuccessful attempts, however, you must wait 90 days before submitting a new registration and payment to GBCI. Candidates must pay the exam registration fee for each exam attempt.
9. You can confirm, cancel, or reschedule an exam on the [Prometric website](#).
10. In addition, if you have scheduled an exam at a test center and would like to reschedule it for a remote proctored online exam (or vice versa), you will first need to cancel your exam at the test center, and then follow the link to schedule a remote proctored online exam.
11. Rescheduling and cancelation policy:
  - a. You may reschedule or cancel your exam up 30 days prior to your exam without incurring a rescheduling fee.
  - b. If you reschedule or cancel your exam fewer than 30 days, but more than three days before the scheduled date, you will be charged a \$50 fee.
  - c. You cannot reschedule your exam after midnight on the third day before the scheduled appointment. (For example, Wednesday appointments cannot be rescheduled after Sunday, 11:59 p.m.)
  - d. If you miss your exam date or fail to reschedule three (3) days prior to the exam, you forfeit the entire exam registration fee. Learn more about [GBCI's exam refund/rescheduling policy](#).
  - e. When you reschedule an exam, you will receive a new confirmation email. If you do not, please contact Prometric immediately to confirm that your exam was rescheduled.
    - a. please [contact Prometric](#) immediately to confirm that your exam was rescheduled.

Days before original exam date	Refunds	Reschedule
30 days or more	Yes	Yes
3-29 days	Yes, less a \$50 cancellation fee	Yes, less a \$50 rescheduling fee
0-3 days	No	No

To register five or more candidates at one time, [contact GBCI](#).

## Eligibility Requirements

GBCI recommends that you have exposure to SITES concepts through educational courses, volunteering, or work experience prior to testing.

To be eligible for the SITES AP exam credential, you must:

- a. Be 18 years of age or older.
- b. Agree to the [Disciplinary and Exam Appeals Policy](#) and [credentialing maintenance requirements](#).

## 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 [SITES Online account](#) may be audited, and a request for further documentation of any information or claims submitted by you 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—in the event that any conduct discovered during such an audit violates the SITES professional [Disciplinary and Exam Appeals Policy](#), GBCI policy and/or the law.

## Testing Accommodations

If you have a documented disability that would prevent you from taking the SITES AP 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 exam is administered. Prometric, GBCI's exam 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. For remote proctored online exams, Prometric may not be able to accommodate all requests since candidates are taking the exams in a remote location.

If you require testing accommodations, you must indicate this during your registration process by checking the box that says, "Yes, I need testing accommodations." To be eligible for accommodations, you and your health care provider each need to complete one form, the [Candidate Form](#), and the [Provider Form](#), to document your disability and need for accommodation. Please email the completed forms along with your testing accommodation request to [accommodations@gbci.org](mailto:accommodations@gbci.org) or by faxing it to 202.545-3708. There is no additional charge for testing accommodations. Each request is evaluated individually.

GBCI reviews this documentation and, if approved, alerts Prometric of the necessary accommodations. Please allow up to two weeks to receive a reply from GBCI following the submission of your documentation. Please note that once you have requested testing accommodations, you are not able to schedule an appointment with Prometric until your request

is processed. You will be contacted by email regarding the status of your testing accommodations request.

## Exam Fees

See the [exam](#) page on the SITES 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 before registering for an exam.

# THE EXAM

## Exam Development

A SITES AP is an individual who possesses the knowledge and skills necessary to support the SITES certification process, including participating in the design and development process, supporting and encouraging integrated design, managing the application and certification process and providing advocacy and education for the adoption of SITES. The development of a valid exam begins with a clear and concise definition of the knowledge, skills and abilities needed to perform the job of a SITES AP successfully. The SITES AP exam is developed by a global network of Subject Matter Experts and meet the specifications of a job analysis. The exam 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 exam is launched the exam questions are regularly monitored to ensure continued reliability.

The exam assesses candidates' abilities at three cognitive levels: Recall, Application and Analysis.

- **Recall Questions:** These questions assess a candidate's ability to recall factual material that is presented in a similar context to the exam references.
- **Application Questions:** These questions 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 Questions:** These questions 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 SITES AP exam contains 100 randomly delivered multiple choice questions and must be completed in 2 hours.

The exam has both scored and unscored questions. All questions are delivered randomly throughout the exam and candidates are not informed of a question's status, so candidates should respond to all the questions on the exam. Unscored questions are used to gather performance data to inform whether the question should be scored on future exams.

The exam is computer-based. Exam questions and answer options are displayed on the 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.

During the exam, candidates may submit comments on any question(s) they believe to contain technical errors in content by using the comment button located in the navigation bar. In order to challenge an exam question, you must have commented on the question and provided an explanation of your concerns. After the exam, within ten days, [inform GBCI](#) that you have left comments on your exam; in your correspondence, be sure to note your questions and the email address used to sign up for the exam, as well as the date on which you took it. You must notify GBCI within ten days of your exam date that you have left a comment within your exam.

Be prepared to commit 2 hours 20 minutes for the exam. Total exam time is broken out as follows:

- An optional 10-minute tutorial, the 2-hour exam and an optional 10-minute exit survey.

If you need to take a break before completing your exam in a test center, you may do so by raising your hand for assistance. Testing time is **NOT** suspended. Be aware that if you exit the test center or end the exam session by pressing “Finish” within your exam before completing the exam, the exam cannot be restarted, and the exam session and fee are forfeited.

Please note that breaks are not permitted during remote proctored online exams. It is strictly prohibited for you to be out of the webcam’s field of vision at any point while taking the exam. If you leave your seat during the exam, except when authorized by the Remote Proctor at the end of the exam, your exam session and fees are forfeited.

## Exam Language

The SITES AP exam is only available in English.

## Exam Maintenance

The SITES AP exam goes 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 the exam remains statistically reliable and valid.



# PRE-EXAM CHECKLIST

## Are You Ready?

### Two Month Before Your Exam (test center or remote proctored online delivery)

- a. Ensure that your given name (first name) and surname (last name) in your [SITES Online account](#) matches exactly the given name and surname on the identification you will present at the test center. (See Identification Requirements below.) **If the names do not match, you will not be allowed to test, and you will forfeit the exam registration fee.** If you have any questions, please [contact us](#).
- b. Confirm that the date, time, and location of your exam is correct. If it is not, please visit [prometric.com/gbci](https://prometric.com/gbci) for information about rescheduling or canceling your exam.

### For Remote Proctored Online Exams: Five Days Before Exam

- a. Review the [ProProctor User Guide](#) in preparation for your exam and adjust your testing environment accordingly. ProProctor User Guide link is also available in your exam confirmation email received after scheduling your remote proctored online exam.
- b. Perform a [system readiness check](#) and ensure that your computer meets the minimum system requirements. If the system readiness check fails, the page will alert you to the failed item and prompt you to troubleshoot the errors and complete the check again.
  - Screen Resolution: 1024 x 768 is the minimum resolution required, 1920 x 1080 recommended
  - Operating System: Windows 7 or higher | MacOS 10.13 or higher
  - Web Browser: Latest Google Chrome
  - Webcam Resolution: 640 X 480 pixels External for desktops, Internal for laptops.
  - Microphone: Enabled
  - Download Speed: 500 Kbps or greater
  - Upload Speed: 384 Kbps
  - Only a laptop or desktop computer can be used to take the exam.
  - No dual-monitor configurations are permitted for testing (e.g., a desktop with two monitors or a laptop with a separate monitor).
  - Computers must be undocked and have a movable web-camera
- c. [Download and install](#) the ProProctor application.

## Exam Security

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

- Exam questions and answers are the exclusive property of GBCI.
- The exam, 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 questions 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

Plan to arrive at the test center at least 30 minutes prior to your scheduled exam appointment. If you arrive at the test site after your scheduled exam time, you will lose your seat and forfeit the exam registration fee.

Upon arrival at the test center, you will be required to show an acceptable form(s) of identification (see Identification Requirements below) and sign in. Next, you will be escorted to a locker to store your belongings. You will have access to your ID and your locker key for the duration of your exam. Then you will go through a security checkpoint, where you will be asked to empty your pockets; remove eyeglasses, roll down shirtsleeves, remove watches and fitness trackers/ monitors, remove jewelry\*, and roll up pant legs for inspection; and pass through a metal detector. Upon completion of the enhanced security check-in, you will be escorted to a workstation by test center staff.

*\*Religious apparel and wedding rings are exempt.*

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:

- a. You experience a problem with your computer
- b. An error message appears on the computer screen (do not clear the message)
- c. You need to take a break (testing time is NOT suspended)
- d. You need the test center staff for any other reason

Accessing personal effects during the course of your exam is a security infraction and as a result, your exam session could be voided without a refund. Prometric test centers are outfitted with cameras that record the check-in process and exam experience for each candidate. These recordings may be viewed by Prometric test center staff and GBCI in the case of suspected security infractions. If you have a medical condition that may necessitate

access to medication (e.g., an insulin pump), you must submit a Testing Accommodation request to GBCI for approval during exam registration.

If you require a break (e.g., to use the restroom), you must abide by the aforementioned security policies, and you will be required to repeat the security check before you are permitted to reenter the exam room.

## What to Expect at the Virtual Check-In

Plan to log on to the [Prometric site](#) 30 minutes prior to your scheduled exam appointment. If you arrive at your virtual check-in after your scheduled exam time, you will forfeit your exam and exam registration fee.

Upon logging into the Prometric site, you will be prompted to capture a facial image from your webcam, followed by an image of your government-issued ID. Once these steps are completed, you will proceed to meet with a remote Readiness Agent who will guide you through all the security checks before launching your exam.

The security checks will include verifying acceptable form(s) of identification (see Identification Requirements below), followed by a comprehensive 360-degree webcam scan of the room and work surface area. Similar to being at a test center, the Readiness Agent will then ask you to raise your pants legs above the ankles, empty and turn all pockets inside-out and raise shirt sleeves above the wrists. If you are wearing eyeglasses, you will be required to remove them for visual inspection to ensure they don't contain a recording device. Large jewelry items must be removed due to concerns over concealed recording devices. If you have long hair that covers your ears, you will be asked to pull your hair back to ensure nothing is attached to your ear (such as a Bluetooth earpiece). Upon completion of the virtual security check-in, you may proceed to launch the remote proctored online exam and meet the Remote Proctor, who will be proctoring the exam for its entire duration.

It is strictly prohibited for you to be out of the webcam's field of vision at any point while taking the exam. You must remain in your seat during the exam except when authorized to leave by the Remote Proctor. Contact the Remote Proctor via chat or audio if:

- a. You experience a problem with your computer
- b. An error message appears on the computer screen (do not clear the message)
- c. You need the Remote Proctor for any other reason

Accessing personal effects during the course of your exam is a security infraction, and as a result, your exam session could be voided without a refund. Audio, video, and chat messages are recorded throughout the entire duration of the exam. These recordings may be viewed by Prometric proctoring staff and GBCI in the case of irregularities or suspected security infractions.

## Identification Requirements

GBCI, along with Prometric, enforces a strict policy regarding acceptable identification to

maintain the integrity and quality of the SITES AP exam and to ensure all candidates have access to a consistent and fair exam check-in process. All IDs must be plasticized or laminated by the issuing authority at the time of issue. Your ID must be in the original form it was issued; duplicates or photocopies will not be accepted.

You are required to provide one form of valid government-issued identification that contains **all** of the following four elements:

- Your name, which must exactly match the name that you used to register for the exam

*Please note: The identification that you present to the test center must include your name printed in Roman characters and must **exactly** match the name that you used to register for the exam. IDs with names printed solely in non-Roman characters are not acceptable.*

- A recent, recognizable photograph that looks like you
- Your signature
- Be unexpired and includes an issue and expiration date

Examples of identification that typically comply with requirements include:

- Passport
- Driver's license with a printed signature, including date issued and date of expiration
- Current government-issued photo ID with signature, including date issued and date of expiration
- Green card, permanent residence card, or H-1B visa\*
- Military ID that includes date issued and date of expiration

If your identification does not include all four required elements, you must provide a secondary identification (with the same first and last name) that includes the outstanding required elements. Remember, at the time your secondary identification was issued, the issuing authority must have laminated it.

- For example, India residents presenting an India PAN card or India voter ID that does not include a date issued and/or an expiration date must also present a second form of identification (with the same first and last name and signature), which does include an expiration date. A secondary form of ID could be an unexpired credit card with a printed signature.

Unacceptable forms of ID include, but are not limited to:

- ID without an expiration date or date of issue
- ID with the first and last name printed solely in non-Roman characters
- Photocopies or duplicates
- Social Security card

- Library card
- For India residents: Aadhaar cards

## Prometric Regulations

You must abide by [Prometric's security rules](#) while at the test center or in the remote proctored environment. 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 testing environment (testing center or online), 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.

If you are dismissed from the testing environment center, [inform GBCI](#) within ten days of your exam date and provide a reason for your behavior, GBCI reviews all instances of dismissal from a test center the testing environment and makes a ruling based on the consideration of your rationale and the Prometric report of the incident. To appeal a GBCI 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 your case.

# AFTER YOUR EXAM

## Exam Results

The SITES AP exam is scored between 125 and 200. A score of 170 or higher is required to pass. Your exam score is displayed on the screen at the end of the exam and a score report is emailed to you following your exam session.

Within 72 hours of your appointment, your exam results are processed, your [SITES Online account](#) is updated, and, if applicable, your credential is updated in the USGBC directory.

## Passing the Exam

### Designating Your Credential

As soon as you have passed the SITES AP exam, you can use the title “SITES® AP” and/or the logo.

Please review the [GBCI 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 [SITES Online account](#).

### Credential Maintenance Program

You must fulfill the requirements in order to maintain your credential. For information regarding how to maintain your credential, see the [CMP Guide](#).

## Exam Content Appeals

Because of the need for exam security, GBCI does not release exam questions or answers to candidates. GBCI does not respond to complaints or appeals received more than ten days after an individual’s exam date and does not respond to complaints or appeals sent to any organizations other than GBCI.

If you experience any problems at the Prometric test center or during a remote proctored online exam, you must inform test center personnel before leaving the test center or the remote proctor before ending your online exam session. Prometric will draft an Incident Report and make it available to GBCI.

If you wish to submit an exam content appeal, you must submit comments during the exam on any question(s) believed to contain a technical error in the content. You can use the comment button located on the navigation bar. In order to challenge an exam question, you must comment on the question and provide a brief explanation of your concerns during the exam. After the exam, inform GBCI that you have left comments on your exam; in your correspondence, be sure to note your questions and the email address used to sign up for the exam, as well as the date on which you took it. GBCI reviews your concerns and notifies you of the findings.

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 original exam score will not be changed.

The only way to earn the SITES AP credential is to earn a score of at least 170 or higher on the exam.

## 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 [SITES Online account](#).

To protect your rights to control score distribution, exam scores are released only to you, the exam taker, and authorized GBCI staff. GBCI does not release exam scores except for use in research studies that preserve your anonymity. Candidates' scores will always remain confidential unless released with the written consent of a candidate.

Official statistics regarding the SITES AP exam, including all question 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 SITES AP exam.

Knowledge domains reflect the SITES rating systems' credit categories and what one needs to know.

## SITES AP Exam

### Knowledge Domains

#### 1. Advocacy and Education for Adoption of SITES (7 Questions)

- A. Importance of ecosystem services from a global and local perspective (economic, social and environment benefits)
- B. Impacts of nature on human health and well-being
- C. Connection between landscape design and ecosystem services
- D. Importance of conserving and restoring healthy, functioning ecosystems
- E. Impacts of landscapes on water usage (e.g., irrigation), regional water supplies and energy consumption (e.g., treating, pumping and delivering water)
- F. Impacts of landscape construction and maintenance practices on local and regional priorities and issues (e.g., water quality)
- G. Importance of prioritizing the site/landscape early in design process
- H. Difference between conventional and integrative design process and the benefits of the integrated process
- I. Uniqueness of SITES approach/foundation when compared to LEED and other metrics
- J. Benefits of pursuing SITES certification (including cost/benefit analysis to project)

#### 2. SITES Basis/Foundation (10 Questions)

- A. SITES framework and connection to ecosystem services
- B. SITES Guiding Principles, Decision-Making Hierarchy and four Goals
- C. Process for rating system development (e.g., interdisciplinary, multi-year consensus based, inclusive of multiple stakeholders/advisors, public comment periods, field-



testing via pilot program)

- D. Similarities and differences between SITES and LEED in terms of framework, development process, etc.
- E. Difference between prescriptive- and performance-based approach
- F. Sustainable design, construction and maintenance resources, including resources for project precedents (e.g., case studies)
- G. Integrated systems (e.g., water-energy, site water, soil, vegetation, ecosystems)
- H. Approaches to landscape performance planning, measurement, evaluation and documentation

### **3. SITES Process, Credit Connections and Synergies (11 Questions)**

- A. Sustainability and program goals/benchmarks and how they relate to SITES credits
- B. SITES review and certification process
  - i. Strategies for creating contract documents and navigating the bid process to ensure SITES remains included throughout design and construction
  - ii. Team members and expertise needed to complete the certification submittal process
  - iii. SITES credits/prerequisites structure and documentation requirements (e.g., worksheets, calculators)
  - iv. Relationship or connection between related credits
- C. Benefits of integrative design team involvement throughout all stages of development
- D. Relationship between local codes and SITES credits
- E. Project eligibility requirements for SITES certification

### **4. Site Context and Pre-Design (14 Questions)**

- A. Site Assessment and Planning
  - i. Importance of conducting a pre-design site assessment with the integrated design team
  - ii. Sources of regional ecosystem information and climate conditions
  - iii. Local priorities and issues (e.g., drought, CSOs, economic stress, social needs, regulations and laws) and how they relate to credits
  - iv. Impact project may have on larger regional context (e.g., watershed, flyways, habitat)

- v. Site assessment process, including important features like identifying the reference soil and its connection to the rest of the SITES rating system
- vi. Vegetation and Soil Protection Zones (VSPZ) concept, including what is/is not allowed in a VSPZ and what is meant by minimal site impact development

#### B. Integrative Design Process

- i. Disciplines and expertise an integrative project team would be comprised of and how to coordinate project team activities
- ii. Communication system and strategies that promotes integrative design process
- iii. Performance-based goal development (e.g., identifying what ecosystem services to protect and restore)

#### C. Engage Users and Stakeholders

- i. Importance of engaging the larger community
- ii. Process for identifying user groups and stakeholders
- iii. Relevance and implications of the project for the community and user groups
- iv. Obtaining local demographics and understanding how demographics can influence the site design (e.g., census, interviews, GIS, crowd sourcing)
- v. Strategies for engaging the community

### 5. Site Design (21 Questions)

#### A. Water

- i. Importance of conserving water resources and restoring ecosystems
- ii. Percentile precipitation event and related calculations
- iii. EPA WaterSense Water Budget tool and how to use it
- iv. Strategies for retaining precipitation onsite versus treatment
- v. Site water budget, including all water generated on site
- vi. Sources of stormwater pollutants found in landscapes and their impacts on aquatic ecosystems and human health
- vii. Identifying aquatic ecosystems and restoration strategies
- viii. Expressing water systems as site amenities

#### B. Soil and Vegetation

- i. Importance of conserving and restoring soil and vegetation
- ii. Reference soil and how to identify and use for soil restoration
- iii. Plants that are native, adapted or invasive
- iv. Difference between native plant and native plant community (including restoration and

conservation issues)

- v. Using vegetation to improve site conditions (e.g., heat islands, building energy load, fire risk)
- vi. Cultural/historical benefits of vegetation (e.g., special status vegetation)
- vii. Relationship of soil management plan to soil restoration during construction
- viii. Attributes of invasive species management plans
- ix. Impacts of landscape construction and maintenance practices on soil and vegetation health and productivity
- x. Concept of optimizing biomass

#### C. Materials and Selection

- i. Importance of material/resource use and management in creating a sustainable landscape
- ii. Material life cycle and associated benefits and strategies
- iii. Conservation and reuse strategies
- iv. Purchasing and declarations strategies (e.g., eliminate use of threatened and endangered species, purchase recycled, regional and sustainably produced materials)
- v. Resource recovery strategies (e.g., design for disassembly, reuse and salvage materials)
- vi. Materials that protect air/water quality
- vii. Connection between site assessment, construction and maintenance plan

#### D. Human Health and Well-Being

- i. Benefits of being in natural environments/open-space, having views
- ii. Protection and maintenance of cultural and historic places
- iii. Strategies to promote safety, accessibility and wayfinding
- iv. Strategies to promote mental restoration, social interaction, physical activity
- v. Strategies to promote social equity
- vi. Onsite food production and its connection to other credits (e.g., public health, irrigation)
- vii. Strategies to reduce light pollution
- viii. Strategies to promote use of fuel efficient and multimodal transportation access
- ix. Strategies to minimize exposure to air pollution, (e.g., tobacco smoke, automobile exhaust)

### 6. Construction (13 Questions)

- A. Construction and contractor's role in ensuring sustainability of project

- B. Construction punch list and relationship to other credits
- C. Construction management process
  - i. Construction specifications
  - ii. Construction operations as critical path and documentation
- D. Methods for controlling erosion, sedimentation and potential pollutants from construction
- E. Soils restoration criteria (e.g., organic matter, compaction, infiltration, soil chemical characteristics, soil biological function)
- F. Compliance with testing and specifications
- G. Exceptions to soil restoration requirements
- H. Waste stream study
- I. Recycling/composting plan and opportunities both on and offsite (e.g., vegetation, rocks and soils, hardscape)
- J. Components and ingredients of construction materials
- K. Air quality protection measures in construction documents

## 7. Post-Construction Plans and Commitments (9 Questions)

- A. Operations + Maintenance
  - i. Importance of maintenance and maintenance perspective to ensuring long term positive impacts
  - ii. Impacts of landscape maintenance on human health and well-being, resource conservation and pollution reduction
  - iii. Connection to site assessment and integrative design process (having maintenance expert early on in process)
  - iv. Components of site maintenance plan and its relationship with other credits
  - v. On and off-site recycling/composting plans (e.g., vegetation, rocks and soils, hardscape)
  - vi. Difference between integrated pest management (IPM) and plant health care (PHC)
- B. Performance Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting
  - i. Importance of post-construction performance monitoring data
  - ii. Components and criteria of a monitoring program/plan
  - iii. Strategies for collaboration (e.g., partnership scenarios with university)
  - iv. Performance evaluation process
  - v. Landscape performance measurements (e.g., basic tools, measuring techniques, data types and sources)
- C. Education

- i. Strategies and formats for communicating and educating about landscape sustainability on and off site to diverse audiences (e.g., interactive displays, tours, program)
- ii. Relationship to other credits (e.g., education about sustainable processes and features on the site)
- iii. Components and composition of a case study
- iv. Strategies for communicating case study to wider audience

**The exam contains 15 unscored questions.**

## References

The primary source for the SITES AP exam is the SITES Reference Guide. The following list of references is not meant to be comprehensive. When combined with the exam specifications, the candidate has the material from which the exam is based.

### References

- *SITES v2 Rating System: For Sustainable Land Design and Development*. Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center of The University of Texas at Austin, the U.S. Botanic Garden, and the American Society of Landscape Architects, 2014. [Print and Digital versions available](#).
- *SITES v2 Reference Guide: For Sustainable Land Design and Development*. Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center of The University of Texas at Austin, the U.S. Botanic Garden, and the American Society of Landscape Architects, 2014. [Print and Digital versions available](#).

## Sample Questions

**Disclaimer:** The exam questions listed here were discarded in the process of creating questions for the exam.

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

The content of these questions, 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 questions does not in any way predict or guarantee your ability to successfully answer questions on the actual exams.

### SITES AP Sample Questions

**1. A city is redeveloping an existing paved parking lot into a pocket park that meets the needs of neighboring residents. The site will include shade trees, a community food garden, and a nature-based playground. The project team plans to pursue C4.7: Optimize biomass. According to this credit, what does the team use as the baseline condition from which to measure site improvements?**

- A. Pre-Columbian condition
- B. Existing site condition (i.e., paved parking lot)**
- C. Same size park within 5 miles (8 kilometers)
- D. Closest greenfield/undeveloped site

*This question represents Domain 5: Site Design and Knowledge Statement B.x: Concept of optimizing biomass.*

**2. In P7.3: Restore soils disturbed during construction, which of the following applications is required to comply with soil restoration criteria that is guided by a site's reference soil?**

- A. Lawn and open space**
- B. Trails and bike paths
- C. Preserved natural forest
- D. Mulch-covered playground

*This question represents Domain 6: Construction and Knowledge Statement G: Exceptions to soil restoration requirements.*

## CONTACT

### Green Business Certification Inc.

2101 L Street NW, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20037 | [gbc.org](http://gbc.org)

The Sustainable SITES Initiative (SITES) website is available 24 hours per day for exam application and registration, information regarding the SITES AP exam and access to your account.

GBCI staff are available for questions, comments and concerns regarding certificates, SITES AP exam records, exam content appeals, exam development, exam scoring, exam format and all other exam policies and procedures, please don't hesitate to reach out using our contact us form: [gbc.org/contact](http://gbc.org/contact)

**Call Center:** 1-800-795-1746 (within the US) or +1-202-742-3792 (outside the US)

GBCI's call center is available Monday through Friday from 9:00 to 17:30 ET for questions regarding exam registration and other SITES AP exam-related inquiries.

### Prometric

1501 South Clinton Street, Canton Crossing Tower, 14th Floor, Baltimore, MD 21224  
[prometric.com/gbc](http://prometric.com/gbc)

Prometric's website is available for scheduling, rescheduling, canceling and confirming exam appointments 24 hours per day. Please see Registration on page 4 for more information.

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