

Pilot Certification Manual

GUIDE TO THE BEE*now* CERTIFICATION DOCUMENTATION PROCESS

BEE *now*

Built
Environment
Education

WELCOME!

We greatly appreciate the time and effort you are contributing to the development of the BEEnow Certification Program. Although the program has been peer reviewed by a number of schools, this is the first simulation of a school going through the actual application process. Consequently, we expect many questions and will be delighted to answer them. Some of these questions will be used to create a manual to help future schools applying for certification. Because one of the biggest questions facing us is the number of credits required for basic, silver, gold, and platinum levels of certification, we encourage you to acquire as many credits as possible. That will help us determine what are reasonable requirements. We are also eager to get suggestions and feedback on both the requirements and the certification process. Your effort at this stage will be very useful when the time comes for your school to make an actual application. Most if not all of the documentation prepared for this pilot program should be valid then. If you would like to know more about the background and goals of BEEnow, please look at the “introduction” in our website: www.beenow.org

OVERVIEW:

To give schools maximum flexibility, there is only one requirement – *a survey of graduating students*.

There is no restriction on which credits a school chooses to earn in order to reach the total necessary for the certification level being pursued (i.e. basic, silver, gold, or platinum). The Certification Document (an excel spreadsheet) describes all of the credits with a multilevel number of headings (e.g. 1.1.1), title, description, and documentation requirement. We suggest that set a completion deadline less than 2 months from the day you start the process.

NAVIGATION:

A. Refer to the Google drive. In the excel file named “BEEnow Certification Worksheet.xlsx”, you will find three worksheets that enclose:

ACADEMIC Category worksheet that includes guidelines and credit-items intended to address the full scope and range of work related to Curriculum, Scholarship, and Service in Built Environment Education.

INSTITUTIONAL Category worksheet that includes guidelines and credit-items intended to address the full scope and range of work related to Administrative Initiatives, Facility Management, and the Institution’s Sustainability Commitment in Built Environment Education.

CERTIFICATION SCORECARD worksheet that includes a summary of the credit-items that can be earned through the BEEnow rating system.

B. In the worksheets, the credit-items are classified based on a multilevel number of headings. For example, the credit-item called “Studio” would be labeled “1.1.1”, because it is in the ACADEMIC category (1.), CURRICULUM credit-unit (1.1), and is a credit-item called “Studio” (1.1.1):

BEEnow Certification Scorecard		Total Score	400
1. ACADEMIC		250	
1.1 Curriculum		300	
1.1.1 Studio		50	

C. Each credit-item has a description in column G:

BEEnow Certification Scorecard		Total Score	400
1. ACADEMIC		250	
1.1 Curriculum		300	
1.1.1 Studio	1.1.1 Studio	50	

D. The green boxes indicate number of credits that can be earned for each Category. Note that the numbers in the green boxes should not be altered, because they indicate the maximum number of credits that can be earned in that category:

BEEnow Certification Scorecard		Total Score	400
1. ACADEMIC		250	
1.1 Curriculum		300	
1.1.1 Studio		50	

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[Note: This is the first draft of the manual. Rather than leave specifics blank, I made a rough guess.]

DEFINITIONS

Architecture School – the educational unit that is NAAB accredited

Credit-unit – the activity or deliverable for which credits are available

Credits – the points that can be earned for satisfying the requirements of a credit-unit

Certification Document – consisting of the three worksheets: Academic, Institutional, and Scorecard

A. Introduction:

BEE*now* certification is a voluntary program for NAAB accredited schools of architecture to encourage them to produce graduates who have the motivation, knowledge, and skills necessary to help design very low-energy buildings. Schools can be certified at the levels of basic, silver, gold, or platinum depending upon the number of credits earned. The certification is valid for 5 years at which time it can be renewed. To earn credits, a school must provide documentation that indicates that it meets the requirements for the credit-units it is pursuing. The credit-units are described in the Certification Document that consists of three worksheets (spreadsheets): Academic, Institutional, and Scorecard. The Academic worksheet is used to describe credit-units related to faculty and curriculum, the Institutional worksheet is used to describe credit-units related to the administration and facilities, and the scorecard is to be used for record keeping.

To give schools the maximum flexibility in earning credits, there is no minimum requirement for either Academic or Institutional credit-units. The only prerequisite is the survey that must be given to all

graduating seniors. To be fair to smaller schools, the number of required credits for each level is a function of school size measured in full-time equivalent faculty positions.

B. Background:

A number of architecture faculty and practitioners came together out of concern about the role of architecture in climate change. They realized that since architectural education is the foundation of the practice of architecture and that many schools of architecture are not focusing on producing graduates who can design very low-energy buildings, some means of assisting a change in that reality was needed. Since this group of faculty and practitioners could not effect the necessary changes in NAAB accreditation requirements, they decided to create a voluntary certification program that will encourage schools to focus on preparing all of their students to become designers of measurable performance in sustainability. For more information on the background of *BEE*now**, see the introduction on the *BEE*now** website: www.beenow.org.

C. Understanding the Worksheets:

[Use the material from Mohamad and Patricia] [Could it be a tutorial?]

D. Recommended Procedure for Applying:

Once a school has decided to apply for certification, a committee of three people should be formed with a representative from studio faculty, lecture faculty, and administration. This committee will then connect with a liaison from *BEE*now** for clarification and management of all questions that might arise.

The school then will submit a formal application for certification (Form A) with the necessary application fee. The form includes a proposed deadline considering the fact that submitted documentation must describe the state of affairs (less than nine months old) at the time is the

descriptions and deliverables are submitted for evaluation. However, documentation for courses given only once per year will be valid up to 14 months after being submitted for evaluation. The form also is used to designate whether the school is of small, medium, or large size for determining the number of credits required for certification.

The school then must decide what level of certification is being sought (basic, silver, gold, or platinum) and, thereby, how many credits must be accounted. Use Table 1 to determine the credits required based on the size of the architecture school and certification level desired. The word school is used to describe the entity seeking certification as, for example, an architecture department that is NAAB accredited.

Table 1 Credits Need for Certification

Level	Small School (up to 10 FTE faculty)	Medium School (11 to 15 FTE faculty)	Large School (16 or more FTE faculty)
Basic			
Silver			
Gold			
Platinum			

* FTE: full time equivalent

Although all documentation should be submitted at the same time, but no later than nine months after the date of application, the documentation for one credit-unit should be submitted early for feedback purposes.

E. Evaluation Process:

When all the documentation has been prepared, it is sent electronically to BEE*now* for evaluation by a team of three people. The team will consist of a volunteer faculty member from an architecture school, a volunteer practitioner, and a member of BEE*now* who is familiar with the

certification requirements. The evaluation will occur within one month of the day that the school is informed that BEE*now* has received all the documentation (i.e. application date). The documentation is submitted along with Form C on which the school specifies the number of credits for which documentation has been submitted. If the correct amount of documentation has been submitted for the credits being pursued, the evaluation team will determine which credits have been earned and, if necessary, explain why certain documentation is insufficient or not appropriate. Upon receiving the evaluation, the school has one month to resubmit content to replace in invalid documentation. If the documentation for more than 10% (MA: This is loose. It is better to specify a specific number of credits instead) of the credits being pursued needs to be resubmitted, the school will be charged an additional incremental fee. Any material not accepted in the second submittal can be submitted for appeal by paying a review fee (see below for details on the appeal process).

F. Certification:

When sufficient credits have been earned, a school will be awarded a five-year certification at the appropriate level. (MA: should we make the effective start date for using the certificate is August 1 or January 1 to mark a beginning of a semester, an academic year or even a calendar year?) way to Besides receiving an certification document, the school's name will be listed (as a certified school at the appropriate level) on the BEE*now* website. If possible, the school's name will be made public through notification by ACSA and/or the AIA. The certified school also will be able to use the BEE*now* logo along with a statement of certification.

G. Appeals Board:

If a school is not satisfied with the second evaluation of any document, it can appeal by filling out the appeal form (BEE*now* Form D) and submitting it with the required fee. A new team of three people will be formed (faculty, practitioner, and member of BEE*now*) to consider the school's request.

The decision of the appeal team is binding. In most cases, it will be in the school's interest to pursue different credit-units rather than make an appeal on one specific since there are so many credit-units to choose from.

H. Documentation Requirements:

A separate PDF must be submitted for each credit-unit being pursued. The file's name should be the name of the credit-unit. The PDF file will consist of at least 2 pages starting with a copy of Form B (supplied by BEE*now*) followed by a scan(s) of the document(s) (e.g. syllabus). Form B , requires the following information:

- name of school;
- name and number of credit-unit being pursued; and
- number of credits being asked for.

The form also allows for comments in case the document is not self- explanatory. Highlight in yellow the relevant material on the submitted documents.

All the PDF files should be in a folder whose name is the name of the school.

A letter on school stationery addressing the accuracy of the submission must be signed by the department head. The text for this letter is supplied by BEE*now* (see Appendix V). The school should include a scan of this letter in the folder. (MA: For consistency, should we make a template of the sign-off letter?)

Any material used to document an activity or deliverable that can fit more than one credit-unit can only be used for one of the relevant credit-units. One-off events can only be used if at least one day of the event occurred in the year preceding the date that the documentation was submitted. Student work that is submitted does not need to have a name attached to it. However, the school

needs to have a way to retrieve the student’s work in case a question about it occurs during the evaluation process. A temporary code might be employed.

I. Required Survey:

The school is required to have all students that are within one year of graduation take the BEE*now* Survey. The survey instrument is delivered only to BEE*now*, and the school only receives an annotated summary. The students’ responses are to remain confidential. The school furnishes BEE*now* the list of students who are required to take the survey, and that list is crosschecked with the names on the survey responses after which the students’ names are deleted. A response rate of at least 80% is required.

If the results of the survey conflict significantly with the information supplied by the school, BEE*now* will request the school to explain the discrepancy.

J. Certification Renewal:

The certification is valid for 5 years from the date it is confirmed. The certification can be renewed every 5 years by submitting updated versions of the original documents. Credit-units that are no longer relevant must be deleted. New credit-units must be added to meet the credit requirements for that school size. At the time of renewal, the school has the opportunity to upgrade its certification level (e.g. from Basic to Silver).

Upgrades are possible before the renewal time but not for at least two years after the initial award. The requirements for an upgrade are the same as the renewal but the number of credits must be increased to the higher level being sought.

K. Fees: [The dollar amounts are my best guess – could be way off.]

1. Initial application \$200

2. Document evaluation fee	\$800
3. Extra evaluation fee per credit*	\$30/credit
4. Appeals fee	\$60/credit
5. Renewal fee	\$400
6. Upgrade fee	\$400

*Up to 10% (MA: as in my first comment, should we specify the number of credits here instead so we are more specific) of the credits can be reevaluated for free. There is a fee for each credit that has to be reevaluated above that level.

Appendix

- I. Application Form A
- II. Form B for page one of each credit-unit PDF file
- III. Cover form for folder (Form C)
- IV. Request form for an appeal (Form D)
- V. **Template** for sign-off letter to use on school stationery by head or chairperson