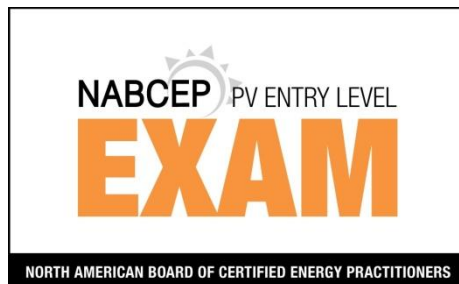




NABCEP PV Entry Level Program Provider Info Packet



Overview, Description and Disclaimer Statement

About NABCEP

The North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners, Inc. (NABCEP) is a national, voluntary, non-profit, professional credentialing organization lead by industry stakeholders. NABCEP certifies qualified practitioners in the fields of renewable and sustainable energy, and energy efficiency technologies, who have met the professional knowledge standards established by NABCEP. The purpose and goal of NABCEP is to assess and measure objectively the professional knowledge of renewable energy industry practitioners, and to promote the advancement of the renewable energy industry. As part of these goals, NABCEP is dedicated to fostering the growth of renewable energy training.

Description of the PV Entry Level Program

In the scope of this program, Providers are registered as administrators of the NABCEP PV Entry Level Exam. Organizations who want their students to have the chance to take the industry-designed NABCEP PV Entry Level Exam must apply directly to NABCEP, using the NABCEP PV Entry Level Provider Application.

NABCEP recognizes the diversity of training programs offered including short courses, continuing education programs, and more in-depth and lengthy programs of study, including formal apprenticeship, multi-course certificate programs, and degree-track programs. For this reason, curriculum, course(s) and program development is determined by the Provider. NABCEP does not have curriculum available for the Entry Level Program. However, the Learning Objectives developed for this program include a breakdown of subtopics and time allotment that should be used in curriculum development. Providers may use the resources and materials they prefer in order to sufficiently prepare students for the Entry Level Exam. In some cases prerequisites or bridge training requirements may be necessary for students to fully comprehend all the areas encompassed in the Learning Objectives. These prerequisites should be determined by the Provider.

Disclaimer Statement:

The NABCEP PV Entry Level Exam is intended to test basic knowledge and is not equivalent to NABCEP Certifications nor is it a prerequisite for NABCEP Certifications.

A passing score on the NABCEP PV Entry Level Exam does not represent any permission or license to work in any field or position.

A passing score on the NABCEP PV Entry Level Exam does not provide any guarantee of employment.

Registration as a NABCEP PV Entry Level Exam Provider does not constitute any endorsement, approval or sponsorship of the Provider or programs by NABCEP, and does not indicate any other affiliation with NABCEP.

Registered Provider Requirements

Eligible Institutions

The NABCEP PV Entry Level Exam can be offered by any university, college, community college, or vocational-technical institute accredited by an agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education; or offered by any Joint Apprenticeship & Training Committee or U.S. Department of Labor approved apprenticeship program; or offered by a training program that has received accreditation from the Institute for Sustainable Power Quality (ISPQ) or equivalent third-party accreditation.¹

Instructors

A resume, CV or summary of experience for each instructor must be submitted with the application. Resumes must show a minimum of 40 hours of board-recognized training² in advanced solar PV. All installation or equivalent installation experience should also be documented. NABCEP must be notified and provided with all necessary documentation if there is a change in instructor.

Program or Course(s) Requirements

Registered NABCEP PV Entry Level Exam Providers must have programs that include course(s) which have an interactive teacher-learner structure. This implies a connection between a learner and a learning source. It 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 he/she is separated from faculty and other students but where the learner receives feedback and the learner's progress is monitored. Examples include computer-assisted instruction, interactive video/CD/DVD and/or web site learning.

Registered NABCEP PV Entry Level Exam Providers are required to provide students with the necessary information covering the NABCEP-issued Learning Objectives. This material shall be presented in a well developed way. Courses can include more than the Learning Objectives but must include a comprehensive review of them.

Prerequisites or bridge training and/or experience in electrical systems, mathematics, and other subjects may be required for some students to fully comprehend and satisfactorily demonstrate knowledge of all of the Learning Objectives. Also, for intensive short courses (e.g., 40-hour, one-week workshops) students should be encouraged to spend approximately 2-3 additional hours outside of class (for each hour in class) to review the subject matter, solve problems, and study reference materials prior to taking the PV Entry Level Exam. This may require the student to take the exam at a later date rather than immediately following the course.³

¹ For information on ISPQ or equivalent third-party accreditation see Appendix I

² Definition of board-recognized training available in Appendix II

³ NABCEP Entry Level Learning Objectives, September 2009

Learning Objectives

The PV Entry Level Exam program is based on a set of Learning Objectives developed by a Committee of PV subject matter experts. The Learning Objectives include ten (10) skill sets:

- 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

The skills identified in this analysis do not replace electrical trades, technician, technologist or engineering training. See the Learning Objectives document for the full description of these skills and tasks.

NABCEP will periodically review the Learning Objectives and make any changes according to changes in the National Electrical Code or any technology changes. NABCEP will notify the Provider of any modifications to the Learning Objectives.

Fees

Annual Fee: \$300.00

- Initial annual fee must be submitted with application
- Will be refunded if registration is not completed
- NABCEP will invoice annually for subsequent fee

Exam: \$75.00 per exam administered

- NABCEP invoices after score reports are issued
- Individual payments from students are not accepted
- Providers may add an administration fee to cover the cost of the exam printing and other administration expenses
 - Additional fee to be retained by Provider
 - Additional fee not to exceed \$75.00 per exam

At NABCEP's sole discretion we may choose not to grade exam forms from registered organizations whose accounts are in arrears. It is NABCEP policy to provide warning letters and statements to Providers whose accounts are 60 days past due. Any accounts exceeding 90 days past due are subject to termination and will be notified by NABCEP. 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.

Application and Registration Notification

Applying

Only complete Entry Level Provider Applications will be reviewed. Potential Providers are advised to apply as far in advance as possible since application turnaround time is dependent upon application backlog. Please be advised that it is against NABCEP policies to advertise a course or training program as offering the NABCEP PV Entry Level Exam before formal notice of registration has been given. Students will not be retro-actively eligible to sit for the exam.

NABCEP will notify the primary contact via e-mail when an application is received. Within the following three weeks an initial audit of the application will be completed. Organizations will only be notified at this point if the application is incomplete.

Incomplete applications will only be reviewed once they are complete. Once a provider has been notified that their application is incomplete, they will have 3 months to complete the application. After this period, the application will be invalid and should the organization still wish to administer the Entry Level Exam, a new application will be required.

Complete applications, found to meet all criteria set forth by NABCEP, will be approved for registration. The primary contact will be notified via e-mail. The contact address will be sent to NABCEP's testing contractor, Professional Testing Inc. Preliminary packages containing the requisite agreement forms and administration manual will be sent to the provider within 5 business days of notice of their registration. Within 10 business days of receipt of their agreement forms, Professional Testing Inc. will send the examination and administration forms in an encrypted electronic file to the Provider designated staff member. Examinations are printed, administered and proctored by provider personnel at the expense of the provider, and at a time and location determined and announced by the provider. All test related questions should be addressed to Professional Testing Inc.

Expired Applications

The Entry Level Provider Application is periodically updated. It is the applicant's responsibility to verify that the application being submitted is the current up-to-date version of the form as posted on our website www.nabcep.org. NABCEP cannot accept applications more than three months out of date.

Appropriate Certificate of Insurance

All registered NABCEP PV Entry Level Providers must submit a copy of the appropriate Certificate of Insurance(s) showing that professional liability and general liability policies are maintained with respect to the administration of examinations.

The Exam

Procedure

Providers will be required to sign a NABCEP Entry Level Exam Provider Agreement Form, agreeing to comply with NABCEP examination administration policies, including those related to maintaining the security of the examination, confidentiality of the test items and other related issues. The NABCEP Entry Level examination is developed according to accepted psychometric standards of measurement; the items are written and reviewed by Subject Matter Experts. The NABCEP Entry Level Examination is a confidential and secure measurement of knowledge that is not meant to be read, studied, discussed or taught by Providers or their instructors.

After exam administration, answer sheets must be returned to the Professional Testing Inc. for scoring via a traceable carrier at the expense of the Provider. Successful candidates will receive a suitable-for-framing letter stating that they have achieved a passing score on the NABCEP PV Entry Level Exam.

Upon grading of the answer sheets, NABCEP will send candidate scores directly to each candidate to the mailing address provided in the Exam Scheduling Form and Release of Scores. Providers will be sent a listing of the scores of each candidate who signed the release.

Exam Administration Location

The registered Provider must administer the Entry Level Exam from the location covered by the certificate of liability insurance provided in the application. Providers who wish to administer the exam in another location must seek approval from NABCEP 30 days in advance. To gain approval from NABCEP, Providers must demonstrate that appropriate testing security measures will be employed at the remote site, and they must also file a certificate of liability insurance for the proposed exam administration site.

Special Accommodations

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 Professional Testing Inc. for review.

Students

Students must successfully complete coursework with a registered NABCEP Entry Level Exam Provider in order to become eligible to sit for the Entry Level Exam. Student must be provided with a copy of the NABCEP PV Entry Level Exam Candidate Information Sheet which can be found on NABCEP's website under "Entry Level" and "for Students." Each student must also be provided with a copy of the NABCEP PV Entry Level Exam Learning Objectives. Providers and students are encouraged to contact NABCEP if they have any questions about our programs.

Marketing Guidelines

Registered Course or Program Marketing

Registered NABCEP PV Entry Level Exam Providers may market their programs and courses as "Registered NABCEP PV Entry Level Exam Providers." Since NABCEP does not endorse, sponsor, or approve training, no such language is permitted in marketing of training.

The only logo to be used with marketing of the NABCEP PV Entry Level Exam is the PV Entry Level Exam Logo. The NABCEP rectangular logo is not to be used without prior written approval from NABCEP. The NABCEP circular Installer trademark with design can only be used by Certified Installers and then only with the inclusion of their name and Certificant number.

Student's use of a Passing Score Achievement

A passing score on the NABCEP PV Entry Level Exam does not confer the title of a NABCEP Certified Installer™ or any other title or credential from NABCEP. Successful Candidates may state that they have passed the PV Entry Level Exam issued by the North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCEP). The passing score achievement document may only be displayed in association with the individual achieving the passing score, as the achievement is personal and may not be transferred, assigned to, displayed or used by any other individual, organization, business, or entity. Replacement documents are available from NABCEP for a fee of \$25.00.

If you have any questions about NABCEP, please contact

North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners
(NABCEP)

634 Plank Rd, Suite 102
Clifton Park, NY, 12065

E-mail: clovery@nabcep.org

Phone: (518) 289-9685

Fax: (518) 899-1092

Appendix I

ISPQ Accreditation

The Institute for Sustainable Power is an international non-profit organization that coordinates, develops, and maintains international standards for the evaluation and qualification of renewable energy (RE), energy efficiency (EE), and distributed generation (DG) training providers. The standard is the Institute for Sustainable Power Quality and its regional licensee is the Interstate Renewable Energy Council. ISPQ accreditation meets the accreditation qualification for NABCEP PV Entry Level Provider Registration. More information can be found at www.irecusa.org

Equivalent third-party accreditation

If an organization feels they meet the requirement of accreditation from an equivalent third-party, a letter from the accrediting agency should be submitted outlining how their accreditation procedure equates to the procedure outlined below.

The Accrediting Procedure (U. S. Department of Education, 2009)

1. **Standards:** The accrediting agency, in collaboration with educational institutions, establishes standards.
2. **Self-study:** The institution or program seeking accreditation prepares an in-depth self-evaluation study that measures its performance against the standards established by the accrediting agency.
3. **On-site Evaluation:** A team selected by the accrediting agency visits the institution or program to determine first-hand if the applicant meets the established standards.
4. **Publication:** Upon being satisfied that the applicant meets its standards, the accrediting agency grants accreditation or preaccreditation status and lists the institution or program in an official publication with other similarly accredited or preaccredited institutions or programs.
5. **Monitoring:** The accrediting agency monitors each accredited institution or program throughout the period of accreditation granted to verify that it continues to meet the agency's standards.
6. **Reevaluation:** The accrediting agency periodically reevaluates each institution or program that it lists to ascertain whether continuation of its accredited or preaccredited status is warranted.

Appendix II

Board-recognized training:

Training must meet the following criteria to be considered board-recognized training:

- a) A minimum of 40 hours cumulative
- b) Have a formal training format, with a teacher-learner structure. This implies a connection between a learner and a learning source. It 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 he/she is separated from faculty and other students but where the learner receives some sort of feedback and the learner's progress is monitored. Examples include computer-assisted instruction, interactive video/CD/DVD and/or web site learning
- c) Covers core competencies from the PV Installer Task Analysis, including the National Electrical Code® and OSHA safety standards relevant to PV installation

Types of training programs may include but are not limited to:

1. Offered by any accredited university, college, or community college
2. Dedicated independent training programs ISPQ accredited
3. Apprenticeship training programs
4. Those approved by State Contractor Licensing Boards
5. Vocational/Technical training programs
6. Industry in-house training programs (i.e. Manufacturers)