



## **Frequently Asked Question**

### **Questions related to the NABCEP Installer Certification**

Would you like to find a NABCEP [Certified Installer](#) in your area?

Do you want to be a NABCEP [Solar PV Certified Installer](#)?

Do you want to be a NABCEP [Solar Thermal Certified Installer](#)?

Are you looking for the Solar PV or Solar Thermal [Study Guides](#)?

Are you trying to [recertify](#) your Solar PV or Solar Thermal Certification?

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### **Questions related to the Entry Level Programs.**

Are you looking for information about [renewable energy training](#)?

Are you looking to get involved in the industry and learn more about [Solar PV systems](#)?

Are you looking for a list of registered Providers of NABCEP's [Entry Level Exam](#)?

Does your institute want to become a [Registered Provider of the NABCEP Entry Level Exam](#)?

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### **What is the difference between the Entry Level Exam and the NABCEP Certified Installer Exam?**

The Entry Level Exam is an entry point into the field of solar photovoltaic systems. It shows that you have a basic understanding of Solar PV system installation and design, but in itself, it does not qualify one to become an installer. It prepares you for employment in the field as passing the exam will be recognized by potential employers. To obtain the Entry Level Exam, you must pass a course offered by a Registered Provider, and then pass the exam administered by the provider at the end of that course. The list of Registered Providers can be found on our website [HERE](#). On the opposite end of the spectrum is the NABCEP Installer Certification which is a distinguishing mark for professional installers. In order to become a certified NABCEP Installer, you must first qualify to sit for the exam by meeting the criteria for education, training, and experience as described in section 3 of the [Candidate Information Handbook](#). After submitting an application which will be thoroughly reviewed by NABCEP showing that you have met all the criteria to sit for the exam, you will be notified if you have, in fact, completed all the prerequisites necessary. The program culminates in a 4 hour, 60 question exam, which if passed, will give you the title of a certified NABCEP Installer. Your certification will last for three years from the time you are notified that you passed the exam.

### **How do I know what training courses meet the criteria for board recognized training, and which ones are recommended?**

To be clear, NABCEP is not an organization that accredits, recognizes, reviews or approves training. NABCEP requires that applicants choose a training course that meets the criteria for board recognized training in order to achieve one prerequisite to sit for the Installer Certification exam. We list general guidelines of what would qualify as board recognized training, but it is up to the applicant to choose the appropriate courses that will help prepare themselves best to pass the examination. Ultimately, *it is upon the candidate to research and decide which course(s) will help prepare them best for the NABCEP Certification exam.*

The guidelines for board recognized training are similar for both the PV and Solar Thermal Exam and can be found [HERE](#).

NABCEP highly recommends that applicants browse the Interstate Renewable Energy Council's (IREC) website at [www.irecusa.org](http://www.irecusa.org) which has a general catalog of renewable energy training programs and lists accredited training programs.



## **How do I meet the experience requirements to be eligible to sit for the NABCEP Solar PV Certification exam?**

As a candidate for the NABCEP Certification exams, it is important that you review the respective Candidate Information Handbook which covers all aspects of the application process and eligibility requirements. The handbooks can be found [HERE](#).

For PV, experience is defined as the installation of at least two PV systems occurring at some point in the two years prior to submitting an application for the exam. The individual must be in a **responsible role** on the job installing PV systems. A **Responsible role** is defined as the role of foreman, supervisor, site manager, or experienced worker performing PV installation work without direct supervision. In terms of being able to use an installation as one of the two necessary to meet the experience requirement, only one person per installation is allowed to claim the title of being in a **responsible role**.

The installation of at least two PV systems must total 1kW. At least one installation must be a system with an inverter and subject to a complete electrical permitting and inspection process by a permitting authority — OR — in the absence of such, an appropriate underwriter authorized to provide an inspection certificate. In regions where neither of these inspection options exists, the Application Review Committee will judge experience based on supplied documentation.

For more information about experience and documenting installations, please click [HERE](#) and review Section 3 of the [Candidate Information Handbook](#).

## **I've submitted my application to sit for the Solar PV or Solar Thermal Certification exam, when can I expect to hear back?**

The Candidate Information Handbook states that applicants will be notified of eligibility / ineligibility no later than 4 weeks before the exam - roughly mid February. Candidates who submit their application prior to January 15th will be able to sit for the March 13th exam provided that the applications submitted are complete and are accepted. Those who submit applications prior to January 15 that are incomplete and require further supporting documentation may or may not be able to sit for the exam - this will be determined on a case by case basis depending on the documentation missing and the timeliness of the candidate supplying the requested documentation. These Candidates will be notified of their eligibility to sit for the exam no later than 4 weeks before the exam.

## **I have done the necessary coursework and would like to sit for the Entry Level exam. Where can I take the exam?**



There is only one way to sit for the Entry Level Exam, and that is by first finding a Registered Provider of the Entry Level Exam on our website [HERE](#).

If you have taken a class from a provider that is not on this list, you will not be able to take the exam for the Entry Level Exam. After locating a provider on the Entry Level Registered Providers List, you will need to contact them directly to enroll in their class. Upon successfully passing the class, you will then be eligible to sit for the NABCEP Entry Level exam.

**We are interested in becoming a provider for education and training courses, what are our options?**

As a training provider, there are a couple ways that you can be complementary to NABCEP programs. Let us just re-iterate first that NABCEP does not review, accredit or recognize training. The organization that does this is IREC and you can read about the Institute for Sustainable Power Quality standards for renewable energy training programs [HERE](#).

Training providers play a very important role by preparing students for the NABCEP Entry Level Exam and the NABCEP Certification Exams.

- 1) If you would like to become a Provider of the Entry Level Exam, please click [HERE](#) and review the Entry Level Provider Info Packet which provides an overview of the program and will help you determine if your institution is eligible to be a Provider.
- 2) Many training providers can offer advanced PV training for candidates to use in an application to sit for the NABCEP Certification exam. You're training does not need to be approved by NABCEP but must meet the criteria for board-recognized training. These can be found [HERE](#).
- 3) Training providers can also offer Continuing Education for NABCEP Certified Installers. To understand if your courses are already eligible as Continuing Education or if you need to register them, please consult the Continuing Education Guidelines which can be found [HERE](#).

If you have any further questions about how your training may complement NABCEP's programs or mission, please contact the NABCEP office at (800) 654-0021

**I took a class from a registered provider of the Entry Level Exam, but I failed the exam. Can I take it again without having to retake the course?**

After failing the exam, you may take it one additional time at a scheduled, organized



testing site without repeating the course. You will be required to pay another exam fee. You will also have to make arrangements with a provider offering the course and may be required to pay an additional administrative fee set by the provider.

If you elected, however, not to take the test after completion of the course, you are eligible to take the exam two times without having to repeat the course. In order to sit for the Entry Level exam, you must provide proof that you passed a course offered by a registered provider, and mail that in along with the answer sheet for your exam.

In either case, the candidate must make all of the arrangements with a registered provider. A list of all the registered providers for the Entry Level Exam can be found on our website [HERE](#)