



# Green Star Volume Certification

## Process Guide

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## Executive Summary

Within the Green Star rating system there are two programs that allow a group of projects that share similar features to be certified in bulk. These programs are Volume Certification and Portfolio Certification:

- Volume Certification focuses on the design and construction of assets, and typically uses Green Star – Design & As Built or Green Star – Interiors as the rating tools of choice.
- Portfolio Certification on the other hand, focuses on groups of assets in operation, and uses Green Star – Performance as the rating tool of choice.

The focus of this document is Volume Certification, and outlines the processes involved in achieving certification.

### Volume Certification

Volume Certification is a customised service to certify a group of projects that share similar features. Applicable to all Green Star rating tools except Green Star – Performance, it enables common elements of a Standard Design to be certified once and then can be applied to future individual projects to achieve a Green Star rating.

Green Star Volume Certification allows projects to access the benefits of standardisation, including:

- Lower submission costs per project;
- Lower registration fees per project;
- Reduced documentation;
- Reduced turnaround time for each submission;
- Achieve formal certification earlier;
- Ability to achieve an individual project certification for a specific site earlier in the project lifecycle;
- Increased technical support and free technical queries throughout the Standard Credit Assessment stage;
- Increased certainty that common design, processes and materials comply with best practice benchmarks;
- Increased marketing opportunities and ability to demonstrate corporate leadership in sustainability.

### The Volume Certification Process Guide

This document outlines the steps required to achieve a Green Star rating across a group of projects that share similar design features via Volume Certification. There are distinct 3 stages in the Volume Certification process:

- **Stage 1: Project Inception and Registration**

This stage is aimed at understanding what the opportunity is for Volume Certification and how the GBCA can assist. This includes meeting with the GBCA to discuss organisational objectives and strategies, the project standard design, and internal quality control mechanisms. By the end of this stage, the Applicant should understand the level of commitment required to achieve certification across a group of projects, and have projects registered and going through the certification process.

- **Stage 2: Standard Credit Assessment**

This stage outlines the process for having Standard Credits assessed. This also includes information on what to provide at the next stage, Individual Project Assessment, such as how the Quality Assurance process works, as well as what to do when there are changes to the Standard Design.

- **Stage 3: Individual Project Assessment**

This stage outlines how the Standard Credits can be applied to individual projects, as well as guidance on how documentation specific credits must be submitted for assessment. The processes of auditing Standard credits and recertification of the Standard design are also outlined in this stage.

## Questions?

For more information please contact the GBCA at 02 8239 6200.

## Volume Certification Summary

With the introduction of Volume Certification, organisations can now have common elements of their project standard design assessed once and then applied to specific project sites. This reduces costs, future proofs assets, and provides the independent verification that Green Star is internationally recognised for.

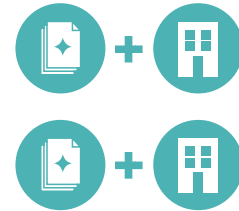
### Volume Certification – Overview Summary



**Project Inception & Registration**



**Standard Credit Assessment<sup>A</sup>**



**Individual Project Assessment**

#### What you get

- Two workshops to discuss Volume assessment approach & Volume Certification Technical Amendment document
- Consumer engagement marketing workshop
- Unlimited technical support
- Right to market: Registered for Green Star

#### What you get

- Right to market: Standard Assessment results
- Assessment Certificate outlining standard credits achieved (valid for 2 years)
- Unlimited technical support

#### What you get

- Right to market: Individual building As Built ratings
- Unlimited technical support

#### What you submit

- Certification legal agreement
- Registration fee

#### What you submit

- Credit Templates for policies, guidelines, approaches, contracts and specifications
- Supporting documentation
- Quality Assurance process description
- Scorecard

#### What you submit

- Credit Templates for all claimed credits
- Supporting Documentation for site-specific credits
- Scorecard
- Certification legal agreement
- Registration fee

#### Assessment process

- No items will be assessed at this stage

#### Assessment Process

- Two rounds of assessment, 4 week turnaround time for each round
- Assessor reviews all templates
- Assessor reviews documentation
- Optional Assessor interaction pre or post Round 1

#### Assessment Process

- Two rounds of assessment, 2-3 week turnaround time for each round
- Assessor reviews all templates
- Assessor performs tiered levels of assessment for site specific documentation
- Assessor reviews randomly selected supporting documentation for standard credits claimed at building level
- Optional Assessor interaction pre or post Round 1

## Stage 1: Project Inception & Registration

The first phase of the Volume Certification process is to lay the foundations required to ensure each individual project is set up to successfully, and efficiently, achieve a Green Star certified rating.

### Project Inception & Registration Stage



Project Inception  
& Registration



#### What you get

- Two workshops to discuss Volume assessment approach & Volume Certification Technical Amendment document
- Consumer engagement marketing workshop
- Unlimited technical support
- Right to market: Registered for Green Star

#### What you submit

- Certification legal agreement and registration fee payment

#### Assessment process

- No items will be assessed at this stage

### Project Inception

The Project Inception sets out the scope of works and defines which credits will be assessed during the Standard Credit Assessment stage and which credits will be assessed during the Individual Project Assessment stage. This will be determined through close collaboration and a detailed workshop between GBCA and the Applicant. As part of this process, additional workshops including the Project Inception Meeting and a Standard Credit Technical Workshop are required. In addition, an optional Consumer Engagement Marketing Workshop for Applicants wanting to explore the benefits of how to best market Volume Certification can be leveraged.

### Project Inception Meeting

The Project Inception Meeting aims to ensure both the Applicant and GBCA understand the type of scope and projects being rated and how to ensure successful delivery of the projects. This is a one hour Sydney-based or teleconference meeting, where GBCA will detail the Volume Certification process and obtain information from the Applicant to ensure they are on the right pathway for the proposed projects.

### Registration Process

If Volume Certification is agreed upon as the correct pathway for the intended projects, the next step is to formally register. GBCA will issue you with a Certification Agreement and invoice for the Standard Credit Assessment stage. In order to complete registration GBCA must receive the executed Certification Agreement and payment of the Certification fee.

If it is decided Volume Certification is not the most appropriate pathway, GBCA will discuss options with you and alternative pathways towards Green Star certification.

### Volume Certification Fees

The Volume Certification fees are developed on a case-by-case basis depending on the level of standardisation amongst an Applicant's projects. The more common elements a Standard Design has, the more cost effective it will likely be for an Applicant to seek certification.

## Green Star – Volume Certification

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The fees are broken down into two divisions, one which covers the Project Inception and Standard Credit Assessment stages, and the other which covers each Individual Project Assessment. The approximate cost for the Project Inception and Standard Credit Assessment stages is closely aligned with the cost of certifying a single project of a particular building type. For example, a retail fitout with a contract value of \$3m-\$10m may be around \$15,000\* (member price) for certification. This fee is payable prior to the Standard Credit Technical Workshop and covers GBCA workshops, unlimited technical support and the assessment at the Standard Credit Assessment stage.

*\*Please note this is an example and the cost will vary depending on your individual situation. Please contact GBCA for a quote.*

## Standard Credit Technical Workshop

Upon registration, a Standard Credit Technical Workshop is arranged. This workshop, based in Sydney or via teleconference, aims to analyse benchmarks and credits, and to understand which are relevant to the Standard Design. Applicants should involve people familiar with the projects, such as those in charge of managing design brief/guidelines, construction managers, project managers, personnel who verify the successful delivery of a project, and members of the consulting team.

This workshop will define which credits or criterion can have an element of commonality that can be broadly replicated. The key at this point is to try and find commonalities, not exclusions. A good way to determine this is to consider if a process or design feature is implemented the same way every time. If so, it can be assessed during the Standard Credit Assessment stage. It is important to understand that the process or design feature does not need to be applied to every individual project to be considered a Standard Credit. There will be a chance to identify whether a Standard Credit applies to a particular project in the Individual Project Assessment stage (see Individual Project Assessment section for more detailed information). The more common elements identified at this stage, the greater the efficiencies will be. Global or company wide approaches can also be recognised through this method. Even where the approach requires an element of site applicability (cycling spaces for example, is a site dependent impact), the design approach may be assessed as a standard Criterion.

## Quality Assurance Process

For each of the Standard Credits that will be applied at the Individual Project Assessment stage, in lieu of full documentation requirements supporting a credit, a Quality Assurance process will need to be established and formalised. This will ensure that such outcomes are realised at the Individual Project stage. This could include a simple sign off at the site level that Standard Credit items have been received (i.e. furniture), or letters confirming that the project team has complied with requirements of the credit. Each credit reviewed at the Standard Credit Assessment stage will have a Quality Assurance component agreed to by the GBCA at the Standard Credit Technical Workshop. (Note: Projects that are audited will be required to provide full documentation as per the credit requirements in the relevant Green Star Submission Guidelines).

The outcome of this stage will be a *Volume Certification Technical Amendment* document. This document clearly outlines which credits have been identified as 'Standard' credits and therefore will be assessed during the Standard Credit Assessment stage, and which credits are 'Site Specific' and will be assessed during each Individual Project Assessment.

## Consumer Engagement Marketing Workshop and Marketing Opportunities

Applicants will have the opportunity to engage with the GBCA Marketing team to discuss ways to maximise the marketability of your Volume registration and certification. Applicants are encouraged to enquire with the GBCA Marketing team on 02 8239 6200 for more information.

## Stage 2: Standard Credit Assessment

The second stage is to have Standard Credits assessed and locked in for individual projects.

### Standard Credit Assessment Stage



Standard Credit Assessment



#### What you get

- Right to market: Standard Assessment results
- Assessment Certificate outlining standard credits achieved (valid for 2 years)
- Unlimited technical support

#### What you submit

- Credit Templates for policies, guidelines, approaches, contracts and specifications
- Supporting documentation
- Quality Assurance process description
- Scorecard

#### Assessment Process

- Two rounds of assessment, 4 week turnaround time for each round
- Assessor reviews all templates
- Assessor reviews documentation
- Optional Assessor interaction pre or post Round 1

## Standard Credit Assessment

Once the *Volume Certification Technical Amendment* document has been issued, the Standard Credit Submission is ready to be compiled. The project team must begin collating all Standard Credit documentation as per the relevant Submission Guidelines and agreed amendments outlined in the *Volume Certification Technical Amendment* document. Like any project going through Green Star certification, flexibility to modify documentation, or seek alternatives at this stage via our Credit Interpretation Request process will be available. Any rulings issued will be included in the *Volume Certification Technical Amendment* document for future reference.

For any credit, a number of distinct methods of compliance or options may exist. For example, for the Standard Credit Assessment, there could be five options of furniture items available from different suppliers; for the Individual Project Assessment, depending on the project, the installation of a particular furniture element from one of the five suppliers may occur. This can also extend to solutions related to processes (i.e. distinct operational guides), or design solutions (i.e. distinct store layouts). When submitting Standard Credits, all options should be included for assessment even though they may not be applied to every individual project. At the Individual Project Assessment stage project teams should clearly nominate which processes and/or solutions have been applied to the particular project.

## Documentation

Documentation for the desired credits is collated in line with the relevant Submission Guidelines and agreed amendments outlined in the *Volume Certification Technical Amendment* document. Examples of documents that will need to be provided may include speculative drawings, fitout guidelines, standard specifications, material safety data sheets, policies and procedures, and any relevant commitments. The process for submitting for Standard Credit Assessment is the same as all Green Star projects. Submission of both a General Section and supporting documentation for each Standard Credit is required. Documentation must be submitted in accordance with the GBCA's [Submission Requirements checklist](#).



## Assessment

All individual credits submitted will be assessed in full by one or more third-party Certified Assessors. In line with all Green Star assessments there will be up to two rounds of assessment available. After the two rounds of assessment, the points achieved will form your Standard Credit Assessment Certificate and these points can be applied to your individual projects. The Standard Credit Certificate is valid for two years from the date of issue.

Individual projects registered for Volume Certification can apply credits from the Standard Credit Certificate to an individual project submission, during the time the certificate valid. A Volume Certification scorecard will also be provided outlining the points achieved for the Standard Credit Assessment, and will allow you to calculate the number of points that any individual project will be able to claim at the individual Credit Assessment. Credits not assessed at the Standard Credit Assessment stage can still be submitted on an individual project basis at the individual Project Assessment stage.

## Changes to the Standard Credits or Standard Design

The Standard Credit Certificate can be updated at any time. Amendments may be required due to changes in procurement or management of projects. For example, a change in the quality assurance process will need to be updated and verified by the GBCA, in order to be included in an Individual Project submission. Any changes should be discussed with the GBCA as early as possible so they can be reviewed and incorporated accordingly. Depending on the scope of changes, additional fees and approval timeframes will need to be considered.

Once the assessment is complete the GBCA will issue an updated Standard Credit Certificate. Please note this change will not impact the expiry of the certificate. Major changes to the design or processes that impact a significant amount of credits, may incur a larger fee and longer turnaround timeframes. In some cases an extension of the certificate expiry may be granted. These will be reviewed by GBCA on a case-by-case basis.

## Stage 3: Individual Project Assessment

The third stage is applying standard assessed documentation to individual projects and having them certified.

### Individual Project Assessment Stage



Individual Project Assessment

#### What you get

- Right to market: Individual building As Built ratings
- Unlimited technical support

#### What you submit

- Executed Certification Agreement & invoice payment per individual project
- Credit Templates for all claimed credits
- Supporting Documentation for Standard credits & full documentation for Site Specific credits
- Scorecard

#### Assessment Process

- Two rounds of assessment, 2-3 week turn around time for each round
- Assessor reviews all templates and simplified supporting documentation for Standard credits
- Assessor performs assessment for site specific documentation
- Optional Assessor interaction pre or post Round 1

### Individual Project Assessment

Once the Standard Credit Assessment is complete and credits have been achieved, it is time to register individual projects for Green Star certification. When ready to register the GBCA will assist in the registration process by issuing a Certification Agreement and invoice. Registration of the Individual Project will be complete once GBCA receives an executed Certification Agreement and invoice payment. The Individual Project Assessment fee is outlined in the Applicant specific proposal provided at the beginning of the process. For multiple project registration at one time, the GBCA may be able to issue one streamlined Certification Agreement and invoice. Please speak to the GBCA for more information.

### Project Specific Credit Application

The Individual Project Assessment stage includes applying credits approved at the Standard Credit Assessment stage, as outlined in the *Volume Certification Technical Amendment* document, as well as Site Specific credits that are uniquely applicable to the individual project. An example of a credit that is likely to be assessed as a Site Specific credit is 'Access to Public Transport'. This credit is dependent on site location and is unlikely to be resolved through a Standard Credit approach. These Site Specific credits will be assessed in full for every individual project submitted for assessment, and documentation must be collated as per the Submission Guidelines.

The Volume Certification scorecard, with the Standard Credits claimed for individual projects will need to be completed for each project submitted. Not all Standard Credits will be applicable to every individual project. The Volume Certification scorecard allows project teams to quickly claim pre-approved Standard Credits. Simply selecting 'yes' on those credits will indicate the credits that are being claimed as Standard Credits for the Individual Project Assessment. It is not a requirement that all Standard Credits are selected for each individually registered project. For example, 'Daylight' may be claimed as a Standard Credit, but may only be applicable where a fitout is located in a strip mall; whereas fitouts within enclosed shopping centres may not be able to claim the same Standard Credit.

The Volume Certification scorecard will assist teams in tallying and identifying which additional credits may be submitted to ensure that the registered project achieves a rating. As with all Green Star rating tools (except for Green Star – Performance), if a minimum score of 45 or above, out of all available Standard Credits and Individual Project credits is achieved, the GBCA will award a Green Star Certified Rating.

## Standard Credit Application at Individual Project Assessment

Credits that have been achieved during the Standard Credit Assessment stage will not require full documentation as per the Submission Guidelines. Only the reduced documentation as outlined in the *Volume Certification Technical Amendment* document will be required to confirm compliance. These credits will be audited. The GBCA will randomly choose a project and notify the project team of their requirements.

## Standard Credit Audit Process at Individual Project Assessment

Green Star relies on ensuring that a project performs to a rigorous set of standards. When undergoing Volume Certification, this takes place through the Standard Credit Audit Process, in addition to the Individual Project Assessment. The Standard Credit Audit Process verifies that the Quality Assurance process is working as intended and outlined in the Standard Credit Assessment stage. For example, if 'Greenhouse Gas Emissions' has been awarded in the Standard Credit Assessment and is claimed on an individual project, this credit might be audited. In the event an audit occurs, failure to present documentation showing the elements claimed will mean the Quality Assurance process is not accurately verifying the validity of claims in the Volume Certification scorecard.

The Standard Credit Audit Process relies on the GBCA reviewing the Quality Assurance documentation in full for the first submitted project, and then randomly auditing full documentation for 20% of projects, but no less than 1 in 5 individual projects. Please note, the audit will not occur at regular intervals, and audits only occur on the individual projects using Standard Credits to demonstrate compliance.

Notification of whether an individual project is to be audited will occur when Applicants inform GBCA of the intent to submit for Individual Project Assessment. They are typically required to inform GBCA of intent to submit for assessment at least 2 weeks prior to submission. Applicants may want to take up to 4 weeks to tidy-up Quality Assurance documentation, but this should not be an onerous process when the Quality Assurance methods are properly implemented. Please inform GBCA if there will be any delays in submitting for assessment.

## Assessment of Standard Credits on Individual Project

In addition to the Site Specific credits that must be documented in full accordance to the Submission Guidelines, Standard Credits as applied to an Individual Project will also be assessed. For these credits, documentation will need to be provided as outlined as per the *Volume Certification Technical Amendment* document and the Submission Guidelines. This may include the following documentation:

- Completed Submission Template;
- Relevant credit calculator (where applicable);
- Quality Assurance summary sheet;
- Documentation collected through the Quality Assurance process, as outlined in the credit and in the *Volume Certification Technical Amendment*.

For Standard Credits being applied to the Individual Project, once the relevant documentation is submitted and received by the GBCA for assessment, the Assessment Panel will review the documentation and provide one of three comments for each credit (including the audited ones):

- *Compliant*: The documentation submitted demonstrates the credit has been verified through the Quality Assurance process.
- *Minor non-compliance*: The documentation highlighted issues that must be addressed prior to the next audit.
- *Major non-compliance*: The documentation submitted is not:
  - in line with the Quality Assurance process (example, the report is not for the relevant project, or is not filled in); or
  - the documentation submitted does not align with the Standard Credit submittal (e.g. a specified chair is from a different manufacturer); or
  - the Volume Scorecard indicates a claim for a Standard Credit that cannot be verified.

*Major non-compliance* will result in the Standard Credit not being awarded on the audited project and will be forfeited for all future projects. Three *Major non-compliance* on a single audit, or five *Major non-compliance* notifications across all audits, will result in a halt of all in-progress registrations for Volume Certification. In these instances, Applicants will need to speak with the GBCA and have their Standard Credits and Quality Assurance process reassessed for compliance. In addition, fees may apply for revision and re-assessment of credits and Quality Assurance processes. Alternatively, the Applicant may choose to go through the Standard Credit Technical Workshop again to update and amend the items that have been deemed *Major non-compliance*.

## Summary of Documentation Requirements

	Standard Credit Assessment	Individual Project Assessment - Non-Audited Project	Individual Project Assessment - Audited Project
<b>Standard Credit</b>	Full credit documentation submitted, including process and quality assurance methodology and sample summary sheets.	Submission Template.  Credit Calculator (where applicable).  Quality Assurance summary sheet.	Full credit documentation submitted.
<b>Site Specific Credit</b>	No documentation submitted.	Full credit documentation submitted.	Full credit documentation submitted.

## Standard Credit Recertification

The Volume Certification Certificate is valid for 24 months from the date of issue. In order to extend the validity of the Volume Certification Certificate beyond the 24-month period, Applicants will be required to have their Standard Credits and Quality Assurance process re-assessed. Applicants are advised to contact the GBCA approximately 3 months prior to expiry to start the process of revalidation. The revalidation will ensure that Standard Credits have been assessed against current benchmarks, as well as allowing for changes in the Applicant’s current Quality Assurance processes and Standard Design. This will include entering into a new Certification Agreement and payment of a registration fee. Fees will depend on the complexity and number of changes required to update the Applicant’s standard approach to credits and Quality Assurance process.