
Green Building Council of Australia New Generation Assessment Process

JUNE 2015

Green Building Council of Australia

Executive Summary

Within the assessment of New Generation Rating Tools, the following occurs:

- assessment is based on Stages; and
- assessment is based on compliance with the intent of the Criterion.

This guide looks at how an assessment is conducted; and the format of the assessment comments.

For a summary of the assessment process, please refer to [Appendix A](#).

Contents

Executive Summary	2
Contents	3
Glossary	4
Assessment Types	5
Criteria selected for each Assessment Type	7
Outcome of Assessment	8
Assessment Process	10
Determining Compliance - Guidance	13
General Rules for Assessment Comments	14
Assessment Comments Structure (formerly Common Language Guide)	15
Notes for discussion within an assessment	17
Appendix A: Summary of the Assessment process	18

Glossary

Assessment: the review of documentation by the Assessor(s).

As Built assessment: This is the final assessment in Green Star – Interiors and Green Star – Design & As Built.

Criterion Awarded: refers to Criterion assessed using any Stage, where points are awarded at Assessment. When this comment occurs at Design Review, the comment is based on the information provided in the Submission, and the project is on track to meet this requirement at As Built assessment.

Credit: addresses issues related to a certain sustainability impact. Each credit defines a clear outcome that a project must meet.

Criterion: an initiative that improves or has the potential to improve a project's sustainability performance.

Compliant: where the submission demonstrates compliance with the requirements of the Criterion.

Design Review: This is only available for Green Star – Interiors, and Green Star – Design & As Built. This is optional, and is obtained prior to the As Built assessment.

Final assessment: This is the assessment that occurs for Green Star - Performance and Green Star – Communities. Note: there is only one assessment for Green Star - Performance and Green Star – Communities (no separate Design Review).

Minor Non-Compliance: where there is an insignificant error identified within the submission, and the points can be awarded. The Criterion is deemed to meet the intent of the credit, however, it could be improved and is expected to be addressed in future submissions. When this comment occurs at the Design Review, the comment is based on the information provided in the Submission, and the project needs to address this requirement at As Built assessment. When this comment occurs at the As Built/Final assessment, the comment is feedback for future submissions.

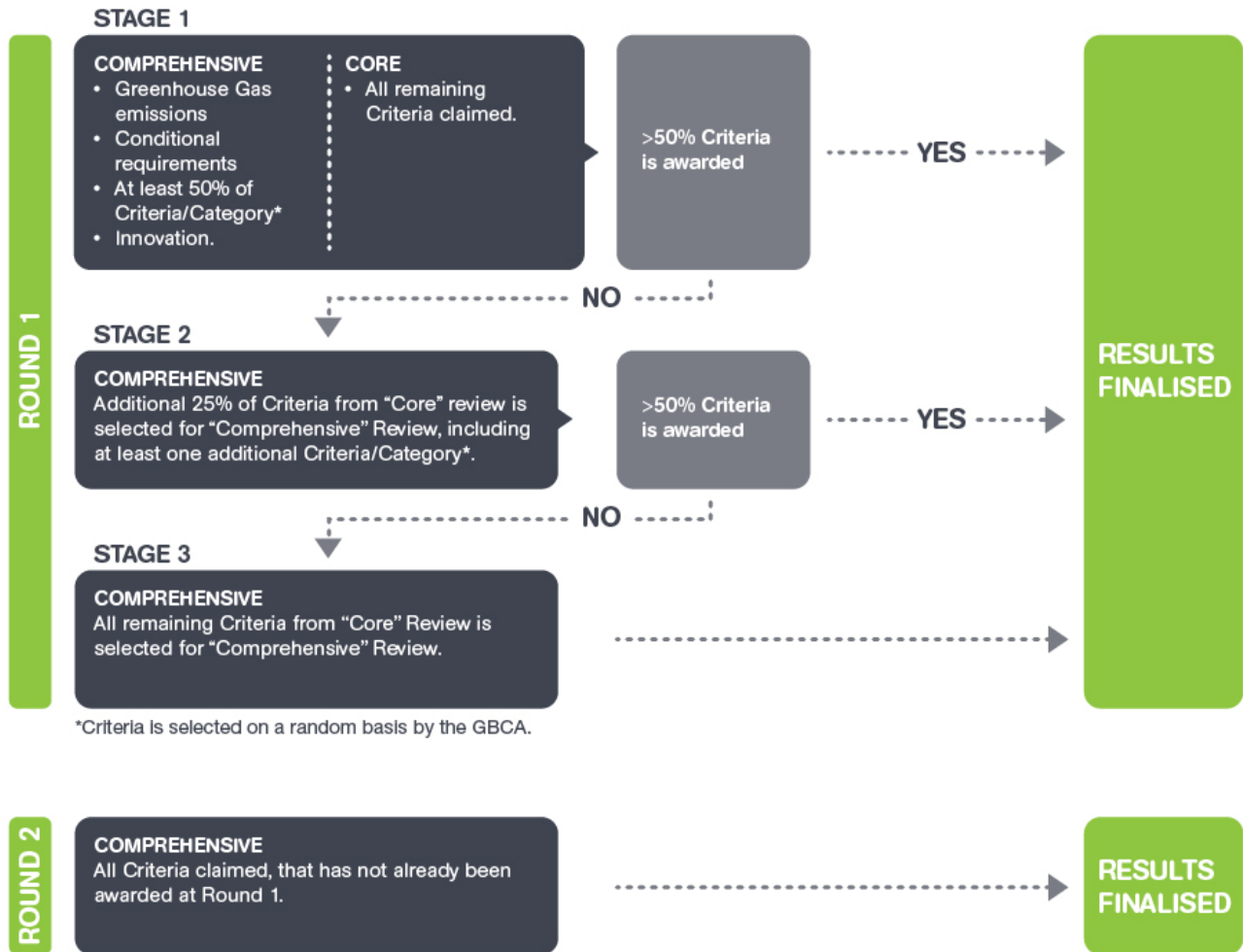
Major Non-Compliance: where there is a significant error identified within the submission, and the points cannot be awarded. Based on the information provided, the submission does not align with the requirements of the Submission guidelines and/or does not meet the aim on the credit.

For more details on the above, please read within this document.

Assessment Types

The assessment process consists of up to 3 Stages of assessment, as outlined below (fig 1).

Figure 1. Staged Assessment Process



Note: A Certified Rating can only be awarded if the minimum number of points are reached, and the conditional requirements are awarded.

Within an assessment of a Criterion, there are two types of assessment that takes place; a Comprehensive Review and a Core Review.

Table 1: Assessment Types Summary:

CORE REVIEW	COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW
<u>Submission Template</u> assessed for compliance.	<u>Submission Template</u> assessed for compliance.
<u>Documents</u> have been included.	<u>Documents</u> assessed for compliance.

CORE REVIEW

The Core Review is where the Submission Template is assessed for compliance only. This involves assessing the information in the Submission Template, to ensure that this information confirms how the project meets the aim and intent of the credit.

The intention of a Core Review is to ensure that the submission documentation has been provided, as claimed by the project team, and the Submission Template is assessed for compliance. It is expected that project teams that have carefully reviewed their submissions before sending to the GBCA should be able to easily pass the Core Review.

This Core Review will:

1. Assess the Submission Template, and ensure that the information on the Submission Template demonstrates compliance and meets the aim of the credit.
2. Check that supporting documentation referenced in the Submission Template has been attached. Note: At this review, the supporting documentation *will not* be analysed and assessed.

If, during the Core Review, the documentation does not correspond with the requirements above, then the Criterion is to be included as part of the Stage 1 assessed Criterion.

GBCA reserves the right to assess any, or all, Criteria claimed with Comprehensive Review at its discretion.

COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW

The Comprehensive Review is where the Submission Template is assessed for compliance and a detailed review and assessment of supporting documentation takes place. This involves assessing the supporting documentation to ensure that it correlates with the information in the Submission Template, and ensuring that the supporting documentation meets the aim and intent of the credit.

This Comprehensive Review will:

1. Assess the Submission Template, and ensure that the information on the Submission Template demonstrates compliance and meets the aim of the credit.
2. Assess the supporting documentation referenced in the Submission Template has been attached, and demonstrates compliance and meets the aim of the credit.

Criteria selected for each Assessment Type

CORE REVIEW

A Core Review is undertaken for all Criteria which have not been included in the Comprehensive Review.

A Core Review occurs at Round 1 only.

COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW

At Round 1, not all Criterion claimed undertake a Comprehensive Review.

The nominated Criteria that undertake a Comprehensive Review are selected at random by GBCA. However, the following rules apply:

- Conditional Requirements must be included in the Comprehensive Review;
- Innovation claims must be included in the Comprehensive Review.
- At least half of the Criterion claimed in each Category, must be included in the Comprehensive Review. If one category is not submitted, a Criterion from another category will be selected to reach the threshold of at least half the submission.
- If there is a Credit with a minimum requirement ("0"), and the associated Criterion are selected for assessment, then the minimum requirement needs to be assessed (not just the associated the Criterion).
- Any other additional Criterion which the Assessor or GBCA deems necessary. E.g. inconsistency between credits.

At Round 2, all Criterion claimed undertake a Comprehensive Review, except those already awarded at Round 1.

Note:

Criterion assessed via a Comprehensive Review or Core Review at the Design Review assessment may not necessarily be the same Criterion assessed in the As Built assessment.

Outcome of Assessment

The outcome of the assessment, is outlined in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Outcome of Assessment:

CORE REVIEW	COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW
Awarded – compliant	Awarded – compliant
-	Awarded – minor non-compliance
Further assessment required (Comprehensive Review required)	Not Awarded – major non-compliance

CORE REVIEW

There are two potential outcomes for documentation assessed at Core Review.

These are:

Awarded - Compliant: Documentation aligns exactly to the requirements of the Submission Guidelines and the intent of the credit. Points are given to the project.

Further assessment required: during the Core Review, the Assessor is unable to verify compliance with the intent of the credit. The Assessor then undertakes a Comprehensive Review on the Criterion (as per Stage 2 / Stage 3).

COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW

There are three potential outcomes for documentation assessed at Comprehensive Review.

These are:

Awarded - Compliant: Documentation aligns exactly to the requirements of the Submission Guidelines and the intent of the credit. Points are given to the project.

Awarded - Minor non-compliance - A minor non-compliance is deemed insignificant if it does not affect the results/aims of the credit criteria (or compromise the overall deliverables of the project). Points are given to the project, with a note for future project submissions. The Assessors will use the guidance on page 11 to decide whether the item is significant or not.

Minor non-compliances will be used to communicate to project teams that, while the credit may have been awarded in this instance, the project team is advised to ensure future submissions in other projects address the comment as the credit may not be awarded in the future.

Therefore, the Assessor will need to make a comment stating why the credit would not have been awarded, and why in this instance they are comfortable that the aim of the credit has been made.

When there is a “minor compliance” issue, no action is required by the project team for the project’s submission. However, guidance is provided for clarity and consideration in similar future circumstances. If these issues are identified at the Design Review assessment, these must be addressed for the As Built assessment.

Examples of Minor non-compliances:

- Administrative Errors.
- Inconsistency between the points claimed on the submission and scorecard.
- Calculators incorrectly completed, but when adjusted does not affect the project achieving the Criterion points.

Previously, a “minor compliance” was known as “Points Awarded. However, for future submissions...”.

Not Awarded - Major non-compliance - A major non-compliance is deemed significant if it significantly affects the results/aims of the credit criteria, or compromises the overall deliverables of the project. Points are not given to the project. The Assessors will use the guidance within the section “[Determining Compliance – Guidance](#)” to decide whether the item is significant or not.

One reason for Not Awarded – Major non-compliance, is that the credit as submitted cannot be awarded as the entirety of the documentation does not demonstrate all of the relevant information. The Assessor cannot verify the achievements claimed by the project team.

Alternatively, the credit as submitted cannot be assessed as information within the submission is contradictory in such a manner that the Assessor cannot make a reasonable judgement call as to the achievement of the claim.

Another reason, is that the information submitted indicates the project was not designed or built in line with the requirements listed in the rating tool. The information presented does not provide the Assessor with confidence that the achievement claimed has occurred.

Examples of Major non-compliances:

- Required documentation (i.e. commissioning report, drawings) omitted from submission and it is not otherwise clear that the aim of the credit has been met.
- Compliance Requirements have not been met in the submission.
- Inconsistencies within the submission documentation between/within credits.
- Submitted contractual documents have not been executed by relevant parties and it is not clear that the works have been completed.
- Calculators incorrectly completed, but when adjusted affects the project achieving the Criterion points.

Previously, a “major non-compliance” was known as “Points not awarded” or “Points to be confirmed”.

In order to determine whether the Criterion is Met, Compliant, Minor non-compliance or Major non-compliance, the Assessors are to follow the questions laid out within the section “[Determining Compliance – Guidance](#)”. Once this is determined, the Assessors can then use this guide to formulate the response to the project team.

Assessment Process

Round 1:

STAGE 1:

STEP 1 – COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW:

- i. Undertake a Comprehensive Review on the nominated Criterion claimed.
- ii. Determine if:
 - Awarded – compliant
 - Awarded – minor non-compliance
 - Not Awarded – major non-compliance
- iii. Provide comments within the scorecard, for the project team, for Criterion that are Awarded – minor non-compliance, and Not Awarded – major non-compliance, explaining how full compliance has not been met.

STEP 2 - CORE REVIEW:

- i. Undertake a Core Review on the remaining Criterion claimed.
- ii. Determine if:
 - Awarded – compliant
 - Further assessment required
- iii. If further assessment required, then undertake a Comprehensive Review on the Criterion, as per Step 1.

STEP 3 - CRITERION COMPLIANCE TALLY:

Scorecard will tally the number of Criteria “Not Awarded” (i.e. been through a Comprehensive Review and identified as required to be resubmitted for Round 2). The scorecard will inform the Assessor whether:

- Assessment is complete.
- Stage 2 Comprehensive Review required.

If less than 50% of all Criteria claimed is not awarded (i.e. greater than 50% is awarded), go ahead to Step 7.

If greater than 50% of all Criteria claimed is not awarded (i.e. less than 50% is awarded), then go to Step 4 where the Assessor administers a Comprehensive Review of Criterion (for Criterion where only a Core Review took place).

STAGE 2:

STEP 4 – COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW:

- i. Undertake a Comprehensive Review on the additional nominated Criterion claimed.
- ii. Determine if:
 - Awarded – compliant
 - Awarded – minor non-compliance
 - Not Awarded – major non-compliance
- iii. Provide comments within the scorecard, for the project team, for Criterion that are Awarded – minor non-compliance, and Not Awarded – major non-compliance, explaining how full compliance has not been met.

STEP 5 - CRITERION COMPLIANCE TALLY:

Scorecard will tally the number of Criteria “Not Awarded” (i.e. been through a Comprehensive Review and identified as required to be resubmitted for Round 2). The scorecard will inform the Assessor whether:

- Assessment is complete.
- Stage 3 Comprehensive Review required.

If less than 50% of all Criteria claimed is not awarded, go ahead to Step 7 (i.e.no further action required by the Assessor).

If greater than 50% of all Criteria claimed is not awarded, then go to Step 6 where the Assessor administers a Comprehensive Review of Criterion for all remaining Criterion.

STAGE 3:

STEP 6 – COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW:

- i. Undertake a Comprehensive Review on the additional nominated Criterion claimed.
- ii. Determine if:
 - Awarded – compliant
 - Awarded – minor non-compliance
 - Not Awarded – major non-compliance
- iii. Provide comments within the scorecard, for the project team, for Criterion that are Awarded – minor non-compliance, and Not Awarded – major non-compliance, explaining how full compliance has not been met.

STEP 7 – COMMENTS FINALISED:

Comments are given back to the project team, wherein they address the Not Awarded – major non-compliance items at Round 2, as per the guidance in the assessment comments.

Round 2:

STEP 1 – COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW:

- i. Undertake a Comprehensive Review on the nominated Criterion claimed.
- ii. Determine if:
 - Awarded – compliant
 - Awarded – minor non-compliance
 - Not Awarded – major non-compliance
- iii. Provide comments within the scorecard, for the project team, for Criterion that are Awarded – minor non-compliance, and Not Awarded – major non-compliance, explaining how full compliance has not been met.

STEP 2 – COMMENTS FINALISED:

Comments are given back to the project team.

Determining Compliance - Guidance

The overarching philosophy behind the assessment process is that, while documentation provided in the submission may not be exactly as per the Submission Guidelines, the question becomes, 'has, in the opinion of the Assessor(s), the intent of the credit been met?' If the intent has been met, the points should be awarded. Whilst project teams should provide documentation as per the Submission Guidelines requirements, in cases where information has not been provided exactly as per the guidelines, a grey area of compliance will emerge and the Assessor will need to assess and make a judgement call on what has been provided as evidence. The following questions have been included to help provide guidance on this.

When assessing documentation, the Assessor will ask the following questions as guidance to help determine compliance.

	Questions to determine compliance level	Yes/No
1	Has the aim and intent of the Criterion been met?	If yes , then it is likely a minor non-compliance. If no , then it is likely a major non-compliance.
2	Was a CIR issued by the GBCA allowing alternative/reduced documentation?	If yes , then determine whether the project has demonstrated compliance with the CIR. If no , then determine whether the project has demonstrated compliance with the Submission Guidelines.
3	Omissions in the submission: Does the omitted information impact the project's capacity to achieve the credit criterion?	If no , then it is likely a minor non-compliance. If yes , then it is likely a major non-compliance.
4	Can the required documentation be found elsewhere in the submission?	If yes , then assess the criterion accordingly. If no , then use the following questions as further guidance.
5	Discrepancies in the submission: Do the discrepancies (i.e. inconsistent values) impact the project's capacity to achieve the Criterion/sustainability outcome?	If no , then it is likely a minor non-compliance. If yes , then it is likely a major non-compliance.
6	Errors: do the errors impact the project's capacity to achieve the criterion?	If no , then it is likely a minor non-compliance. If yes , then it is likely a major non-compliance.
7	Does the error have an impact on any other aspects of the project?	If no , then it is likely a minor non-compliance. If yes , then it is likely a major non-compliance.

General Rules for Assessment Comments

Each comment requires the following:

- **Outcome** – What is the result of the Criterion?
Outline of whether or not the Criterion is awarded.

If the Criterion is not awarded (major non-compliance), or awarded with a note (minor non-compliance), the comment will also contain:

- **Reason** – What is incorrect/missing/inconsistent with what was provided?
An explanation as to why the information provided does not meet the Submission Guidelines requirements, including reference back to the page number and document provided in the submission.
- **Action** – What is required to be done?
Refer to what needs to be included in the documentation at the next assessment.

The structure of the comment will be dependent on the information that is being requested. This is explained in detail in the following pages.

Assessment Comments Structure (formerly Common Language Guide)

Assessment Type	Review	Outcome	Assessment comment
Core Review	Shows compliance	Awarded	No comment.
Comprehensive Review	Shows compliance	Awarded	No comment.
Comprehensive Review	Shows compliance with minor non-compliance	Awarded	<p>However, for future submissions, please [insert note explaining what the project team should do]. In this instance, [explain why, in this instance, the Criterion was awarded].</p> <p><i>Add the following for Design Review only:</i></p> <p>In the As Built submission, please ensure that this is addressed.</p> <p>The Assessors note the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. [explain what is wrong or missing within the submission]. This should [explain what should be done to rectify the submission]. 2. [explain what is wrong or missing within the submission]. This should [explain what should be done to rectify the submission]. 3. [etc].
Comprehensive Review	Does not show compliance (i.e. major non-compliance)	Not Awarded	<p><i>Add the following for Round 1 only:</i></p> <p>In the next Round of assessment, please address the above, and the Criterion will be reassessed.</p> <p><i>Add the following for Round 2 Design Review only:</i></p> <p>[Explain how what was provided to rectify the problem at Round 1, does not comply with the requirements and/or has not addressed the Round 1 comment.]</p> <p>Based on the above explanation, the Criterion cannot be awarded. To claim this in the As Built assessment, address all the</p>

items above.

Add the following for Round 2 As Built/Final Assessment only:

[Explain how what was provided to rectify the problem at Round 1, does not comply with the requirements and/or has not addressed the Round 1 comment.]

Based on the above explanation, the Criterion cannot be awarded.

Notes for discussion within an assessment

When assessing, if the Assessor has items to discuss with the other Assessor(s) or items to discuss with GBCA, these should be noted separately to the comments to the project team. This separates the notes for discussion, with the notes for the project team.

Discussion items may include:

- Notes to request a Peer Review.
- Feedback to the GBCA on the Criterion or Rating Tool.

REQUEST FOR PEER REVIEW

A Peer Review is utilised when the Assessor requires additional support assessing a Criterion. Any requests for peer review are required to:

- Detail any comments the Assessor(s) have formed thus far.
- Clearly explain what aspect of the credit the Assessors feel they cannot adequately assess.

FEEDBACK TO THE GBCA

Feedback to the GBCA are items where:

- The Assessor(s) would like clarification on the Criterion/Submission Guidelines, or
- The Assessor(s) believe the Criterion should be changed (as the Aim of Credit is not being met).

These do not affect the outcome of the assessment.

Appendix A: Summary of the Assessment process

	Core Review	Comprehensive Review
What is assessed at Stage 1?	All other Criterion claimed.	Nominated Criterion: Conditional Requirements + Innovation Category + At least half Criterion per category. This will equate to approx. 50% of Criterion claimed.
What is assessed at Stage 2?	-	At least one additional Criterion per category.
What is assessed at Stage 3?	-	At least one additional Criterion per category.
How is this assessed?	All Submission Templates assessed for compliance, and with supporting documentation attached.	All Submission Templates assessed for compliance and detailed assessment of supporting documentation for the selected Criterion(s). Criterion will be selected on a random basis by GBCA.
What are the results of an Assessment?	Awarded – compliant	Awarded – compliant Awarded – minor non-compliance Not Awarded – major non-compliance