

FAQs for GM International, Other Green Mark Schemes, and Application related matters

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Section A: Timeline and Certification Process related matters

1. Can project outside Singapore apply Green Mark International?

The Green Mark International standard/criteria has been established for both New and Existing residential and Non-Residential building projects located outside of Singapore. This updated standard incorporates the GM 2021 criteria and Singapore's Environmental Regulatory Standards while emphasising outcome-based indicators, such as energy and carbon emissions, to combat climate change. Additionally, this standard encompasses broader sustainability issues, including building health and well-being, resilience, intelligence, and design for maintainability. The GM International standard offers two additional ratings, Certified and Gold, which align with Singapore's Environmental Regulatory Standards. All overseas projects applying Green Mark certification from 1st April 2023 onwards will be evaluated using the GM International criteria. Simplified recertification will be replaced by GM International In-Operation for recertification projects.

Starting from 1 January 2024, all projects will be assessed using the documents under GM 2021 (2nd edition), including ongoing GM International projects with application submitted before 1 January 2024. The certification standards and technical guides under the 1st edition remain valid until 31 December 2023. The latest criteria and scoring framework can be downloaded from : <https://www1.bca.gov.sg/buildsg/sustainability/green-mark-certification-scheme/green-mark-2021>

2. Can I get a quotation for my project and what is the process after I submitted my application?

BCAI publishes the basic fee structure for Green Mark certification of overseas projects on the BCAI website, and the final fees may vary depending on additional expenses such as overseas travel (if there is any need to conduct any physical assessment), and any other factors (such as project complexity, location, and required resources). For budgetary purposes, you can refer to the basic fee structure published on BCAI website as an estimate. The final fee quoted for BCAI projects will be different from Singapore projects due to these additional considerations. The fee for overseas project will be determined only after we have received the signed Green Mark application form.

Upon receiving the completed application form, BCAI will inform the applicant of the project's acceptance. BCAI will review the available resources and scope before providing a quotation via a BCAI's Letter of Offer. Please note that BCAI is not obligated to accept all submitted applications.

Upon receipt of signed LOO by the Applicant, we will issue the invoice for the payment of the assessment fees. After payment is received, the assessors will be assigned and both parties can communicate on the assessment dates, etc.



3. Who are the external assessors responsible for conducting the Green Mark assessment?

Upon receiving full payment, BCAI will notify the applicant of the external assessors assigned to the project. The external assessors are a team of sustainability consultants or green professionals from the Green Mark Department who have been trained and appointed by BCAI to conduct the Green Mark assessment.

4. Can a project with long construction timeline be considered for Green Mark Certification, and what is the validity period of the contract and Green Mark Certificate?

After a successful application to BCAI, the applicant will receive a Letter of Offer (LOO) that remains valid for five years from the date of issuance. The Green Mark certification process, which includes Pre-assessment, Preliminary Assessment (Provision certificate), and Final Assessment and Verification (Final Certificate), must be completed within the validity period of the LOO. It is mandatory to complete the Pre-assessment and Preliminary Assessment within three years from the date of LOO and the Final Assessment and Verification within three years from the date of Provision certificate or within five years from the date of LOO, whichever is earlier. Please note that BCAI does not provide extensions for the LOO (except for special cases and it is up to BCAI's discretion) or Green Mark certification, and no refunds will be given to the applicant if the project is unable to complete the certification process within the required timeline. BCAI does not accept projects that generally exceed the requirement timeline. Green Mark Certificate is valid for 3 years.

5. Does project team need to appoint the Responsible Person (RP)" e.g. Green Mark Accredited Professional (GMAP) or Green Mark Advanced Accredited Professional (GMAAP) or Registered Energy Auditors at the time of application?

To ensure that the project meets the target Green Mark, it is **mandatory** for the applicant/owner to designate a "Responsible Person (RP)" who holds either a Green Mark Accredited Professional (GMAP) or Green Mark Advanced Accredited Professional (GMAAP) certification. For existing buildings, the RP must hold certification as GMAP (FM) or GMAAP (FM). The name and accreditation number of the applicable professional must be submitted with the application, and appointments cannot be made at a later stage of the project. The RP does not necessarily have to be a Singaporean.

These GMAP and GMAAP certifications are awarded to eligible professionals through the Green Mark Professional Qualification Scheme, which is managed by the Singapore Green Building Council (SGBC). More information about this scheme can be found at: Green Mark Accredited Professionals (sgbc.sg). The SGBC GMAP Portal provides access to the Directory of Green Mark Accredited Professionals, which can be found at this link: <https://gmap.sgbc.online/public/directory>.

For GM International In-Operation, the RP can be a Registered Energy Auditor. The list of BCA-registered energy auditors can be found at this link: <https://www1.bca.gov.sg/docs/default-source/docs-corp-buildsg/sustainability/list-of-bca-registered-energy-auditors.pdf>.

6. Would BCAI assessors need to conduct physical assessment at the project location?

The need to conduct physical assessment at the project location will be decided by BCAI on project-by-project basis. For majority of the projects, the pre-assessment, assessment, and verification will be done via



video conferencing. However, there could be certain projects selected by BCAI team to conduct physical assessments. BCAI will inform the team about the mode of assessment at the time of application before issuing the LOO. The cost of travelling and related expenses will be included in the assessment fees.

7. GM International In-Operation only applies to Existing Building which have achieved GM certification previously and had no change of major energy use. That means, we only need to submit the GM International In-Operation Excel Submission Template (available on the website). The GM rating to be awarded will depend on meeting the requirements in Energy Efficiency (i.e., Pathway 1 or Pathway 2), and the project does not need to comply with the Base Sustainability Requirements. Is it correct?

Yes, Existing Buildings which are coming in for re-certification and which have been Green Mark certified before and with no change in major energy use (e.g., no installation and/or replacement of the chillers); it will be assessed under GM International In-Operation. Projects can maintain the previous Green Mark award rating or upgrade the ratings based on the Energy Efficiency performance. In this case, the Base Sustainability Requirements are not applicable.

Existing buildings which have been GM certified before and have replaced the chillers since the last GM certification or plan to replace chillers at the time of application; will be assessed under GM International Full Criteria and are also required to comply with the Base Sustainability Requirements.

Section B: GM International Criteria

8. Is the Base Sustainability Requirements (BSR) determined by sustainability indicators or points?

The Base Sustainability Requirements are determined by the number of sustainability indicators, rather than points. Under the full criteria of GM International, all Green Mark Ratings, including new buildings, and existing buildings must meet the minimum requirements established by the Base Sustainability Requirements. Each indicator is based on the specific characteristics of the sub-system. For instance, in section RBE01-1 Enhanced Building Envelope Performance, there are several sub-indicators such as (a) Façade design, (b) Cool materials, and (c) Innovative façade technology. Projects are allowed to choose any one of these sub-indicators and are not obligated to meet all of them in section RBE01-1.

GM In-Operational is applicable to re-certification projects that have previously obtained Green Mark certificate before and have not undergone any significant changes in energy usage (such as the installation or replacement of chillers). These projects have the option to maintain their previous Green Mark rating or upgrade their rating based on their energy efficiency performance. In such cases, the Base Sustainability Requirements is not applicable.



9. Whole Life Carbon (CN 2.3 iii) - The main builder is local and do not have a BCA Green and Gracious Builder certificate. Can the consultant carry out self-scoring to meet the criteria?

The criteria require the appointment of environmental specialists during the construction stage. To meet the criteria, the main builder is required to achieve at least Merit rating under BCA Green and Gracious Builder and ISO14001 certification.

This requirement applies to both local and overseas projects under Section CN 2.3 (iii). To earn points, the main builder must obtain GGBS and ISO 14001 certification, and certification of a subsidiary of the main builder with GGBS is not acceptable. Furthermore, self-scoring and pro-rating of points are not permitted for overseas projects.

10. Whole Life Carbon CN 2.2 (ii) - Are products certified by a local certification body but not SGBC certified acceptable?

GM International's criteria for environmentally friendly product certification allows for certification through an Environmental Product Declaration (EPD) or an approved local certification body, such as the Singapore Green Building Council (SGBC) for Singapore. The SGBC's SGBP Certification Scheme evaluates products based on their sustainability performance and whole lifecycle, in compliance with ISO 14024 Environmental labels and declarations - Type I environmental labelling. For overseas projects, products certified by a local or international certification body aligned with this ISO standard and/or EPD can be considered. If a product has obtained SGBC certification in Singapore but not overseas, it is acceptable to provide evidence demonstrating that the product is identical to the SGBC certified.

A different tier of rating, such as a 2-3 star or 2-10 grade system, is acceptable as long as it is one level better than the base level. For example, a Grade 2 product would be equivalent to a 2-tick rating, a Grade 3 product would be equivalent to a 3-tick rating, and so on. However, the levels should not be pro-rated back to the ratings available in SGBC.

Products that meet the required certification standards but do not possess a valid certificate and certificates by single tier rating certification body are not acceptable.

11. Resilience 1.1b – The developer planned to sell 50% of the dwelling units with bare finishes and 50% of the dwelling units that are fully fitted out. How many units are required to be fitted with PUB WELS “3ticks” rating for 90% of all relevant water fittings?

Dwelling units with bare finished are excluded. The relevant water fittings will be based on 50% of the dwelling units that are fully fitted out. Assuming the project has 100 units with 2 water fittings in each unit and 10 water fittings for common area, the total applicable/relevant water fittings will be 100 water fittings + 10 water fittings for common area. $90\% * (100+10) = 99$ fittings (required PUB WELS 3-ticks).



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12. Resilience 2.2 (i) – For projects outside Singapore, is it acceptable to appoint an E-waste collector without collaborating with the Producer Responsibility Scheme (PRS) Operator, as PRS is not available overseas,

The appointment of an E-waste collector is adequate to earn points for this item, and collaboration with PSE is not necessary.

13. Where can I refer to for more questions on the criteria?

Additionally, you may also refer to the Green Mark 2021 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for more information on the clarification of the certification criteria: https://www1.bca.gov.sg/docs/default-source/docs-corp-buildsg/sustainability/20240101_gm2021-faqs_v2.pdf



Section C: Other Green Mark Schemes

14. What are the common space activities that are appropriate for the GM Healthier Workplaces: 2018 and GM Retail schemes?

The GM Healthier Workplaces: 2018 scheme is distinct from the GM International scheme. Office spaces can consider the GM HW scheme, while showrooms and shopping activities can consider the GM Retail scheme, depending on the owner's intent and scope. All ongoing projects under the GM Healthier Workplaces: 2018 and GM Retail schemes must complete their assessments by 1 December 2024.

15. Is the BCA-IMDA Green Mark for Existing Data Centres EDC: 2019 criteria suitable for Data Centres projects outside Singapore?

Overseas data centre projects can refer to either GM NDC:2019 or GM EDC:2019 criteria. For GM NDC the project must complete the final assessment verification (GM Final Certificate) within three years of receiving the GM Provisional Certificate. It is important to note that all data centres must provide measured data as evidence to demonstrate meeting the declared score during the preliminary assessment (Provisional Certificate). Score corresponding to the GM rating and Prerequisites such as M&V, OSE, PUE, and others must be fulfilled. The project team must provide measured operating PUE of 25% IT load from the DCIM system for verification purposes, simulated data cannot be used for verification. The project is required to submit the target operating load and timeline at application to ensure that the project can complete the Green Mark process within the required timeline. BCAI does not accept projects that exceed the required timeline, **refer to item 4 on timeline.**

For GM EDC:2019 criteria, the project must operate at 25% of the IT load, and we do not accept projects with a lower operating IT load.

Overseas Data Centre: Part 5 GM DC criteria on REC, we are open to accepting the purchase of REC from the local or overseas market, not limited to the project's own country. The REC commitment period should be a minimum of three years.

16. What are the considerations for GM District?

The applicant is required to submit a project write-up, site boundary, building types and amenities, and relevant area and project phases. The district's scope encompasses the new and current buildings and infrastructure within the applied scope and boundary. Housing projects without commercial buildings may be more suitable for GM International. It is important to note that BCAI generally does not accept applications for projects on reclaimed land, and there is no recertification scheme for the GM District criteria.

To ensure that the project can complete the Green Mark process within the required timeline, a description and timeline must be submitted with the application. BCAI strictly enforces the timeline and does not accept projects that exceed the required timeline, **as stated in item 4 on the timeline.** If the design, facilities, and buildings of the completed phases are the same as those in the undertaking letter provided by the owner/developer, the undertaking letter can be used to support the verification process. For more information, please refer to the illustrations below:



District Project	Within 5 years of date of LOO	Final Assessment and Verification
Phase 1	Completed construction	Able to complete verification within 5 years of LOO
Phase 2	Provided the same design, facilities, building types and design as phase 1. Under construction or future.	The same as Phase 1 (Completed Construction). Owner/developer to submit commitment undertaking letter for Phase 2 for verification.
Phase 3	Different design, facilities and building types from Phase 1 (Completed construction) Under construction or future.	Undertaking is not acceptable in this case due to the differences. Project will need to complete the construction to complete the verification.