ISSP-SA & ISSP-CSP Credential Maintenance Program Guide

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Information in this Guide represents current policies and procedures for the ISSP-SA & ISSP-CSP Credential Maintenance Program. Information in this Guide supersedes information contained in any previously published Guides.

All information and guidelines are subject to change.

Please read and understand the entire Guide including all policies, procedures and consequences.

ABOUT GREEN BUSINESS CERTIFICATION INC.

Green Business Certification Inc.™ (GBCI) is the premier organization independently recognizing excellence in green business industry performance and practice globally.

Established in 2008, GBCI exclusively administers project certifications and professional credentials and certificates within the framework of the U.S. Green Building Council’s Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®) green building rating systems as well as the PEER® standard for power systems, the WELL Building Standard™, the Excellence in Design for Greater Efficiencies (EDGE) program, the Sustainable Sites Initiative (SITES®), the City Climate Planner Urban Greenhouse Gas Inventory Specialist credential, the Investor Confidence Project Investor Ready Energy Efficiency (IREE) certificate, Parksmart™, TRUE, and the GRESB® benchmark, which is used by institutional investors to improve the sustainability performance of the global property sector.
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Introduction

The ISSP credentials have been designed by sustainability practitioners, for sustainability practitioners, through global collaboration and expertise. The goal of these credentials is to serve as a global benchmarks for sustainability professionals, providing industry-recognized credentials that can be carried across national borders, by:

- bringing cohesion and definition to the emerging profession of sustainability
- providing credibility for employers and assurance of a standard level of competency of the sustainability professional
- imparting evidence of competency for practitioners in the field, furthering their credibility, influence and career advancement opportunities

The ISSP credentials provide definition and standardization of the competencies employers and seekers of consultants should expect from sustainability professionals.

Launched by the International Society of Sustainability Professionals (ISSP) in 2016, the ISSP Sustainability Associate (ISSP-SA) and ISSP Certified Sustainability Professional (ISSP-CSP) credentials were acquired by Green Business Certification Inc. (GBCI) in November 2019. GBCI is the premier organization independently recognizing excellence in green business industry performance and practice globally.

There are two ISSP credentials available to sustainability practitioners:

**ISSP Sustainability Associate (ISSP-SA):** This is an introductory level credential for individuals who are new to the field of sustainability but have sufficient education and training to pass a test on basic knowledge and understanding of key sustainability concepts. The ISSP-SA is a prerequisite for the ISSP-CSP.

**ISSP Certified Sustainability Professional (ISSP-CSP):** This credential is for experienced sustainability practitioners who demonstrate a combination of sustainability-related work experience and formal education.

Ongoing professional development and education activities are required for maintenance and biennial renewal of the credentials.
Registering for Your Exam

ISSP-SA Registration
1. Login to the Exam Center. First-time visitors to the Exam Center will need to create an account by clicking “Create New Account” at the top of the page.
2. Registering candidates will be required to provide contact information including stating which email address is to be used for correspondence, including sending exam results and certificates. The name shown on the certificates will match the information that you enter when creating your account. USGBC and International Society of Sustainability Professionals (ISSP) members should enter the email addresses (and/or ID number, if applicable) associated with their membership in order to be eligible for member discounts.
3. Register for an ISSP-SA exam by clicking “Register for an Exam” in the blue menu bar.

ISSP-CSP Application & Registration
1. Carefully review the ISSP-CSP eligibility requirements. Note that only valid ISSP-SA credential holders are eligible to apply for the ISSP-CSP exam.
2. Download the ISSP-CSP Application and accompanying reference form from the GBCI website. Please review these materials carefully.
3. Pay the non-refundable ISSP-CSP application fee. See ISSP-CSP Application Submission Instructions for details. Only applicants who have paid the application fee will be considered.
4. Fill out the ISSP-CSP Application and have three (3) references who are familiar with your sustainability expertise each fill out a reference form.
5. Submit your completed ISSP-CSP Application and accompanying reference forms. See ISSP-CSP Application Submission Instructions for details.
6. Candidates will be informed as to their application’s status within 10 business days of its submission.
7. After you have been informed that your ISSP-CSP application has been accepted, login to your Exam Center account.
8. Register for the ISSP-CSP exam by clicking “Register for an Exam” in the blue menu bar. Please note that the ISSP-CSP exam will not be a selectable option until your ISSP-CSP application has been accepted and all fees paid.

Payment
Payment for the ISSP-SA and ISSP-CSP exams is completed in the Exam Center. Credit card and PayPal are acceptable methods of payment. Payment is required at the time of registration.

Scheduling Onsite or Online
Once a candidate has registered for the ISSP-SA or ISSP-CSP exam, they will be prompted to schedule an exam either at an onsite testing center or via online proctoring. Click here for more information about online proctoring requirements. Exams can be scheduled year-round on a rolling basis.
Rescheduling and Cancellation Policy

Once an exam is scheduled, candidates are able to reschedule at no charge, or cancel for a full refund of the exam fee, as long as rescheduling/cancellation is completed at least 72 hours before an onsite exam or 24 hours before an online exam.

If a candidate reschedules or cancels an exam less than 72 hours before an onsite exam or less than 24 hours before an online proctored exam, they will incur a fee as described in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exam Reschedule/ Cancellation Fee</th>
<th>Testing Center, United States</th>
<th>Testing Center, International</th>
<th>Online Proctored</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Less than 72 hours before scheduled exam</td>
<td>Less than 24 hours before scheduled exam</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISSP-SA</td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>$110</td>
<td>$65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISSP-CSP</td>
<td>$110</td>
<td>$120</td>
<td>$70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to reschedule or cancel an exam, login to your account in the Exam Center and click ‘My Assessments’ in the blue menu bar. From there, you can scroll down to manage your exam registrations.

Re-Examination

Candidates who fail either credential exam must wait three (3) months in order to reschedule it. Candidates must register and pay for an exam each time they take it.

If a candidate is retaking the ISSP-CSP exam more than one (1) year after they first submitted an application, they must re-apply with updated documentation. This policy applies even if the candidate has attempted the ISSP-CSP several times within that year.

Support

Email GBCI with questions. See the Contact section of this handbook for details.

Eligibility Requirements

All ISSP-SA and ISSP-CSP candidates must agree to the GBCI Disciplinary and Exam Appeals Policy and credential maintenance requirements.

ISSP Sustainability Associate (ISSP-SA)

There are no specific professional or academic requirements in order to register for the ISSP-SA exam, nor is there any associated prerequisite coursework. This is because the exam itself assesses an individual’s eligibility for the credential. However, GBCI recommends that you have exposure to sustainability concepts and issues prior to testing.

ISSP Certified Sustainability Professional (ISSP-CSP)

The ISSP Certified Sustainability Professional certification (ISSP-CSP) is awarded to those practitioners who demonstrate sufficient education and knowledge of sustainability concepts and issues by passing the ISSP-CSP exam as well as competence in the tasks and
responsibilities required of people working in the field. ISSP-CSP applicants must meet the following criteria:

1. Pass the ISSP-SA exam
2. Submit an application providing evidence of eligibility for the ISSP-CSP exam, including:
   a. Evidence of a bachelor's degree or global equivalent
   b. Evidence of one of the following:
      • At least 5 years of sustainability-related professional experience within the last 10 years; or
      • At least 4 years of sustainability-related professional experience within the last 8 years and an additional year of full-time sustainability-related education or training; or
      • At least 3 years of sustainability-related professional experience within the last 6 years and an additional 2 years of full-time sustainability-related education or training
   c. Three (3) references attesting to your work as a sustainability professional.

As a reminder, ISSP-CSP applications must be reviewed and accepted before applicants may register for and take the ISSP-CSP credential exam.

In the event of appealing an ISSP-CSP application decision; the candidate is only permitted to provide clarifying information that supports the original application. No new information may be provided. Please submit your appeal by email to GBCI.

**GBCI Review**

GBCI reserves the right to conduct a review at any time (including prior to application submission and after credential has been granted) of all current and past exam applications. Any information that has been provided to GBCI may be audited and a request for further documentation of any information or claims submitted by the credential holder may be made at any time. GBCI further reserves the right to take disciplinary or legal action—including but not limited to revocation of credential(s)—in the event that any conduct discovered during such a review violates the [Disciplinary and Exam Appeals Policy](https://www.gbcisite.com), GBCI policy and/or law.

**Testing Accommodations**

If you have a documented disability that would prevent you from taking an ISSP credential exam under normal testing conditions, you may request accommodations. Credentialing programs managed by GBCI comply with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Under the ADA, entities that administer standardized examinations must offer the examinations in a place and manner that is accessible to candidates with disabilities. This may require reasonable modifications to the manner in which the exam is administered. Kryterion, GBCI’s exam delivery vendor for the ISSP exams, will provide candidates reasonable auxiliary aids and services, except where it may fundamentally alter the validity of the exam results. Available accommodations include, but are not limited to, a reader, a scribe, and extended testing time.

If you require testing accommodations, you and your health care provider will each need to complete one form, the Candidate Form and the Provider Form, to document the disability and the need for accommodation.
Completed forms must be scanned and emailed to accommodations@gbcio.org in PDF format, or faxed to 202-545-3708. The email subject should be “ISSP Credential Exam Testing Accommodations - [Your last name], [Your first name].” Do not mail your forms to GBCI or submit them to gbcio.org/contact. Forms must be submitted at least 60 days before you would like the test to occur; there is no additional charge for testing accommodations. Each request will be evaluated individually.

GBCI will review this documentation and, if approved, will alert Kryterion of the necessary accommodations. If proper documentation is submitted, please allow up to 30 days to receive a reply from GBCI. Once you request testing accommodations you will not be able to schedule an exam with Kryterion until your request is approved. You will be contacted by email regarding the approval status of your testing accommodations request. If your request is approved, Kryterion will assist you in scheduling the exam.

**Exam Fees**

Exam fees are published on the ISSP credentials webpage. Your paid exam fee is good for only one exam attempt and includes an exam registration administration fee.

USGBC members and International Society of Sustainability Professionals (ISSP) members receive discounts on the exam fees and the ISSP-CSP application fee. In order to receive the exam fee discount, these individuals must enter the email address (and/or ID number, if applicable) associated with their USGBC or ISSP membership upon creating an Exam Center account.
The Exams

You should review the Exam Content Outline section of this document to determine your knowledge and readiness to sit for the exams. The ISSP-SA exam covers Section 1: Core Sustainability Concepts. The ISSP-CSP exam covers Sections 2 through 6 of the Exam Content Outline.

Exam Format

The exams are computer-based, closed-book, multiple-choice tests and must be taken without the use of any online or hard copy reference documents or assistance from another individual.

- The ISSP-SA examination requires successful completion of 75 multiple choice questions and must be completed within 2 hours.
- The ISSP-CSP examination requires successful completion of 100 multiple choice questions and must be completed within 2.5 hours.

Exam questions and answer options are displayed in a web browser. The Exam Center records your responses and times your exam. Within the time limit, you will be able to change your answers, skip questions, and flag questions for later review.

Grading and Scoring

The ISSP-SA and ISSP-CSP exams include both scored and unscored questions. All questions are delivered randomly throughout the exam and candidates are not informed of a question’s status, so candidates should respond to all the questions on the exam. Unscored questions are used to gather performance data to inform whether the question should be scored on future exams.

Participants will be notified of their exam results via email as soon as the exam is completed.

Exam Language

The exams are available in English.
Pre-Exam Checklist

Are You Ready?
The International Society of Sustainability Professionals (ISSP) has developed study materials for each of the credential exams. Visit the Study Materials page at www.sustainabilityprofessionals.org for more information.

See the Sample Questions section of this handbook for further preparation.

One Month Before Your Exam

The amount of time needed to prepare for an ISSP exam is dependent on each individual and their familiarity with the exam content. GBCI recommends that candidates give themselves at least a month to prepare using the resources linked above.

One Week Before Your Exam

Confirm that the date, time and location of your exam is correct. If it is not, please see the Rescheduling and Cancellation Policy section for information about rescheduling or cancelling your exam.

What to Expect at the Testing Center?

When taking an exam at a testing center, please arrive at least 15 minutes before your scheduled exam time and be prepared to provide your Test Taker Authorization Code. Without your Test Taker Authorization Code, the proctor will not be able to load your assessment.

You will be required to provide the exam proctor two (2) forms of identification (one must be a government-issued photo ID). A credit card, bank debit card, or employee identification card can serve as secondary identification. A United States Social Security card is not an acceptable form of identification.

Exam Security Protocols

At the testing center you will be asked to place all personal items, except your identification, in a locker, locking file cabinet or compartment. Your personal belongings will not be accessible to you during a test session. Personal belongings include bags, purses, keys, wallets, hats, briefcases, books, cell phones, calculators, portable electronic devices, watches, and any type of firearms. To prevent any disruption, you must turn off cell phones and personal electronics before placing them in the storage compartment.

If you are wearing eyewear or jewelry, the test center proctors will request you to remove them in order to examine them for embedded technology. If the proctor determines the eyewear or jewelry contains cameras, microphones, or other technology, you must surrender them to be stored with your other personal items or you will not be approved to take the exam. In the event that eyewear or jewelry is found to contain inadmissible technology, the proctor will report this to the test vendor immediately.

Proctors will require you to turn out your pockets. This includes all pockets visible on your clothing, except those that would require you to remove clothing or otherwise expose yourself
(e.g. pockets on a blouse that cannot be turned out without removing the blouse). At a minimum, pockets in jeans or slacks should be turned out.

Your testing area will be fully visible to a proctor at all times through one or more of the following methods:

- Seating in the testing area
- Viewing window
- Closed circuit television monitoring
- Video recording system

If a video recording system is used, you will sign a statement agreeing to be recorded prior to the start of the exam.

What to Expect During Online Proctoring?

When taking an online proctored exam, a stable, high-speed internet connection (minimum of 1 Mbps upload / 1 Mbps download) as well as a microphone and detached web camera are required. Your hardware and software must meet the requirements described on the online proctoring help site. At least 24 hours before your online proctored exam, you must follow the preparation instructions here. If your seating and camera position during the exam do not match security protocols, your exam will be interrupted by a proctor in order to correct them.

Online proctored ISSP-SA and ISSP-CSP exams can be completed from any location as long as the following test environment requirements are met:

- The room is well lit, quiet and free from distraction.
- The testing surface is clutter-free and contains only one computer, one keyboard, and one mouse.
- You may not use more than one monitor, even if you are using a laptop.
- Lanyards/name badges, hats, watches, bracelets and necklaces are not permitted to be worn during testing. Please remove all items from your neck and wrists.
- Interaction with another individual during your test session is not permitted.
- You cannot take a break for any reason. If you leave your workstation during the exam, your exam may be terminated.
- You may not lean out of the camera view during your test session. The proctor must be able to see you at all times.
- Cell phones are not permitted in the testing area.
- Reading the exam aloud is prohibited.
- You will be recorded during the entire exam experience.
After Your Exam

Exam Results
Exam results are provided to test takers immediately after completing the exam. The results are reported on a pass/fail basis; no percentage score or other scoring information is provided to test takers.

Passing the Exam

Designating Your Credential
Once a candidate has successfully met the requirements for certification, they may represent themselves as a certified ISSP Sustainability Associate (ISSP-SA) or an ISSP Certified Sustainability Professional (ISSP-CSP).

The ISSP-SA or ISSP-CSP designation can be used in electronic signatures or displayed on resumes, business cards, web sites and public profiles. The credential is to be displayed as:

- ISSP Sustainability Associate or ISSP-SA
- ISSP Certified Sustainability Professional or ISSP-CSP

Any other representation is incorrect and not allowed.

Certificates
GBCI will issue a certificate to new credential holders in PDF format. Instructions on downloading this document will be sent via email within 10 business days after passing the exam.

Credential Maintenance
The ISSP-SA and ISSP-CSP credentials are valid for two years and renewable upon submittal of evidence of credential maintenance activities through earning Continuing Education Units (CEUs). See the CMP Guide for more information.

Exam-related Complaints and Exam Content Appeals
Because of the need for exam security, GBCI does not release exam questions or answers to candidates. GBCI does not respond to complaints or challenges received more than 10 days after the exam date and does not respond to complaints sent to organizations other than GBCI. GBCI will review the questions and you will be notified of the findings.

If you experience any problems at the Kryterion test center, or during online proctoring, you must inform the test center personnel/proctor before leaving. Kryterion will draft an Incident Report and make it available to GBCI.

GBCI does not modify exam scores under any conditions. In the event of a successful exam content appeal, you will be given the opportunity to retest; your score will not be changed. The only way to earn an ISSP-SA or ISSP-CSP credential is to achieve a passing score on the exam.
The appeal must be submitted via email to GBCI.

**Candidate Confidentiality**

A public directory of all ISSP-CSP’s and ISSP-SA’s whose certification is current and valid can be found here. The purpose of this list is to ensure that there is an official record of certified professionals for reference and verification that can be easily accessed to confirm claims of being professionally certified. Credential holders may opt out of being listed in the directory at any time by emailing GBCI.

Exam scores are released only to you, the exam taker, and authorized GBCI staff. GBCI does not release exam scores except for use in research studies that preserve your anonymity. Candidates’ scores will always remain confidential unless released with written consent of a candidate.

Official statistics regarding the ISSP credential, including all question performance data, individual data and demographic data, will be considered confidential; however, GBCI may publish aggregate, non-identifying information based on such data.
Exam Content

Exam Content Outline
The ISSP certification exams are based upon the Job Task Analysis that was derived from ISSP’s competency research project conducted in 2010 and generated through a multi-stakeholder process in 2013. The diagram to the right illustrates the six core competency areas required of the job of a “sustainability practitioner.” At the center is a fundamental understanding of the issues, principles, and concepts related to sustainability. The ISSP-SA credential focuses on this core competency. An ISSP-CSP must demonstrate knowledge and related experience in the other five categories in addition to the core conceptual knowledge area.

Each of the six competencies is further broken into specific related job tasks. These tasks and the associated knowledge required to perform them comprise the Exam Content Outline. While not a comprehensive study guide, this outline does convey to certification applicants the knowledge areas covered on the exam portion of the certification scheme.

NOTE: The resources provided in the following tables do not represent an exhaustive list of the references or sources needed to gain the necessary knowledge or competencies nor do their study guarantee successful completion of the ISSP certification exams.
## Section 1

### Core Sustainability Concepts

Demonstrated familiarity with the core issues, trends, concepts and frameworks of sustainability.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Task</th>
<th>Related knowledge and competencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1.1 Explain ideas, concepts and importance of sustainability to various audiences | - Demonstrate familiarity with global and local, economic and scientific issues, by describing key trends, impacts and perspectives relevant to sustainability. For example, defining sustainable development, Limits to Growth theory, LOHAS trends, \( I=P\times AxT \) equation, steady state or circular economy models.  
  - Explain sustainability frameworks and principles such as the Triple Bottom Line,  
  - Identify issues of social justice and social impacts  
  - Explain and apply systems thinking.  
  - Summarize historically significant events related to sustainability such as Brundtland Commission, Kyoto Protocol, Agenda 21, the various COP’s  
  - Describe current trends in and interplay among various sustainability issues such as waste, water, pollution, social impact, etc.  
  - Explain the importance of sustainable practice and how it can contribute to social, environmental, and business objectives |
| 1.2 Choose and customizing appropriate third-party sustainability resources | - List applicable regulatory trends and policies as they relate to sustainability (e.g. whistle blower, Sarbanes-Oxley, ESA, RoHS, WEEE, EuP, Montreal Protocol, IPCC).  
  - Demonstrate expertise in GHG inventorying and its relationship in areas such as buildings, transportation, and materials.  
  - Define sustainability claims, eco-labels and certifications such as EPEAT, Energy Star, LEED, etc.  
  - Describe key aspects of the landscape and architecture/hierarchy of global institutions, frameworks and standards relevant to the organization, its sustainability issues and its stakeholders. For example, GRI, Earth Charter, Hannover Principles, and Kyoto Protocol  
  - Identify relevant trends, technologies, approaches related to common sustainability initiatives (e.g. energy reduction and production, life cycle assessment, life cycle costing, bioremediation, GEMI, CDP, etc.) |

### Resources for Core Sustainability Concepts

- ISSP Glossary of Sustainability Terms
### Section 2

#### Stakeholder Engagement
Skills and knowledge related to collaboratively working with stakeholders to forward a mutually satisfactory beneficial agenda

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Task</th>
<th>Related knowledge and competencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 2.1 Identify, map and prioritize stakeholders and their primary interests or concerns | - Define stakeholder and the critical attributes that relate to your organization using tools and models like the stakeholder influence and importance matrix and stakeholder influence diagram  
- Define the importance and utility of engaging stakeholders in your sustainability efforts  
- List the critical steps or activities involved in facilitating stakeholder groups  
- Identify driving forces behind stakeholder motivations  
- Prioritize stakeholder needs and concerns  
- Identify ethical frameworks and filters for stakeholder interaction |
| 2.2 Develop a strategy and means of engaging with each stakeholder | - Analyze and evaluate key person(s) within each stakeholder group  
- Define the stages of stakeholder engagement.  
- Create stakeholder engagement assessment matrix: classify stakeholders as: unaware, resistant, neutral, supportive, leading  
- Identify points of leverage with stakeholder groups  
- Select appropriate organizational planning techniques and strategies appropriate for each stakeholder  
- Access, engage, and include stakeholders, influencers, and trusted advisors in dialogue  
- Advise employees of stakeholder identities and needs  
- Create stakeholder register: identification information (name, organization, etc.), assessment information (major requirements, expectations, potential influence on project, etc.), stakeholder classification (internal/external, supporter/neutral/resistor).  
- Describe strategies for behavior change management |
| 2.3 Implement and institutionalize procedures for engaging and communicating with internal stakeholders (e.g. senior management, functional leads, line employees) | - Discuss company sustainability opportunities in communications  
- Build consensus and support among diverse stakeholders  
- Describe strategies for engaging with hostile stakeholders  
- Explain the relevant of sustainability to all employees to give them guidance around opportunities for them in their jobs. |
| 2.4 Implement procedures for engaging and communicating with external stakeholders (e.g. suppliers, industry partners, NGO’s community members) | - Describe suitable approaches and considerations for managing multi-stakeholder engagements  
- Build consensus and describe strategies for engaging with hostile stakeholders |
| 2.5 Build relationships across organizational functions | - Create sub-groups of engaged employees  
- Build and nurture leadership and support from key stakeholders |
- Enlist support of employees and functional leads.

2.6 Prepare communications with input from key stakeholders

- Produce and control communications, create communications plan, identify communication methods applying current models for effective communication

**Resources for Stakeholder Engagement**

### Section 3

#### Plan Sustainability Strategies
Create a comprehensive, long-term and inclusive approach to the systematic implementation of sustainability vision and initiatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Task</th>
<th>Related knowledge and competencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 3.1 Develop a high level, long-term sustainability road map | - Describe strategic frameworks and planning models (e.g., backcasting, SWOT) and approaches to implementing them  
- Identify key contributors to the planning process  
- Relate sustainability vision to core purpose and define a sustainable version of the organization  
- Establish base line metrics or baseline performance  
- Apply appropriate tools (e.g. impacts assessment, resource flow diagrams) to identify critical aspects and impacts; inputs and outputs  
- Distinguish between a sustainability framework and common sustainability standards.  
- Describe different approaches to developing a plan for an organization (e.g. ADDIE model, hierarchy of competencies) |
| 3.2 Articulate the business case for sustainability | - Identify business aspects that benefit financially from the application of sustainability principles and practices  
- Distinguish between Green and Sustainable practices  
- Short term return vs long term return  
- Define the relationship between risk and sustainability  
- Articulate how sustainability links to business strategy  
- Identify an organization's key priorities and risks and communicate in business language  
- Conduct a cost benefit analysis  
- Recognize and account for externalities  
- Conduct life cycle costing  
- Present business case to senior management & obtain approval  
- Developing an understanding of the context for the organization to which sustainability will be applied |
| 3.3 Articulate a long term vision of sustainability for the organization and a strategy to achieve it | - Identify critical aspects of a sustainability plan that must be met. Distinguish between what is necessary to be sustainable from what is currently feasible  
- Overcome constraints of current thinking; establish BHAG’s  
- Identify alignment of producer and consumer  
- Design transmaterialization strategies  
- Distinguish between vision, goals, strategy, indicators  
- Identify key benefits that will attract employees to participate |
| 3.4 Create an overarching project framework to support the higher-level framework, that can be operationalized and implemented | - Design cyclical process for managing a sustainability plan  
- Identify existing organizational systems that could be leveraged to create a SMS (e.g. HR, strategic planning, budgeting, training) |

| 3.5 Identify material issues and the relevant key indicators, specific metrics and targets | - Devise SMART metrics  
- Calculate baseline data  
- Identify obstacles to measuring long term impacts, externalities, etc.  
- Identify the most common metrics shared across industries and regions  
- Familiarity with Balanced Score Card and its application to TBL metrics  
- Explain life cycle costing principles  
- Identify material issues and apply prioritization techniques  
- Understand how to determine and create baselines for key indicators  
- Appropriately design/choose TBL metrics. Distinguish between and appropriately apply leading and lagging indicators; Qualitative and quantitative metrics  
- Understand the processes, key terms, standards and approaches to conducting greenhouse gas inventories and audits  
- Identify the relationship to and application of emerging accounting practices. |

| 3.6 Identify the critical components of an SMS | - Define the PDCA cycle  
- Identify the key attributes of an SMS (e.g., cyclical/iterative)  
- Understand that implementation is an embedding process and the key elements are training, communication, SOP’s and documentation  
- Check - monitor progress and system so need metrics and audit process and implement a corrective action mechanism  
- Act - top level strategic and regular revisiting of the whole plan and process  
- Plan and understand importance of the Management Review |

**Resources for Planning Sustainability Strategies**

- UNESCO (2014) UNESCO Roadmap for Implementing the GAP on ESD.  
- The Natural Step backcasting process  
  Willard, B. The New Sustainability Advantage, Sustainability Champion’s Guidebook  
- Deming, E  
  ISO standards 14000, 26000  
  Blackburn, W. The Sustainability Handbook  
- Wackernagel, Ecological Footprint  
- Kaplan and Norton, The Balanced Score Card
## Section 4

**Implement Sustainability Strategies**
Managing the ongoing activities related to successful integration and fulfilment of sustainability goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Task</th>
<th>Related knowledge and competencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Establish effective support and governance structures for the implementation of sustainability strategies and initiatives</td>
<td>- Understand governance models, processes, decision frameworks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Implement an SMS in alignment with accepted standards and protocols</td>
<td>- Understanding of the benefits of standardized SMS’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Familiarity with continuous improvement standards and protocols (e.g. ISO series of standards)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Apply PDCA model and strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3 Integrate sustainability principles into organizational functions, policies and practices</td>
<td>- Define the phases of implementation of sustainability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Change management theory; strategies and barriers to change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Describe the basic approach to life cycle assessment</td>
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<td>4.4 Manage complex projects</td>
<td>- Define the different process groups of a project (Initiating, Planning, Executing, Monitoring and Controlling, Closing).</td>
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<td>- Classify the project into the project management knowledge areas (integration, scope, time, cost, quality, human resource, communication, risk, procurement, stakeholder).</td>
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<td>- Analyze and select the appropriate process model components (Inputs, Tools &amp; Techniques, Outputs).</td>
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<td>- Manage the project per project requirements and plan.</td>
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<td>4.5 Communicate sustainability plans and concepts and choose strategies for buy-in from all members and levels of an organization</td>
<td>- Plan Communications: who needs it; when is it needed; where should it be stored; what format; how to retrieve it; any barriers to overcome such as language, time zones, cultural, etc.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Familiarity with the strategies and concepts of community based social marketing</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Communications Management Plan:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Wilhelm, K, Making Sustainability Stick</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Manage Communications: Determine and limit who will communicate with whom and who will receive what information</td>
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<td>- Control communications: the process of monitoring and controlling communications throughout the entire project life cycle to ensure the information needs of the project stakeholders are met.</td>
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<tr>
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<td>- Ensure optimal information flow among all communication participants, at any moment in time.</td>
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<tr>
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<td>- Analyze Communication dimensions:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Interactive and technology based</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Internal and external</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>o Formal and informal</td>
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</table>
4.6 Launch and support teams and work groups
- Launch and charter teams
- Build commitment among team members
- Facilitate groups through decision making
- Hold teams accountable for results
- Lead teams through the stages of team development
- List the critical steps in building consensus in groups

4.7 Drive innovation, improvement and continuous learning
- Innovation Theory - motivators for adoption, barriers to adoption, etc.
- Familiarity with product stewardship, LCA's
- Understanding of the theory of double loop learning

4.8 Distribute communication and determine process for gathering feedback
- Ensure two-way communication and assure line manager acceptance

Resources for Implementing Sustainability Strategies

- Benn, S., D. Dunphy and A. Griffiths, Organizational Change for Corporate Sustainability (3rd ed.), Routledge, New York.
- US Environmental Protection Agency
- Fleischer, D. GREEN TEAMS: Engaging Employees in Sustainability, GreenBiz.com
- GMIC Guide to Forming a Green Team, Green Meeting Industry Council
- Willard, B The New Sustainability Advantage
- Rogers E., Diffusion of Innovation
## Section 5

### Evaluate and Report Sustainability Efforts

Collect, analyze and report the results of sustainability metrics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Task</th>
<th>Related knowledge and competencies</th>
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| 5.1 Conduct an impact assessment of organizational or community inputs, operations, outputs and stakeholder relationships | - Apply impacts assessment models and strategies  
- Perform cost-benefit analysis & employee motivational studies  
- Manage supply chains |
| 5.2 Design, implement and maintain data systems for collecting accurate, timely and reliable data (maximally integrated with other data collection systems of the organization). | - Conduct validity & reliability studies based on data compiled from comparable organizations.  
- Design TBL dashboards with leading, lagging, qualitative and quantitative metrics  
- Determine materiality of metrics and reporting requirements  
- Perform and review greenhouse gas inventories and audits  
- Apply prevailing standards for measuring and managing social, environmental and economic impacts. |
| 5.3 Analyze data and draw conclusions about progress. | - Apply concepts of materiality, transparency, context, completeness to measures and reports  
- Selecting, interpreting and reporting on sustainability key performance indicators |
| 5.4 Gather data, case studies, examples, and logically compile and order them | - Prepare defensible, readable and accessible reports  
- Demonstrate understanding of widely accepted reporting formats like CDP, GRI, SASB, IIRC |

### Resources for Evaluating and Reporting Sustainability Efforts

- **CDP**
- **Global Reporting Initiative (GRI)**
- **The International Integrated Reporting Council (IIRC)**
- **Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB)**
## Section 6

**Adjust plans**  
Continuously review efforts and adjust to meet emerging needs and opportunities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Task</th>
<th>Related knowledge and competencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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| **6.1 Maintain and continuously refine management systems** | - Conduct regular reviews of SMS, plans, strategic priorities, threats and opportunities  
- Perform annual SWOT & cost-benefit analysis |
| **6.2 Prioritize action based on context, analysis and set targets** | - Use accredited project management concepts  
- Recognize and incorporate new and emerging opportunities that have the potential to enhance uptake of sustainability initiatives |
Sample Questions

Disclaimer
The exam questions listed here were discarded in the process of creating questions for new exams.

The questions are provided for your convenience to allow you to better familiarize yourself with the format and general content of questions on exams.

The content of these questions, while representative of the type of questions you can expect, does not necessarily mirror the content that will appear on the actual exams.

Furthermore, your ability to correctly answer these sample questions does not in any way predict or guarantee your ability to successfully answer questions on the actual exams.

ISSP-SA Sample Questions
1. Brazil has the highest rate of aluminum recycling in the world at 98%. Which of the following represents one of the unintended social consequences of its recycling?
   A. The economic benefits to the citizens of Brazil of the money earned from recycling aluminum cans.
   B. The financial benefits to beverage companies in being able to reuse the aluminum in their manufacturing.
   C. The capacity of the social welfare system in Brazil to absorb the costs of treating obesity.
   D. The physical hazards faced by individuals who retrieve the aluminum cans from landfills.

2. Which of the following organizations has developed a standardized reporting system that enables all companies and organizations to measure, understand, and communicate sustainability activities and metrics?
   A. U.S. Green Building Council
   B. Clinton Global Initiative
   C. Global Reporting Initiative
   D. Environmental Defense Fund

3. The Genuine Progress Indicator differs as a metric from the Gross Domestic Product indicator because it includes which of the following factors?
   A. Taxes paid by corporations and citizens.
   B. Measures of the actual "value added" business creates rather than just sales.
C. Increases to account for resource efficiencies achieved by industries or businesses
D. A calculation of worth of volunteer time.

4. In the equation I=PxAxT, the letters stand for...
   A. Impact equals Planetary health x Attitudes x Technology
   B. Impact equals Population x Affluence x Technology
   C. Impact equals Population x Air quality x Toxins
   D. Impact equals Pollution x Activity x Technology

5. Which of the following best exemplifies the systems property of "emergence?"
   A. A school of fish swimming in unison without the benefit of a "leader" fish.
   B. The "butterfly" effect in which a random event has unanticipated consequences in a distant part of the system.
   C. When hydrogen and oxygen molecules combine, water is created.
   D. A sudden and unpredictable escalation in a systems behavior as illustrated in melting glaciers.

6. In systems speak, dynamic complexity refers to . . .
   A. Systems which have many moving parts
   B. Systems that have variables that keep changing
   C. Systems whose purpose or structure keeps changing
   D. Systems in which cause and effect are neither close in time nor space
ISSP-CSP Sample Questions

1. What are the four steps of an LCA?
   A. Goal Definition and Scoping, Inventory Analysis, Impact Assessment, then Interpretation
   B. Goal Definition and Scoping, Inventory Analysis, Impact Assessment, then Extrapolation
   C. Process Mapping, Goal Definition, Inventory Analysis, Impact Assessment, then Interpretation
   D. Goal Definition and Scoping, Inventory Analysis, Extrapolation, then Interpretation

2. A carpet manufacturer changes its business model to switch from a product company to a service company in which it promotes the leasing of carpet tiles instead of selling wall to wall carpet to customers. This is an example of . . .
   A. Cradle-to-cradle
   B. Rematerialization
   C. Dematerialization
   D. Transmaterialization

3. As the sustainability coordinator, you’ve just been approached by an NGO (Non-Governmental Agency) to participate in a collective impact initiative for what you consider to be one of the most critical issues in your industry. You see value in this effort, but need to convince your organization to support your involvement. Which of the following rationales would you use to justify your involvement to your leaders?
   A. Your involvement will fulfill your personal target for employee volunteer involvement.
   B. Your involvement will help you manage the long term risks to your organization.
   C. You will learn a lot about what your competition is doing.
   D. You will be able to mention this association in your report to stakeholders.

4. What is "backcasting?"
   A. A process associated with life cycle assessments that looks upstream in the value chain to identify impacts.
   B. The process of establishing baseline measures for organizational impacts.
   C. A planning process that involves moving backwards from a vision of an ideal future to the current state.
   D. A process the IPCC uses to track increase in global temperature change.
5. What would you ask to determine the most material sustainability issues facing an organization?
   A. Which organizational impacts are most likely to influence the decisions of stakeholders?
   B. Which business and environmental trends are most urgent to address?
   C. Which parts of our operation have the greatest potential for cost savings?
   D. Which aspects of our operations would present the greatest risk to the organization if not addressed?

6. You lead the implementation of an organization-wide sustainability effort for a mid-sized manufacturing firm. A cross-functional steering committee developed a comprehensive, long-term plan under your facilitation. The plan includes several major initiatives, at least two of which require significant participation from line employees. The employees, however, are largely unfamiliar with the concepts of sustainability and jaded by past organizational change initiatives that have come and gone without major impact. Most employees are skeptical when you introduce this new initiative. One of the first projects the organization has slated is an across the board waste reduction effort. This involves the cooperation of employees to assure the newly implemented recycling system you and the committee designed works. What would be your first step in enrolling employees in this effort?
   A. Provide training to all impacted employees on the workings of the proposed waste reduction system. Include hands on practice of material handling to assure they understand where and how each key material is to be handled.
   B. Convene employees in small groups and invite them to engage in a problem solving activity which focuses on increasing the efficiency of their processes and making their work more effective and productive.
   C. Recruit employees to participate in a "dumpster dive" to both demonstrate the problem the new system is trying to solve as well as give them firsthand experience with the issue.
   D. Hold work teams accountable for both measuring and reducing the waste in their units. Tie waste reduction results to performance reviews and/or reward systems.

7. You are the sustainability coordinator for your organization. In the last year you rolled out a series of trainings and briefings that provided all employees at all levels with the essential concepts of sustainability and encouraged everyone to begin thinking of ways that the concepts might be applied to business processes throughout the organization. You simultaneously created a system that enabled employees to submit their ideas to you directly. You have been surprised at the response as it has been far greater than you anticipated. You have been inundated with ideas. You realize now, that you were unprepared for this response. What should be your next step?
   A. Pick the suggestions that have the most merit and begin working on them immediately conveying your successes as they are achieved.
B. Celebrate and communicate the success of the program and recruit people to help you process the suggestions.
C. Request additional staffing to help you deal with suggested projects.
D. Pass the suggestions on to the executive team to process and respond to them.

8. What does the term "materiality" mean as it relates to sustainability?
   A. The aspects of an organization's operations and activities that lead to the most important positive and negative economic, environmental and social impacts for which the organization can be held accountable.
   B. The social, environmental and financial impact of the materials consumed or produced as part of an organization doing business.
   C. The relevance of an organization's sustainability vision and goals.
   D. The concept of, or applied use of, various building materials or substances.

**Answer Key**

**ISSP-SA**

Question 1: D | Question 2: C | Question 3: D | Question 4: B | Question 5: C | Question 6: D

**ISSP-CSP**

Question 1: A | Question 2: D | Question 3: B | Question 4: C | Question 5: A | Question 6: B | Question 7: B | Question 8: A
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