

What you always wanted to know about LEED and BREEAM but were embarrassed to ask



Traditional buildings consume 40% of the total fossil fuel energy in the US and EU and are significant contributors of greenhouse gases.

In 2016, the European Commission proposed that all new buildings must be nearly zero energy buildings by 2020, making a clear statement that green buildings are the future.

LEED and BREEAM are two world-wide accepted certification programs that can help us measure the level of environmentally-conscious design in a building. Maybe you have heard of them, but are you on the up and up with the differences between them? Let us sort it out once and for all.

HOW DO YOU CHOOSE?

If you are in the process of starting a construction project, as an architect or planner, you might benefit from a quick comparison of the two systems.

LEED

LEADERSHIP IN ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN

BREEAM

BUILDING RESEARCH ESTABLISHMENT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

MAIN ADVANTAGES

Somewhat greater design freedom, since the LEED process is less prescriptive than BREEAM's. There is no program-licensed assessor required on the scene before or during the project.

Since BREEAM has a more prescriptive approach and uses licensed assessors, design teams know from the very start what is expected of them to attain the certification.

MAIN DISADVANTAGES

Design teams often need to spend some time providing calculations and submitting plans to US-GBC to prove their compliance and receive accreditation.

Less freedom in the design process to a certain extent. Some designs might be disqualified already at an early stage of the project.

PRESENCE

Most common certification globally, except in the UK.

Dominates in the UK.

RUN BY

Non-profit US Green Building Council.

BREEAM's parent company, Building Research Establishment (BRE).

GOOD TO KNOW

A LEED certification is often required or rewarded in the US.

Largely embedded into the UK building regulations.

THE PROCESS IN MORE DETAIL

The design team from the construction company sends the data to the US-GBC, which examines it and issues the certificate if the requirements are met.

Licensed assessors examine the evidence against the criteria and report it to BRE, which assesses the report and issues the certificate if the requirements are met.

TRAINING

While LEED does not require training, there is a credit available if an accredited professional (AP) is used. The role of the AP is to help gather the evidence and advise the client. The evidence is then submitted to the US-GBC which does the assessment and issues the certificate.

Licensed and independent assessors are on site from the start of the project. The trained assessor allows for a design that follows the BREEAM regulations and ensures the paperwork required.

NOW WHAT?

If you are interested in either certification program, it is a good idea to contact a representative for either LEED or BREEAM. Many suppliers can also help you with the programs for their particular solution or product.

ASSA ABLOY Entrance Systems

ASSA ABLOY

New buildings have to meet the needs of the present without compromising the lives and well-being of future generations. In this environment, you need to stay on top of complex and rapidly changing legislation. Working with suppliers that make sustainability an integral part of their business means that you can deliver energy-saving and cost-effective solutions. In the ASSA ABLOY Group, sustainability initiatives are integrated in everything we do and we offer a complete range of entrance systems that are designed to reduce energy usage, no matter which model of entrance solution your project requires.

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