

Introduction

Version control

Version	Date	Description
V1.0	03/07/2023	Draft release

Use of trademarks

Green Star is a registered trade mark of Green Building Council of Australia. The Green Star rating system is developed, owned, and operated by the Green Building Council of Australia. The Green Star rating system and associated trade marks are used in New Zealand under licence by the New Zealand Green Building Council.

Acknowledgments

The New Zealand Green Building Council (NZGBC) is indebted to the Green Building Council of Australia (GBCA) for sharing intellectual property and for their on-going support.

The NZGBC thanks everyone who has contributed content, time and effort in the development and on-going review of the Green Star NZ suite of rating tools. In particular, the NZGBC acknowledges industry members who have participated in Technical Review Groups, Stakeholder Workshops and as NZGBC Assessors, providing valuable feedback and input since the Green Star tools were released in 2009. A list of contributors can be found in the Appendix.

Please see previous versions of the Green Star NZ manuals for the list of companies and individuals who contributed to the initial development of the rating tool.

Future Focus Partners

The NZGBC thanks the following partners for their ongoing support to the program:

Technical Partners



Authorisation and Disclaimer

The Green Star NZ rating system ('Green Star Rating System') and the Green Star NZ Rating Tools ('Rating Tools') have been developed by the New Zealand Green Building Council ('NZGBC'). The Rating Tools are intended for use by project teams, contractors, and other interested parties to validate sustainability initiatives of the design and construction phases of eligible projects.

The Green Star NZ Rating System and the Rating Tools have been developed with the assistance and participation of representatives from many organisations. The Rating Tools may be subject to further development in the future. The views and opinions expressed in the Submission Guidelines have been determined by the NZGBC.

The NZGBC authorises you to view and use this Submission Guidelines for your individual use only. In exchange for this authorisation, you agree that the NZGBC retains all copyright and other proprietary rights contained in, and in relation to, the Submission Guidelines and agree not to sell, modify, or use for another purpose the Submission Guidelines or to reproduce, display or distribute the Submission Guidelines in any way for any public or commercial purpose, including display on a website or in a networked environment.

Unauthorised use of the Submission Guidelines will violate copyright, and other laws, and is prohibited. All text, graphics, layout, and other elements of content contained in the Submission Guidelines is owned by the NZGBC and are protected by copyright, trademark, and other laws.

To the maximum extent permitted by law, the NZGBC does not accept responsibility, including without limitation for negligence, for any inaccuracy within the Submission Guidelines and makes no warranty, expressed or implied, including the warranties of merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose, nor assumes any legal liability or responsibility to you or any third parties for the accuracy, completeness, or use of, or reliance on, any information contained in the Submission Guidelines or for any injuries, losses or damages (including, without limitation, equitable relief and economic loss) arising out of such use or reliance. The Submission Guidelines is no substitute for professional advice. You should seek your own professional and other appropriate, advice on the matters addressed by it.

As a condition of use of the Submission Guidelines, you covenant not to sue, and agree to release the NZGBC, its officers, agents, employees, contractors (including any Certified Assessor, any member of the Technical Working Group and any Independent Chair) and its members from and against any and all claims, demands and causes of action for any injury, loss, destruction or damage (including, without limitation, equitable relief and economic loss) that you may now or hereafter have a right to assert against such parties as a result of your use of, or reliance on, the Submission Guidelines.

The application of the Submission Guidelines to all Eligible Projects is encouraged to assess and improve their environmental attributes.

The NZGBC offers a formal certification process whereby persons may apply for a particular design or project to be assessed for compliance with the criteria specified in the Submission Guidelines upon payment of the relevant fee and execution of the required documentation by the applicant.

For NZGBC non-member organisations: This soft copy gives your organisation license to use the Submission Guidelines by up to 5 users. Organisations that require a license for more than 5 users should contact the NZGBC.

All rights reserved.

Table of contents	1
Introduction	
Version control	1
Use of trademarks	1
Acknowledgments	1
Future Focus Partners	2
Authorisation and Disclaimer	2
Table of contents	3
About the New Zealand Green Building Council	4
About the Green Building Council of Australia	4
Acknowledgements	5
About Green Star Buildings	6
The Green Star Buildings rating tool	8
How Green Star Buildings works	10
The Green Star Buildings achievement scale	18
Certifying your project	19
Promoting your Green Star project registration and certification	25
Updates to the rating tool	27
Additional information	29
Feedback	32

About the New Zealand Green Building Council

The New Zealand Green Building Council is a team of people who are passionate advocates for better buildings, because we know that better buildings mean healthier, happier Kiwis. We do this by working alongside politicians, industry, businesses, and other organisations to bring change.

We're a not-for-profit organisation, and we believe that all New Zealanders deserve to be safe, healthy and happy in our beautiful country – at home, at school, at work. Everywhere.

About the Green Building Council of Australia

The Green Building Council of Australia (GBCA) is Australia's leading authority on sustainable buildings and communities. The GBCA was established in 2002 to develop a sustainable property industry in Australia and drive the adoption of sustainable practices. Today, the GBCA operates Australia's only national voluntary, comprehensive sustainability rating system for the built environment – Green Star.

What is Green Star?

Green Star is an internationally recognised rating system that delivers independent verification of sustainable outcomes throughout the life cycle of the built environment. Green Star's mission is to *"lead the sustainable transformation of the built environment"*. Green Star aims to achieve this by encouraging practices that:

- Reduce the impact of climate change
- Enhance health & quality of life
- Restore and protect our planet's biodiversity and ecosystems
- Drive resilient outcomes for buildings, fitouts and communities.
- Contribute to market transformation and a sustainable economy

The rating tool, certification and evolution of the tool is informed by the following ten principles:

- Green Star is holistic
- Green Star is targeted
- Green Star is outcomes focused
- Green Star is industry developed and adopted
- Green Star reflects best practice
- Green Star is robust
- Green Star is transparent
- Green Star is verifiable
- Green Star promotes innovation
- Green Star celebrates achievement

Through Green Star, assets can achieve certification for their level of performance against one of the many Green Star rating tools. Green Star certification describes to the industry the attributes of the asset in terms that are widely understood and accepted.

Our Future Focus

In March 2018, GBCA announced Green Star Future Focus, a program that set out to revise Green Star to ensure the Australian built environment met the megatrends and issues facing the industry in the next decade.

Following extensive consultation, the program resulted in significant changes to the Green Star rating system, including a revised and expanded framework that includes a greater social focus, increased stringency for the highest rating, and an increased focus on reducing carbon emissions.

Many of these trends are as relevant in New Zealand as they are in Australia and have been adapted for local use.

The Future Focus program sets out the following objectives:

- Recognise world leadership and maintain best practice
- Address climate change

- Focus on people's health, wellbeing, and human rights
- Respond to increased expectations
- Focus on outcomes and ongoing performance
- Improve the user-experience and reduce cost

Future Focus will deliver four holistic rating tools, each relevant to distinct phases of the built environment:

- Green Star Buildings: a rating tool for the design and construction of new buildings and major refurbishments
- Green Star Fitouts: a rating tool for the design and construction of new interior fitouts
- Green Star Performance: a rating tool for sustainable building operations
- Green Star Communities: a rating tool for communities and precincts

Developing Green Star Buildings

Green Star Buildings was developed by the GBCA through a comprehensive engagement process with industry. It had three distinct stages:

- A **scoping phase** for the Future Focus program, which outlined the program's objectives. This included releasing a scoping paper and hosting four sessions across Australia. The GBCA received over 100 submissions, with a high degree of support for the program's direction
- A **consultation phase** for Green Star Buildings, which detailed how the Future Focus program translated to the rating tool for buildings. The GBCA received over 125 submissions with a high degree of support for the revised rating tool, including the revised framework and scope
- A **draft phase**, where the credits were released for public comment. The GBCA also engaged with 11 projects (the 'Early Access Program') to test the rating tool and obtain feedback during its development.

Green Star Buildings reflects three years of engagement with Australian industry. This extensive engagement process lends confidence that the rating tool reflects the issue and opportunities facing the built environment over the coming decade.

Although many trends are common across the Tasman, it is also recognised that there are challenges that are unique to New Zealand. After being widely adopted in Australia, the tool is in the process of being adapted for Aotearoa through detailed review:

- An **introduction phase** to allow the New Zealand industry to review the Australian version and to provide feedback on applicability to local conditions
- An **adaptation phase** to incorporate feedback and work with experts to revise the credits
- A **second round of consultation** during which the draft credits are released for industry review

Any feedback that comes out of this consultation round will be reviewed before the release of the final version of Green Star Buildings NZ.

Acknowledgements

Green Star Buildings was developed thanks to the support of hundreds of people and dozens of organisations in industry. From our Technical Partners to our Expert Reference Panels, from our colleagues worldwide in our Green Building Council network, to our partners in the built environment space, and finally to all our member organisations, we acknowledge your support in delivering this next version of Green Star.

We'd like to highlight and thank those who provided significant time during this process. Their names are listed in Appendix A.

About Green Star Buildings

Green Star Buildings aims to meet current and future demands on the built environment with aspirational benchmarks for design, construction, and operational performance. It also provides a pathway for building owners to address carbon emissions over time.

Green Star Buildings is a rating tool developed to rate the design and construction of any building. Green Star Buildings aims to:

- Assist clients and project teams to achieve and rate their sustainability goals for their project
- Encourage a new approach by rewarding healthy, resilient, and positive best practice outcomes and excellence
- Provide consistent and clear advice in an easy to use manner

Green Star Buildings features eight categories representing the issues that will define the next decade of the built environment.



Responsible

Recognises activities that ensure the building is designed, procured, built, and handed over in a responsible manner.



Places

Supports the creation of safe, enjoyable, integrated, and comfortable places.



Healthy

Promotes actions and solutions that improve the physical and mental health of occupants.



People

Encourages solutions that address the social health of the community.



Resilient

Encourages solutions that address the capacity of the building to bounce back from short-term shocks and long-term stresses



Nature

Encourages active connections between people and nature and rewards creating biodiverse green spaces in cities.



Positive

Encourages a positive contribution to key environmental issues of carbon, water, and the impact of materials.



Leadership

Recognises projects that set a strategic direction, build a vision for industry, or enhance the industry's capacity to innovate.

Each category groups a number of issues related to a certain impact. These are known as credits. A credit addresses an initiative that improves or has the potential to improve a project's performance.

Credits are weighted in relation with each other by varying the number of points available. Each credit defines a clear outcome that a project must meet. Where the outcome is verified to have been met, a project will be awarded the relevant available points.

Once all credits are assessed, the total number of points achieved is compared against the available points in the rating tool, and a certified rating is awarded.

A building seeking certification can achieve a Green Star 'Certified' rating. This rating is awarded at the end of construction and does not expire. There is an option to complete a 'Designed' assessment, an interim step towards the full certification. In addition, leadership badges are being introduced to showcase leadership on a number of issues.

Green Star Buildings certification identifies projects that have demonstrated the achievement of a specific level of sustainability. The rating describes to the industry the sustainability attributes of the project in terms that are widely understood and accepted.

Key features

The rating tool has five key features:

- Delivers a new definition of a sustainable building
- Is Net Zero Ready
- Responds to Sustainability megatrends
- Creates clear expectations for new buildings
- Delivers opportunities for supply chain transformation

Delivers a new definition of a sustainable building

Green Star Buildings is underpinned by a holistic framework that addresses social and environmental issues. This rating tool responds to global movements and initiatives such as the Paris Agreement and the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals. These are increasingly on the radar of investors, governments, and communities. Green Star Buildings certification will give owners, occupiers, and investors confidence that theirs is a high-quality and future-proofed asset.

Net Zero Ready

Green Star Buildings aims to drive all buildings to be net zero carbon in operations by considering both operational and embodied carbon emissions. Its goal is to ensure New Zealand can deliver all new buildings to be net zero carbon in operations from 2030 onwards.

The approach to net zero carbon buildings in Green Star Buildings is known as the Climate Positive Pathway.

This path aims to deliver buildings that are fossil fuel free, powered by renewables, highly efficient, built with lower carbon materials and offset with nature. Further information is available in the section Climate Positive Pathway.

Responds to sustainability megatrends

Green Star Buildings has been built to consider the impacts against the key megatrends of the next decade, and to ensure it responds to the strategic goals of governments, tenants, investors, developers and building owners. Overall, Green Star Buildings responds to:

- World Green Building Council's global megatrends, by providing a balanced rating tool that impacts Climate Action, Resource efficiency, and Health and wellbeing
- UN Sustainable Development Goals, targeting 12 out of the 17 goals
- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) recommendations on the built environment, which resulted in a clear set of benchmarks and practices to drive the built environment to be on track for a 1.5°C trajectory
- Reporting frameworks such as the Global Real Estate Sustainability Benchmark (GRESB) and the Task Force for Climate Related Financial Disclosure (TCFD).

Creates clear expectations for new buildings

There is a set of *Minimum Expectation* that must be achieved by all projects to achieve a Green Star rating. The *Minimum Expectations* aim to ensure all Green Star rated buildings meet a basic definition of a green building (energy efficient, water efficient, good healthy spaces, built responsibly, and on sites that are not critical natural areas). These expectations will assist anyone in understanding what a Green Star rated building looks like no matter what.

In addition, 6 Star rated buildings must be designed to be fossil fuel free, highly efficient buildings, , and built with low carbon materials, as per the Climate Positive Pathway. This expectation also applies to other star ratings over time.

Drives opportunities for supply chain transformation

Green Star Buildings aims to create market demand for innovative, responsible, and low carbon products. It does this by:

- Introducing a new framework for assessing products and materials that rewards products that have lower environmental impact, are transparent, respect human rights, and are lower in carbon content
- Creating a driver for low carbon products by introducing a requirement that must be met by all buildings to reduce their embodied carbon to achieve a rating.

The Green Star Buildings rating tool

Green Star Buildings is composed of the following:

- **Submission Guidelines:** which contains the requirements and benchmarks (credits) that a building must comply with to achieve a rating
- **Calculators and guides:** which assist project teams to calculate whether specific thresholds have been met
- **Technical Questions:** which help project teams seek clarity or propose alternatives to the information in the submission guidelines or guides
- **Technical Clarifications:** which provide project teams with answers to questions that are considered relevant to most buildings
- **Guidance documents:** developed by the NZGBC to assist project teams towards achieving a rating.

Green Star quotes a number of standards, external guides, and legislation, within each credit. Where referenced, these refer to the currently enforced version (for example, by the Building Code of New Zealand, or local council), unless otherwise stated.

Submission Guidelines

The Submission Guidelines is the collection of all credits applicable to eligible projects. Within this document, all the categories and credits are explained, targets are set, and submission requirements are detailed. The Submission Guidelines contain:

- Overview of the rating tool
- Information on the certification process
- The targets and criteria of each credit
- The submission requirements for achieving a Green Star Buildings rating

Calculators and guides

There are six calculators in the rating tool. Two of these calculators are mandatory for all projects seeking certification. The following table describes the calculators, their purpose, and the key data being collected. Guides are provided to assist projects in producing outputs and completing the calculators. These will be available through Green Star resources on the NZGBC website. Calculators are provided for demonstrating compliance with Green Star only and intended to be used to model outcomes for projects seeking certification.

Credit	Description	Key data points
Responsible Products credits	Allows projects to determine whether their building has the requisite amount of responsible products	Responsible Products Value and dollar value
Upfront Carbon Emissions	Enables a project team to calculate their embodied carbon impacts from key and generic products and materials used in the building's construction. It is a simple calculator for those not doing a life cycle assessment.	kgCO ₂
Energy Use (Required)	Allows project teams to demonstrate that they are reducing their energy consumption against a typical building.	MJ/year
Water Use	Allows project teams to demonstrate that they are reducing their water consumption against a typical building.	kL/year
Life Cycle Impacts	Captures life cycle data and compares it against a reference building modelled by the project team.	Various
Movement and Place	Allows project teams to demonstrate that they are reducing their transport related impacts against a typical building.	Various

Technical Questions

Technical questions are intended to assist project teams in instances where clarification is needed, or alternative compliance pathways are to be reviewed and approved by the NZGBC. Technical Questions are to be submitted to a technical coordinator assigned for each project.

Technical Clarifications

A Technical Clarifications (TC) database is available on the NZGBC website.

These TCs are intended to provide additional technical assistance when working through the Submission Guidelines for no additional charge. Using TC responses is not mandatory but may save projects time in some instances. Project teams have the option of including TCs in their submission should the outcome support their project.

Should a project wish to apply a specific TC response then it must be stated in the Submission and the TC must be included as submission supporting documents. Assessors will not refer to the TC database as part of the assessment process, other than to verify the validity of an included TC. To view the TC database, visit: <https://www.nzgbc.org.nz/>

Guidance documents

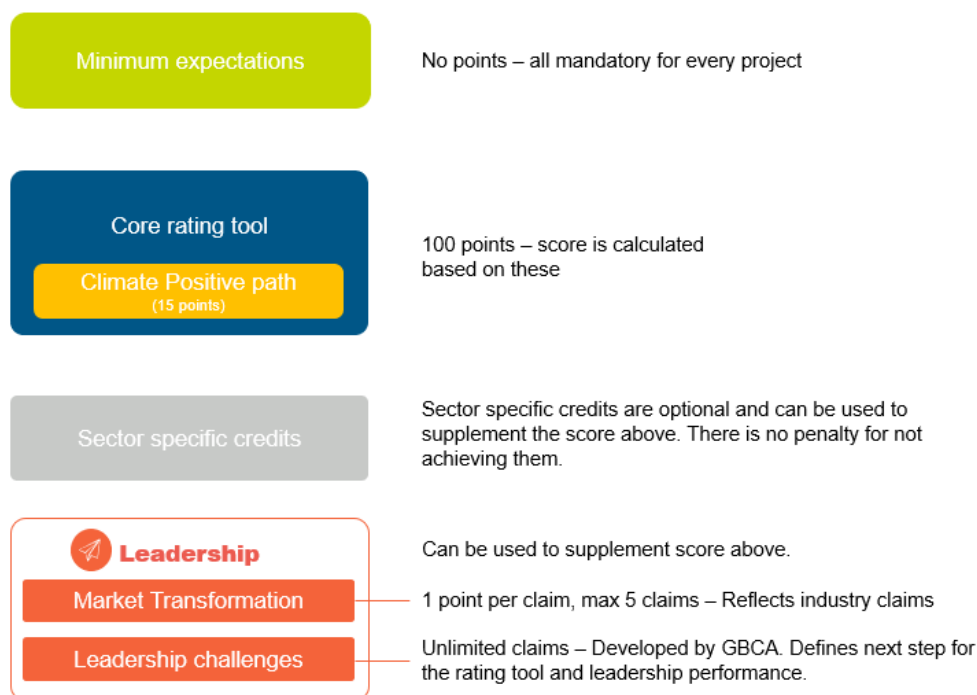
NZGBC also develops guidance documents that assist project teams towards achieving a rating. These are available through the Green Star Resources page.

How Green Star Buildings works

Summary

Green Star Buildings is organised around the following concepts:

- Core Credits
- Leadership
- *Minimum Expectations*
- The Climate Positive Pathway
- Sector Specific Credits and Pathways



There are eight categories in Green Star Buildings.

- Responsible
- Healthy
- Resilient
- Positive
- Places
- People
- Nature
- Leadership

Each category contains multiple credits. A credit addresses an outcome that improves or has the potential to improve a project's sustainability performance.

Credits are weighted in relation with each other by varying the number of points available. Each credit defines a clear outcome that a project must meet. Where the outcome is verified to have been met, a project will be awarded with the relevant available points.

Once all credits are assessed, the total number of points achieved is tallied, and the project is certified as either a 4, 5, or 6 Star rating.

Credit structure

Each credit has the following sections:

- **Outcome:** outlines the result of achieving the criteria outlined within it
- **Criteria:** outlines the performance expectations for meeting one of the following three conditions:
 - *Minimum Expectation* are not assigned points.
 - *Credit Achievement* outlines the best practices that the building must meet to be awarded at least one point. *Credit Achievement* is pass or fail. One to four points are available, depending on the credit. No partial points will be provided.
 - *Exceptional Performance* outlines leading practices that a building can also achieve to be awarded additional points in the credit. *Exceptional Performance* criteria are always in addition to the *Credit Achievement*. *Exceptional Performance* is pass or fail. One to four points are available in addition to those in the *Credit Achievement*, depending on the credit. No partial points will be provided.

Not all credits have all of these, but all credits will contain at least one.

Project teams must target *Credit Achievement* to be eligible to target *Exceptional Performance*.

- **Requirements:** Describes the method for demonstrating compliance with the 'Criteria'. Projects should meet the requirements as outlined to be awarded the credit points. Alternatively, if the project would like to meet the intent of the credit by other means, contact the NZGBC via a Technical Question or request a workshop.
 - The 'Requirements' can include performance methods or prescriptive methods for demonstrating compliance with a criterion. The performance methods rely on demonstrating compliance with the criteria via modelling solutions. The prescriptive solutions are pre-assessed ('Deemed To Satisfy') conditions that have been found to meet the 'Credit Criteria' (for example, a building applying prescriptive sustainability initiatives for the Water Use credit, rather than modelling the building's predicted water usage).
- **Submission content:** this section provides examples of documentation that can be used as evidence. It also states when a calculator must be provided.
- **Guidance:** The guidance section includes additional information relevant to this credit that is useful to the project when pursuing actions and strategies to meet the criteria, including resources and suggested standards.
- **Definitions:** This section outlines a clear definition for the use in Green Star. Definitions will help the project team understand the applicability of a credit.
- **Supporting information:** This section includes a summary of any reference standards needed to demonstrate compliance with the credit criteria, or other resources that are relevant to the outcome.

Credits in the rating tool

Credit	Minimum Expectation	Credit Achievement	Exceptional Performance
Responsible category			
Industry Development		1	
Responsible Construction	•	1	
Verification and Handover	.•	1	
Responsible Resource Management	.•		
Responsible Procurement		1	

Credit	Minimum Expectation	Credit Achievement	Exceptional Performance
Responsible Structure		3	2
Responsible Envelope		2	2
Responsible Systems		1	1
Responsible Finishes		1	1
Healthy category			
Clean Air	•	2	
Light Quality	•	2	2
Acoustic Comfort	•	2	
Exposure to Toxins	•	2	
Thermal Comfort and Amenity Spaces	•	1	1
Connection to Nature		1	1
Resilient category			
Climate Change Resilience	•	1	
Operations Resilience		2	
Community Resilience		1	
Heat Resilience		1	
Grid Resilience*		3*	
Positive category			
Upfront Carbon Emissions *	•	3* +1	3+1
Energy Use *	•	3 *	3
Energy Source *	•	2 *	3
Other Carbon Emissions *		2 *	1
Water Use	•	3	3
Life Cycle Impacts		1	1

Credit	Minimum Expectation	Credit Achievement	Exceptional Performance
Places category			
Movement and Place	•	3	
Enjoyable Places		2	
Contribution to Place		2	
Culture, Heritage, and Identity		1	
People category			
Inclusive Construction Practices	••	1	
Indigenous Inclusion		2	
Procurement and Workforce Inclusion		2	1
Design for Inclusion		2	1
Nature category			
Impacts to Nature	•	2	
Biodiversity Enhancement		2	2
Nature Connectivity		2	
Nature Stewardship		2	
Waterway protection		2	2
Leadership			
Market Transformation		5 (1 point per claim to a maximum of 5 claims)	
Leadership Challenges		Per Leadership Challenge. Total Leadership points available to target is unlimited	
Sector Specific Credits		Per Sector Specific Credit.	

* Denotes Climate Positive Pathway

Core credits

The core of the rating tool is made up of 39 credits across seven of the eight categories, known as the core rating tool. These credits account for 100 available points, which is what the rating score is based on.

Leadership

The Leadership category has two credits. Points for these credits are in addition to the 100 points in the core credits. Points awarded in the Leadership category can be used by project teams to increase the number of total points achieved to contribute to their desired rating (See 'The Green Star Buildings achievement scale' for more information).

The two credits in the Leadership category are:

- **Market Transformation:** Recognises claims for new or innovative technologies or processes or claims for achievements beyond the core rating tool not covered by any other credit or leadership challenge. Criteria is defined in the rating tool to make a Market Transformation claim and up to five different claims can be made in Market Transformation. Each claim is worth one point, meaning a maximum of 5 points can be awarded.
- **Leadership Challenges:** Credits that are introduced by NZGBC to test new approaches and potential expansion for the rating tools. Leadership Challenges are created by NZGBC based on feedback or proposals for industry. New Leadership Challenges must be approved through our governance process. Points for Leadership Challenges are assigned based on the scoring mechanism.

There is no limit to the number of points in the Leadership category a project can target (unlike previous rating tools).

Minimum Expectations

There is a set of *Minimum Expectations* that must be targeted by all projects looking to achieve a Green Star rating. *Minimum Expectations* are not awarded points, therefore, to achieve a rating the project must accumulate points in addition to the *Minimum Expectations*.

The *Minimum Expectations* aim to ensure all Green Star rated buildings meet a basic definition of a green building (energy efficient, water efficient, good healthy spaces, built responsibly, and on sites that are not highly sensitive areas). In summary, buildings must be designed and built to:

- Protect environmentally significant areas
- Emit less carbon in construction and during operations
- Be water efficient
- Have improved air, light, acoustics, and product finishes
- Promote physical activity
- Be built with climate change in mind
- Manage environmental impacts during construction
- Embrace the diversity of our population
- Enable practices that reduce operational waste
- Be verified to work

There is at least one *Minimum Expectation* per core category in the rating tool. Below is a detailed description of each one:

Category	Credit	Outcome
Responsible	Responsible Construction	The site must have an environmental management plan. The builder must have an environmental management system (large builders will need to be ISO14001 accredited). 80% of Construction and demolition waste must be recycled. Sustainability training is provided to construction workers.
	Verification and Handover	The building must be commissioned and tuned. Appropriate metering must be present.
	Responsible Resource Management	The building must have appropriate spaces for waste management and an appropriately sized loading dock.
Healthy	Clean Air	The ventilation system must have appropriate filtration. Point source pollutants must be exhausted directly outside (printers, kitchens). The building must be provided with at an adequate amount of outside air.

Category	Credit	Outcome
	Light Quality	Glare must be managed. Light fittings must be of good quality. Lighting levels must be appropriate. A daylight strategy must be developed.
	Acoustic Comfort	Internal noise levels from services and the outside are limited through an acoustic comfort strategy.
	Exposure to Toxins	All the paints, adhesives, sealants, and carpets must have low levels of Volatile Organic Compounds. Engineered wood must be low formaldehyde. There must be no lead, asbestos, and PCBs in the building.
	Thermal Comfort and Amenity Spaces	A high degree of thermal comfort is provided to occupants in the space, equivalent to 80% of all occupants being satisfied in the space.
Resilient	Climate Change Resilience	The project has done a pre-screening assessment to identify climate-related risks facing the building.
	Upfront Carbon Emissions	The building has 10% less upfront carbon emissions compared to a standard building from materials.
Positive	Energy Use	The building has at least a 10% lower energy consumption than one built to the National Construction Code 2019.
	Energy Source	The building provides a Zero Carbon Action Plan.
	Water Use	The building has at least a 10% or 15% reduction in potable water usage when compared to a reference building (depending on building class) or has installed water efficient fixtures and appliances.
Places	Movement and Place	There are showers, lockers, and change rooms in the building
People	Inclusive Construction Practices	There are provisions for providing gender appropriate facilities and personal protective equipment.
Nature	Impact to Nature	Ecologically sensitive sites are protected.

There are additional carbon related expectations that are applicable to projects based on their star rating and time of registration or certification (see Climate Positive Pathway).

Managing Minimum Expectations

There may be situations in which a project cannot achieve a *Minimum Expectation* for situations beyond their control, or due to the project's typology. Where an exception or a modification is sought by the project team:

- The project team must submit a Technical Question prior to the submission
- The project team will be asked to justify the reason and nominate a slightly lower level of performance that they will need to meet
- The project team must also comply with any instructions for justifying their waiver that may be outlined in the query response
- Waiving *Minimum Expectations* is done via exceptional circumstances and may require additional consultation with our governance process. For more information, contact the NZGBC.

Climate Positive Pathway

The Climate Positive Pathway is contained within five credits:

- Energy Use
- Energy Source
- Upfront Carbon Emissions
- Other Carbon Emissions
- Grid Resilience

The Climate Positive Pathway is worth 14 points. The diagram below illustrates the Climate Positive Pathway:



Climate Positive Minimum Expectation

The following *Minimum Expectation* applies:

- Buildings seeking to get a 6 Star Green Star rating must comply with the Climate Positive Pathway
- Buildings that register from 1 January 2026 and are seeking a 5 Star Green Star rating must comply with the Climate Positive Pathway
- Any building that registers from 1 January 2028 must comply with the Climate Positive Pathway
- In addition, any building that achieves certification after 1 January 2030 (regardless of when submission occurs) must comply with the Climate Positive Pathway

In addition to the above, the Climate Positive Pathway will increase in stringency over time. Refer to the below diagram for what projects will be required to meet.

Credit	Criteria	2024*	2026*	2028*	2030**
Energy Source	Renewable Energy	6 Star	5 Star	All registrations	All certifications
Grid Resilience	10% Peak Reduction	6 Star	5 Star	All registrations	All certifications
Energy Use Reductions over typical building	10% Reduction	All registrations			All certifications
	20% Reduction	6 Star	5 Star	All registrations	All certifications
	30% Reduction				
Upfront Carbon Emissions Reductions over a typical buildings	10% Reduction	All registrations			All certifications
	20% Reduction	6 Star	5 Star	All registrations	All certifications
	40% Reduction			6 Star	All certifications
Other Carbon Emissions	Scope 1 eliminated or offset (refrigerants and fossil fuels)	6 Star	5 Star	All registrations	All certifications
	All remaining emissions offset (embodied carbon and other under control)		5 Star	6 Star	All certifications

* Denotes year of registration
 ** Denotes year of completion

Sector specific credits and pathways

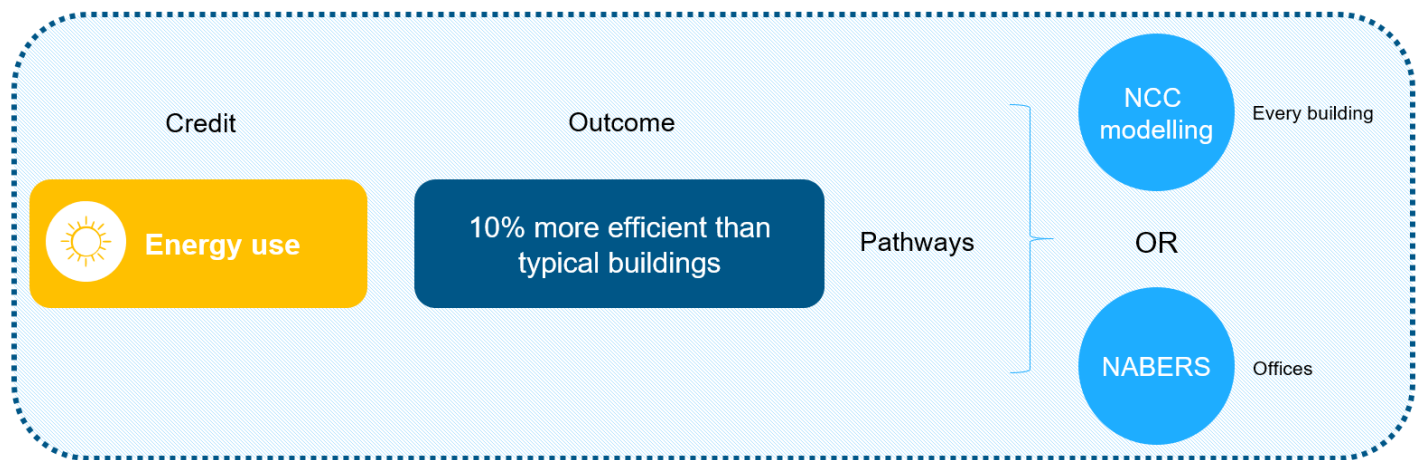
Green Star Buildings is a rating tool designed for use on all non-residential building types. However, due to its universal nature, it may need customising or additional guidance from time to time.

Green Star Buildings introduces two methods to account for sector specific issues:

- **Sector specific pathways:** specific solutions within the core rating tools credits
- **Sector specific credits:** additional credits that are optional and apply to specific sectors.

Sector - specific pathways

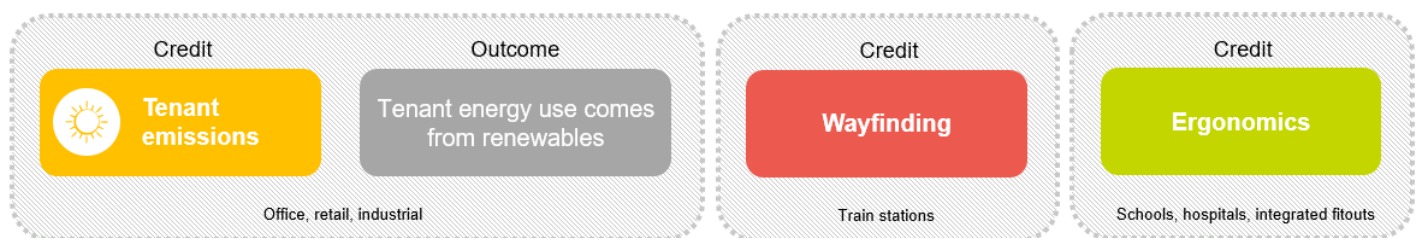
Sector specific pathways respond to the credit outcome for specific sectors. Pathways don't modify the points value of the core credit. They are always additional, and optional to the core pathway described in the credit. Pathways can be introduced at any time by NZGBC. An example of a specific pathway in the *Energy Use* credit is provided below:



Sector - specific credits

Sector specific credits exist outside of the core rating tool. Sector specific credits are assigned a category to help identify where the benefits lie. For example, the credit 'Tenant emissions', which applies to the industrial, commercial, retail, sits in the 'Positive' category.

Sector specific credits can have *Credit Achievements*, and *Exceptional Performance* criteria. Points for sector specific credit criteria are assigned a maximum of three.



Sector specific credits are developed by NZGBC in consultation with industry and approved by the Green Star Advisory Committee.

Sector specific issues not covered by the rating tool and that are not in a sector specific credit may be submitted as a Market Transformation claim.

If you are interested in developing sector specific credits for a building sector, please contact NZGBC for more information.

The Green Star Buildings achievement scale

Green Star Buildings awards buildings with ratings from 4 Star (Best Practice) to 6 Star (World Leadership). The number of points achieved determines the Star rating awarded.

Points in Green Star Buildings

A point in Green Star Buildings is equivalent throughout the rating tool. That is, a point in the *Positive* category is equivalent to a point in the *Nature* category.

The point(s) assigned to individual credit are representative of the credit's worth when assessed against five criteria:

- **Control of outcome:** to place higher reward on credits that deliver guaranteed outcomes. Process-orientated credits would score lower in this metric, while credits that rely on delivering physical attributes would score higher.
- **Scale of impacts:** to place higher reward on credits that have a larger impact in terms of scale. Credits that are narrowly focused score low, whereas credits that have multiple benefits score high.
- **Transformation potential:** to place higher reward on credits that drive market transformation across industry.
- **Length of impact:** to place higher reward on credits that deliver long-lasting impacts. A credit that relies on future operational maintenance will score low, whereas a credit affecting a long-lasting building system would score high.
- **Value generation:** to place higher reward on credits that deliver broad value and benefits beyond the building owner. Credits that are more valued by stakeholders and society will score higher.

The score per category is as follows:



The final composition of the categories highlights the priority areas in industry. The primary percentage of points continues to be on direct environmental impacts, with a specific focus on carbon emissions. In general, categories and credits that have direct qualitative outcomes score higher (e.g., credits in the Positive category) compared to credits that are more process based.

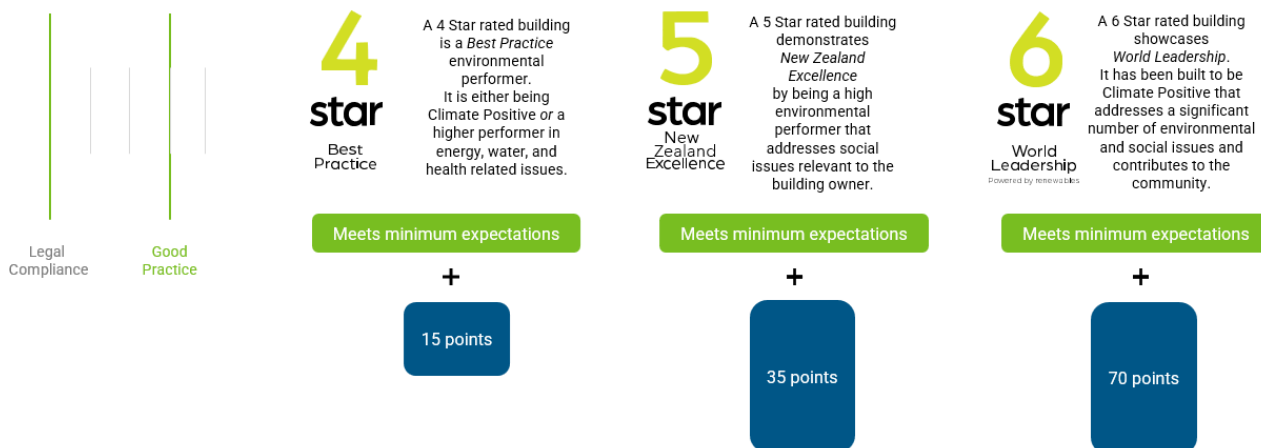
The Green Star Buildings rating scale

The Green Star rating is determined by comparing the percentage of available points achieved out of the 100 total available points. The rating scale shown below details the percentage thresholds for the Star ratings awarded.

- **Legal compliance** – The building is compliant with legislation (New Zealand Building Code)
- **Good Practice** – The building meets the *Minimum Expectations* of good practice – energy and water efficient, good indoor environment quality, and built to operate well.
- **4 Star** – reflects a *Best Practice* environmental performer. It builds on the *Minimum Expectations* to deliver a building that is either climate positive or a higher performer in energy, water, and health related issues **(15 out of 100 points)**
- **5 Star** – demonstrates *New Zealand Excellence* by being a high environmental performer that addresses social issues relevant to the building owner **(35 out of 100 points)**

- **6 Star** – showcases *World Leadership*. It has been built to be a highly efficient building that is net zero ready and addresses a significant number of environmental and social issues, and contributes to the community **(70 out of 100 points)**

The diagram below details the ratings awarded by Green Star Buildings.



Calculating your score

To calculate your score, you add the total number of points achieved in the Core rating tool, the sector specific credits, and any Leadership claims. Once *Minimum Expectations* are met, and you meet or exceed the star rating score benchmark, you can claim the desired rating.

It is possible to add up to more than 100 points, but only 100 points will be assessed and awarded.

The following table gives some examples:

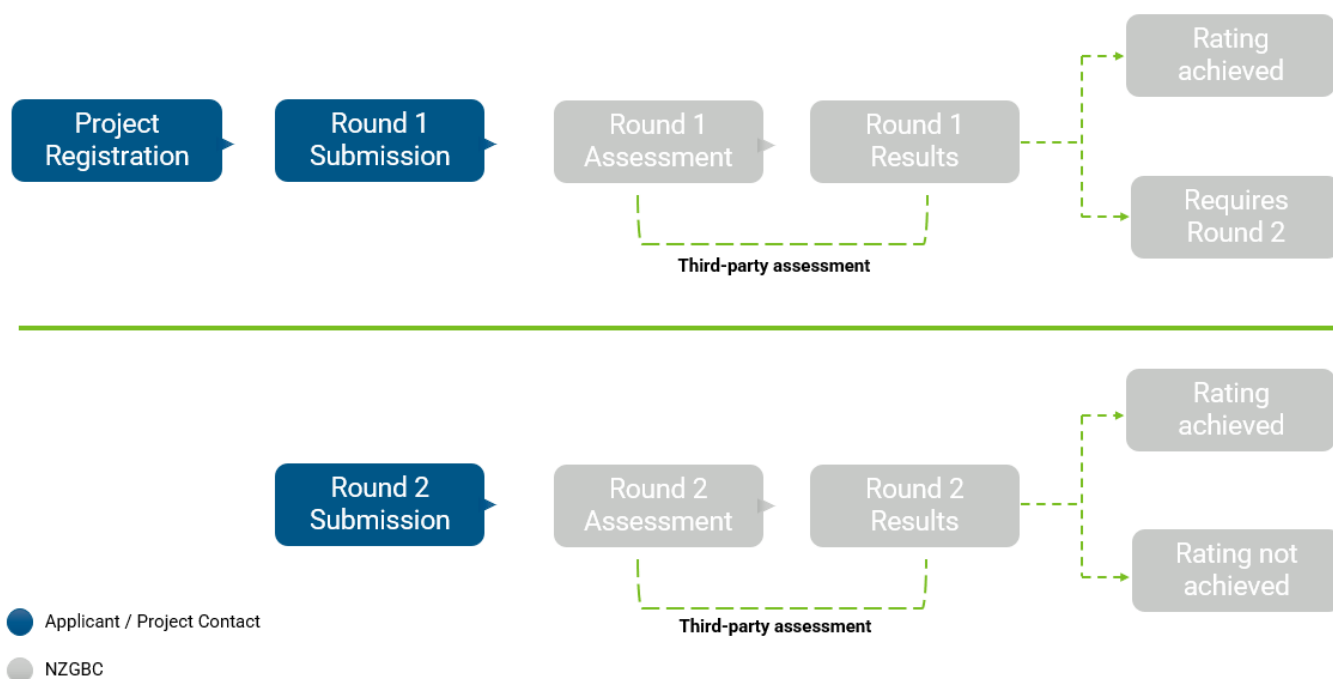
	Score	Score	Score
<i>Minimum Expectation</i>	Met	Met	Met
Core rating tool	15	30	60
Sector specific credits		5	7
Leadership			8
Total score	15	35	75

Certifying your project

Green Star certification is a formal process during which a building, fitout or precinct is awarded a rating by an independent, third party assessment panel. It is a document-based assessment of the project’s submission against the requirements of the rating tool.

NZGBC operates the assessment and certification process that awards all ratings.

Certification Process



The Green Star Buildings rating tool awards only one type of certification - *Green Star Certified* - with three levels of recognition (4 Star, 5 Star, and 6 Star). A *Green Star Designed* assessment is available for marketing purposes.

Information on the certification process is outlined in detail on the NZGBC website: <https://www.nzgbc.org.nz/>

The NZGBC can also provide training to support project teams as they prepare their submission documentation for assessment. https://www.nzgbc.org.nz/Category?Action=View&Category_id=237

Options for certifying projects

Please note that these Submission Guidelines are the basis for certification of a single building.

From time to time, the following certification options (when available) may be used to facilitate certification of projects. An applicant must receive approval through a formal eligibility query, prior to registration, to use one of these options:

- Volume
- Site Wide credit assessment
- Multiple Building, Single Rating (MBSR)
- Crosswalk with another rating tool

Further requirements such as additional eligibility criteria and alternative certification fees may be required. See the NZGBC website or contact the NZGBC for more information. NZGBC reserves the right deem a project ineligible for certification if it has not met the requirements of these options.

Registering for Green Star Buildings

To obtain a Green Star rating, the project must be registered with the NZGBC.

Information regarding the Registration process, including fees, can be found online here <https://www.nzgbc.org.nz/greenstar> . For further information contact greenstar@nzgbc.org.nz.

Eligibility and certification criteria

The eligibility criteria for Green Star Buildings are:

- **Building Type:** It is a new building or a major refurbishment, but not a residential building, a parking garage, or an uninhabited structure
- **Distinct Boundary:** There is a distinct boundary to the building – it has its own address, title, and entrance. It is also the entire building

In addition to the requirements on scoring to achieve a rating, the following three additional certification criteria apply:

- **Timing of Registration and Certification:** The *Certified* rating is achieved within two years from practical completion
- **Minimum Expectations:** The *Minimum Expectations* are met
- **Star rating requirement:** The building achieves at least a 4 star rating

The NZGBC may choose to update eligibility and certification requirements from what is stated in these Submission Guidelines. Please visit the NZGBC website for any further changes to eligibility and certification requirements.

Building Type

Green Star Buildings rates most building types that are new buildings or major refurbishments. In principle:

- Most building types are eligible to be rated, included mixed use developments. All NZBC space uses definitions are eligible for certification apart from residential buildings and standalone carparks and uninhabited structures. Residential buildings should register under Homestar.
- New buildings are those where most structural and facade components of a building are new. The building can be on a greenfield or a brownfield site. Buildings that are reusing portions of previous or existing buildings can be considered new, where a significant proportion of the space did not previously exist.
- A major refurbishment is where a building, or portion of a building, is vacated and withdrawn from stock for the purpose of replacing plant and services. In these cases, most of the façade or structure is retained, though some works on those are acceptable.
- Existing buildings where refurbishments are made but no services, façade, or structure are modified or introduced are eligible for certification under the Green Star Performance rating tool.

Project teams are encouraged to contact the NZGBC where a project is undergoing refurbishment to determine if the project is eligible or submit an Eligibility Query via the NZGBC website.

Distinct boundary

To provide a meaningful result and send a clear message to the market, Green Star Buildings rates the whole building, regardless of the types of uses within it. Only distinct projects are eligible for assessment; project components are not eligible.

Shared building services (such as Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning plant or water treatment) or amenities (such as waste rooms or bicycle facilities) do not affect the building's eligibility for Green Star assessment.

There are situations where buildings do have a distinct boundary even if they share a space with another building. Buildings that have a combination of separate entrances, distinct titles, and addresses can be rated if they can be easily distinguished from another part of a building (for example, a new office tower that is built on air rights on top of a shopping centre). Where towers are joined by an above ground podium, it is all considered as a single structure, and can be covered in one certification. Where buildings share a common basement below ground, they are considered two structures and will need their own ratings (unless an approach is agreed upon by the NZGBC through an eligibility request before registration– see the Options for certifying projects section above)

Project teams are encouraged to contact the NZGBC prior to registration for more information in these situations.

Green Star Buildings delivers a rating that reflects the building as delivered by the building owner or developer.

Timing of Registration and Certification

Projects can register for certification at any time prior to practical completion. Projects can register after practical completion, though applicants should note the deadline below.

All projects registered for Green Star Buildings must achieve a *Certified* rating within two years from practical completion of the project. The Certified rating is awarded after practical completion. Registered projects have the option of undergoing a *Designed* assessment as an interim step towards certification. The *Designed* assessment has to be done prior to practical completion.

Minimum Expectations

A project seeking certification must meet the *Minimum Expectations* set out in the Green Star Buildings rating tool. The *Minimum Expectations* are an expanded list of credits that must be met for the building to be certified. There are also additional *Minimum Expectations* for 5 and 6 Star rated projects. These are listed under the Minimum Expectations section.

Star rating requirement

The project must achieve at least the minimum number of points required for a 4 Star rating. See 'The Green Star Buildings rating scale' for more information.

NZGBC support

Once a project is registered for a Green Star rating, a Technical Coordinator will be assigned to your project. Technical Coordinators are there to assist project teams through the submission, assessment and certification stages of your project and will interface with your assessor once you have submitted. They are the 'first port of call' for any questions you might have regarding your registered project and certification. Technical Coordinators however do not provide design advice or guidance to project teams on how individual projects may provide solutions to meeting the requirements in the Submission Guidelines.

For further information about the roles of the NZGBC in relation to Green Star and resources available to project teams can be found on the NZGBC website.

Documenting a building's achievements

The credits contain criteria that must be achieved for a point to be awarded. To be awarded a credit within the Green Star Buildings rating tool, compliance must be demonstrated through documentation. The project team provides this documentation demonstrating these achievements. The documentation is used by the NZGBC's independent Assessors to establish whether the credit criteria have been met. The independent assessment phase is fundamental to the integrity of the Green Star rating system.

Except for calculators, Green Star Buildings does not prescribe what documentation must be provided. Instead, this is left to the project team to prove evidence of compliance. The credits do, however, provide a suggested list of evidence. While assessors will not require all, or any, suggested documentation to be submitted, it is up to the project to justify why other evidence was used.

The documentation requirements for the Green Star Buildings rating tool do not encourage the submission of large volumes of documentation, but rather a selection of relevant information that clearly demonstrates compliance for each claim made in the Submission. Project teams are recommended to provide direct reference to the part of the documentation that demonstrates compliance. For example, the front page and relevant pages of a report are acceptable rather than an entire document. These requirements are detailed in this Submission Guidelines, on a credit-by-credit basis.

List of Evidence

Unless explicitly noted, the evidence submitted should exist in the form of documentation produced as part of the design, procurement, construction, or commissioning process. Project teams are advised to use such documents as evidence for justifying claims. Below are some examples of frequently used documentation.

- **Certificate** - An official third-party document that certifies that an individual or organisation possesses the qualifications sought in the relevant credit.

- **Confirmation** - An official letter from the relevant party that has authority to confirm an aspect of compliance. The letter must state, recite, or confirm compliance with the Credit Criteria or part thereof. The letter must be project-specific, signed, dated and on company letterhead, as per ISO 9001. Also referred to as: 'Statement' or 'Letter of Confirmation'.
- **Contract(s)** - Full copies or extract(s) from the contract(s) (as required) that clearly stipulate compliance with the Credit Criteria. Relevant sections must be highlighted to allow for quick identification of the relevant clauses.
 - Terminology that dilutes compliance (e.g., 'or equivalent'), is not acceptable. Clauses must stipulate that any deviation from the criteria be approved by the professional who can enforce adherence to design intent
- **Drawings** - Drawings in Green Star refer to architectural and engineering plans, elevations and sections that are generally used to locate items in a building.
 - All drawings must be on official letterhead, contain the project or the building's name, the version number, and the change log. Where a drawing is typical to a number of buildings or floors, the drawing must clearly state that this is the case, and nominate the typical buildings, or typical building type. The drawings must clearly state what type of drawing they are.
 - When submitting drawings for the 'As Built' rating, the drawings should be those used for construction, or drawn after construction has finished. If the drawings are from an earlier stage, the submitter must state why these drawings are appropriate when using them as justification.
- **Meeting Schedule** - A document that lists the dates, purpose, and attendees of project team meetings.
- **Photographic Evidence** – A photograph or set of photographs that demonstrate that a design feature has been installed. The evidence must clearly show the design feature, the context and location where it is installed, that it is part of the registered project and give a date that the photograph(s) was taken.
- **Report** - An official report from a relevant professional that provides an analysis and draws a conclusion on an aspect of the design. The report must be project-specific, dated, and on company letterhead.
- **Specification(s)** - Written descriptions of the works that are to be performed for the project. Specifications are used to delineate the required works, the requirements for a product's characteristics, and the verification procedures for the installed item, or the works performed. They also list legal requirements and quote or name applicable standards.
 - When used to justify a claim, all specifications must be on official letterhead, contain the project's, or the building's name, and the version number. Where a specification is typical to several buildings, the specification must clearly state that this is the case, and nominate the typical buildings, or typical building type.
- **Tender Documentation** – Where tender documentation is used to justify a submission, the project is required to provide either specifications, or drawings, or a contract, or other supporting evidence that forms part of the tender package. In such a case, the project must ensure that the evidence provided complies with the descriptions as detailed in this section.
- **Third-Party Documentation** - Full copies or extracts, as stipulated, from public, non project-specific documents. When submitted as evidence, the relevant elements of the document must be clearly identified with colour (e.g., circled or highlighted). Examples may include standards, public transport timetables or local planning regulations.

Submitting for Green Star Buildings

Once the submission is compiled by the project team, it needs to be uploaded for assessment. Submissions for Green Star Buildings will be done in Green Star Online.

The NZGBC will only accept submissions of a maximum of 100 points.

Design Assessment

As the *Designed* Assessment is aimed at projects in the design development phase, detailed information and documentation may not be available to support claims. As such, when information is not known, as detailed work has not occurred yet, the claims made in the submission form should be considered as 'brief requirements' or 'client instructions' backed by evidence showing this is the case.

It is noted that a simple statement of commitment will not suffice. Rather, information must be provided showing that the broad strategies and processes to deliver a certain outcome have been agreed to.

The *Green Star Designed* assessment is an optional assessment of progress to date. The purpose of assessment is to have an Assessor guide projects on the likely outcome of your future *Certified* submission.

The assessment allows projects to communicate to clients and their stakeholders that the project is on the right track. While the *Designed* assessment process is a valuable tool to ensure progress in the right direction, it does not guarantee a *Certified* rating – the *Certified* submission assesses what has been done and delivered on site, not commitments.

Due to this, the quality of the documentation determines whether projects achieve the credit or not. The Assessor will award a credit at the *Designed* assessment when the documentation shows that commitments and processes are in place to deliver the required outcome. Vague, incomplete, or simplistic statements reduce the value of the *Designed* assessment – poor documentation leads to credits being denied.

The above does not mean that the documentation needs to be extensive. Submissions can include early design stage documentation provided that it is project-specific and clearly demonstrates compliance. Specifications can contain performance requirements for products without listing the specific product brand. Commitments from the owner or developer are appropriate if the project is before tender stage.

There is another benefit to *Designed* assessment worth noting. Projects can submit a selection of credits for assessment. There is no requirement for a minimum number of credits for submission, nor the need for enough credits to receive a Design assessment rating if you do not require it at that time.

Design assessment documentation

There are some guidelines to keep in mind when submitting evidence for Design assessment:

- The evidence should be project-specific, or, where generic, should contain a reference to how the project will address the Submission Guidelines
- The evidence should demonstrate the level of performance or outcomes required as a minimum. They should be described in full, not reference the Submission Guidelines
- The evidence should be clear in a manner that it will allow a third party (e.g., the contractor) to deliver the outcomes as detailed within
- The evidence should show that there is a mechanism to ensure future responsible parties understand and have agreed to the credit requirements in contracts which are yet to be executed
- The evidence should be relevant to the appropriate to the stage of the project. For example, a project halfway during construction should submit documentation that provides more certainty than a commitment.

Certified Submission

As the 'Certified' rating aims to demonstrate that Green Star outcomes have been achieved for the building, as constructed, supporting documentation is required to back up the claims made in the Submission Forms. Under the Submission Content section in each credit, a list of recommended supporting documentation is provided.

The key requirement is that evidence is provided to support each claim made within the Submission Form.

Unless explicitly noted, the evidence submitted should exist in the form of documentation produced as part of the design, procurement, construction, or commissioning process. Project teams are discouraged from producing documentation specifically for Green Star if this can be avoided.

Applicability

Mixed Use Buildings

All building types must comply with the *Minimum Expectations*. Beyond that, projects can average out water and energy use across the building, when using the one pathway. Projects using a combination of pathways must meet compliance for each pathway in order to achieve the relevant points. A mixed use building containing residential sections, shall use the Homestar tool for the residential portions.

Scope

Generally, projects can target credits regardless of the fitout scope of a project. Guidance is provided for credits where fitout scope may affect the outcome. Projects with more than 20% cold shell space may not be eligible for some credits where a fitout is required to demonstrate compliance; in this instance an alternative pathway or sector specific credit may be used instead.

Not Applicable credits

With the introduction of the core rating tool and sector specific credits, projects teams will no longer be able to claim points as 'Not Applicable'. The total number of points the rating score is calculated from is always 100 points. Project teams are encouraged to submit suggestions for sector specific approaches or a Technical Question where they see opportunities for alternative compliance pathways.

Promoting your Green Star project registration and certification

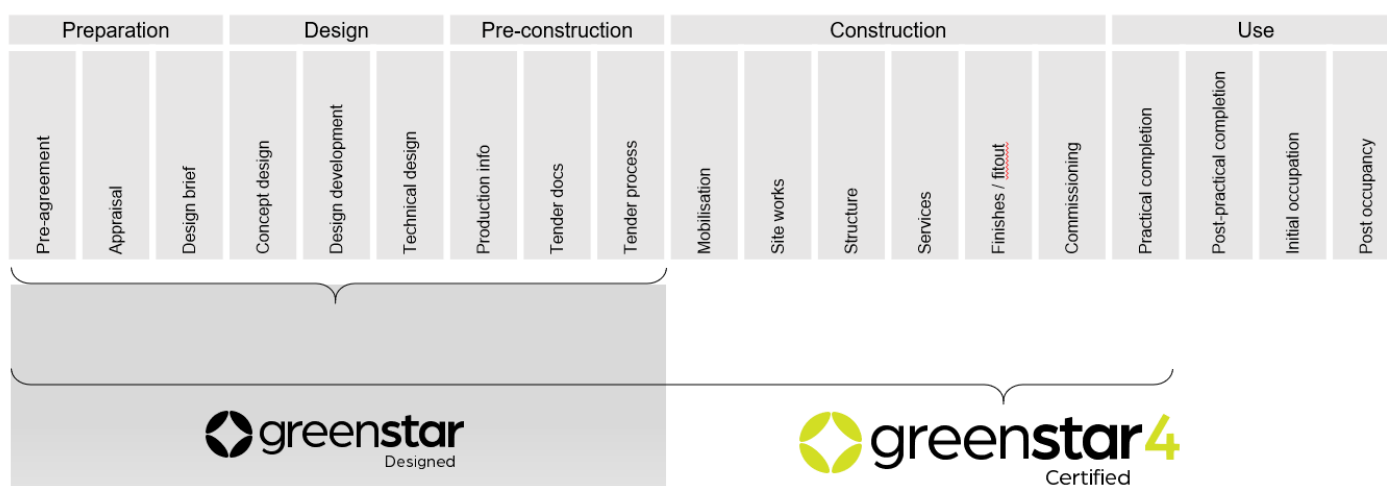
Marketing your registered project

Once registration is confirmed by the NZGBC, you are permitted to market your Green Star project but cannot use the Green Star Certified logo.

Marketing your Green Star Buildings 'Certified' rating and 'Designed' assessment

A Green Star Buildings *Certified* rating signifies a high degree of achievement in sustainable practice for the design and construction of a building. Green Star Buildings does not award certification to the design of the building – the rating is awarded for the construction of the building. To receive the rating, a building must submit documentation to the NZGBC that demonstrates the benchmarks in the rating tool have been achieved. The assessment of the submission is carried out by third-party Assessment Panel.

An optional *Designed* assessment award for marketing purposes is available prior to construction. The *Designed* assessment is not a rating, rather an indication that the project is on track for a *Certified* rating.



Green Star Designed

Green Star *Designed* is intended to signify a project's progress towards a *Certified* rating. It may be awarded following assessment of design stage documentation and entitles an applicant to use the Green Star *Designed* logo for marketing purposes.

Use of the 4, 5 or 6 achievement levels will not be part of the award. However, in communications about the project the owner may say words to the effect: 'The building's design has been assessed and the project is on track to achieve a 6 star Green Star *Certified* rating'.

The Green Star *Designed* logo may be used in collateral, marketing materials, temporary installations like decals, but not permanent ones like plaques. The Green Star *Designed* logo does not contain the rating level.

Green Star Certified

The Green Star *Certified* rating represents a certification that the building's design and construction complies with the requirements of the rating tool.

The award of a *Certified* rating entitles the applicant to use the Green Star *Certified* logo including with the designated star rating – 4, 5 or 6 – for marketing purposes.

Green Star trademarks

Green Star and the Green Star certified logo are trademarks owned by Green Building Council of Australia (GBCA). They constitute valuable intellectual property and are protected by law. Any unauthorised use of the trademarks constitutes infringement of our rights and may result in legal action.

Marketing rules and style guide

This guide sets out the rules for the use of the trademarks and provides marketing ideas to help promote your Green Star project, at registration, *Designed* assessment and *As Built* certified rating.

Badges

In addition to the ratings, projects will also be able to receive additional badges alongside their ratings. More information will be provided via the NZGBC website as Badges are announced.

Updates to the rating tool

While the rating tool will be updated from time to time, project teams are only subject to the Submission Guidelines for the rating tool that they register for, or if the project team chooses, a later version. Project teams are not subject to clarifications or amendments made as part of a revision, unless explicitly stated by the NZGBC. Any release of the Submission Guidelines will always have any relevant supporting material available for it, such as scorecards, calculators, and calculation guides. The rating tool can be updated as follows:

- Ad hoc – additions to the rating tool that are additive in nature such as Sector Specific Credits or Pathways and Leadership Challenges
- Maintenance – occur when an obvious error in the rating tool has been identified. These revisions are additive.
- Corrections – occur when a significant error in the rating tool has been identified. These revisions are corrective.
- Minor revisions – a new version of the same rating tool, with new or amended credit criteria or requirements, e.g., Green Star Buildings v1 to Green Star Buildings v1.1
- Major revisions – Significant changes to the rating tool of both a technical and structural nature. Results in the release of a new full version e.g., Green Star – Design & As Built to Green Star Buildings.

Ad Hoc

Ad Hoc changes are additive in nature and involve releasing additional criteria, sector specific information, or leadership challenges that do not impact the current information in the rating tool but expand on it. They can be used by project teams but are not required to achieve a certification. Current guidance in the rating tool is not impacted. Ad Hoc releases will include:

- Sector specific credits
- Sector specific pathways
- Leadership / Innovation Challenges

Ad hoc changes are dated, but there is no change of versioning to the rating tool. These additional credits and pathways can be published in separate guides or through our Technical Clarification system, and will be available through Green Star Technical Resources webpage.

Reviews and updates to Guidance, Definitions and Supporting Information may occur from time to time should it be deemed necessary. These updates will not change the compliance requirements for certification and will not result in an updated version of the rating tool. These updates may include:

- Clarification of existing guidance
- Additional Guidance or Reference materials
- Updated definitions
- Updated standards

If an error is found in a calculator or guide, the NZGBC reserves the right to make a correction applicable to all registered projects. These are applicable as they correct critical elements which do not accurately reflect the benchmarks or requirements in published credits.

Green Star quotes several standards, external guides, and legislation within each credit. Where referenced, these refer to the currently enforced version (for example, by the New Zealand Building Code, or local council), unless otherwise stated.

Maintenance

Maintenance revisions occur when an obvious error in the rating tool has been identified. These revisions are additive in nature. The changes do not negatively impact on projects registered prior to the date of the change, though all registered projects are informed of the change. They include:

- Additional guidance
- Additional, non-mandatory general pathways

- Spellings and grammar corrections
- Changes to introduction, guidance, definitions, standards, references, and documentation
- Errors in calculators
- Amendments to documentation requirements

Maintenance revisions performed within the first 9 months of a major rating tool release can also include changes to credit criteria and compliance requirements, where the changes are in line with previously communicated outcomes and strategy.

Maintenance revisions are noted by a letter suffix, e.g., 1.0 Rev. A. Revisions are noted in the changelog but are not highlighted directly in the text of the rating tool. Superseded versions won't be available for download.

Project teams can contact NZGBC if they believe they are negatively impacted, and NZGBC will assist them in this scenario.

Corrections

These occur when a significant error in the rating tool has been identified. The revisions are **corrective** in nature. They can change credits, credit criteria, compliance requirements, calculation methodology, and guides. Corrections are retrospective. That is, they apply to all current and future registered projects. Corrections are noted in the submission guidelines and noted by a letter suffix, e.g., 1.0 Rev. A. Corrections can be issued at any time.

Minor version

The purpose of these updates is to improve the useability of the rating tool, and to continue to promote sustainable outcomes. Minor updates may include:

- Readability amendments
- Updates to compliance requirements and changes in strategy for how credits are approached
- Minor updates to benchmarks
- Amendments to documentation requirements
- Additional guidance to account for changes in the certification process

The updates will be based on a continuous review of feedback received throughout the year from project teams, assessment panel and industry. Feedback sources include technical questions, Assessment Panel Comments, communication from project teams, communication from industry and working group feedback.

Where significant change to the rating tool is necessary within a minor update, the NZGBC will engage in public consultation and all significant changes will undergo an endorsement process through the Green Star Expert Reference Panels (ERPs) and Advisory Committee (GSAC).

The revisions will result in the release of a revised tool e.g., v1.1. Minor versions only apply to projects that register under that version.

Major updates

Major updates may include:

- Major amendments to benchmarks
- Introduction or deletion of criteria, credits, or categories
- Major amendments to credit values or scoring for 4, 5, and 6 Star ratings

The release of a major version will be based on a review of changes in priorities and benchmarks in the built environment.

Major releases will involve significant engagement with industry, as well as a review of the achievements through innovation, and a review of certified projects to date. The revisions will result in the release of a revised tool e.g., v2, or a rebrand. Major versions only apply to projects that register under that version.

Additional information

Credit substitutions and project registration upgrade

Projects that are currently registered to any version of Green Star – Design & As Built, or legacy rating tools, are eligible to upgrade to Green Star Buildings. Project teams cannot revert to older versions of the rating tool and can only upgrade to the most current version. Project teams may formally upgrade rating tools by contacting the NZGBC. For additional details on this process, please contact the Green Star team.

Project teams can substitute certain credits between different rating tools or different versions of the same rating tool. For Green Star Buildings, the NZGBC has published a Credit Substitution Matrix available from Green Star technical resources, which lists credits that may be substituted for use in Green Star – Design & As Built. For credits that are not listed in the Matrix or for use in other rating tools, a Technical Question must be submitted to the NZGBC for approval.

Fitout Scope

Green Star is a holistic rating tool and can be used to rate a base building or a whole building including tenant fitouts. Because Green Star reflects the building at the time of completion, credits are awarded based on what has been installed at the time of the submission. Where credits require a project to demonstrate an outcome via a built attribute, they cannot be awarded for a commitment to future installation (as distinct from credits where a plan is required, such as the Zero Carbon Action Plan).

In regards to the scope of fitouts, the following applies:

- Purpose built, single use projects (or parts thereof) such as hospitals, schools and hotels are expected to include fitout works when targeting points in the rating tool. Furniture and loose joinery is not included in the scope by default but can be included if the project team wants.
- For certain credits with specific attributes, tenanted buildings such as commercial offices or shopping centres are expected to include tenant works when targeting points either through built outcomes or leasing clause and guidance mechanisms (refer *Targeting points in Credit Achievement and Exceptional Performance* below). Most credits can be targeted without relying on tenant engagement, and additional sector specific credits for buildings with tenants are available.

Meeting Minimum Expectations

Buildings with tenants, such as a commercial office tower or shopping centre, or small retail parts of the purpose built, single use buildings mentioned above, may choose to exclude tenant works by providing a tenancy fitout guide and/or model leasing clauses to meet any Minimum Expectations. Information is provided in relevant credits and summarised in the below table. If guidance is not provided within the credit, fitout guides and/or model leasing clauses cannot be used.

Targeting points in Credit Achievement and Exceptional Performance

For buildings with tenants, there are four credits in the rating tool which require demonstration of outcomes for the majority of the building (which may include tenant works) for points to be awarded.

Where 20% or more of the building's GFA is leased to tenants, project teams must demonstrate compliance (including relevant tenant works) for at least 80% of total GFA to target points. For any remaining tenanted space, further requirements may apply as outlined in the table below. For example, where 40% of a building's GFA is tenanted, at least half of that tenanted space must be included in demonstrating compliance to meet the 80% threshold of GFA. For the remaining tenanted spaces, a tenancy fitout guide and/or model lease clause must be provided, as relevant dependent on the requirements in the table below.

Where less than 20% of the buildings GFA is tenanted, compliance must be demonstrated for all GFA within the asset owner's control. A tenancy fitout guide and/or model lease clause must be provided for tenanted spaces, as relevant dependent on the requirements in the table below.

Credit	Minimum Expectation	Credit Achievement and Exceptional Performance
Responsible Resource Management	Project teams may use a Tenancy Fitout Guide, Model Lease Clauses, and supply contract for bins or storage containers to demonstrate compliance for cold shell or excluded tenancy spaces. Any fitout works within the scope of the rating for credits where points are targeted must demonstrate compliance with the <i>Minimum Expectation</i> .	n/a
Clean Air		Refer Guidance section in credit regarding scope for tenanted spaces.
Responsible Finishes	n/a	Projects must include tenant fitout works for at least 80% of GFA to target points in the <i>Credit Achievement</i> or <i>Exceptional Performance</i> requirement. For example, for Credit Achievement, 40% of all internal building finishes (by cost of <u>80% of GFA</u>) meet a Responsible Products Value of at least 7
Light Quality – Artificial Lighting	Project teams may use a Tenancy Fitout Guide and Model Lease Clauses to demonstrate compliance for any cold shell or excluded tenancy spaces in the <i>Minimum Expectation</i> only. Any fitout works within the scope of the rating, including those used to target <i>Credit Achievement</i> or <i>Exceptional Performance</i> must meet the requirements for <i>Minimum Expectation</i> .	Projects must include tenant fitouts for at least 80% of GFA to target points in the <i>Credit Achievement</i> – Artificial Lighting requirement. For any remaining excluded tenancies or cold shell spaces, project teams must provide a Tenancy Fitout Guide and Model Lease Clauses.
Acoustic Comfort	No specific tenancy requirements.	Refer credit requirements for tenanted spaces.
Exposure to Toxins	Project teams may use a Tenancy Fitout Guide and Model Lease Clauses to demonstrate compliance for any cold shell or excluded tenancy spaces in the <i>Minimum Expectation</i> only. Any fitout works within the scope of the rating, including those used to target <i>Credit Achievement</i> must meet the requirements for <i>Minimum Expectation</i> .	Projects must include tenant fitouts for at least 80% of GFA to target points in the <i>Credit Achievement</i> requirement. No additional model lease clauses or tenant fitout guidance required.
Connection to Nature	n/a	For any excluded tenancies or cold shell spaces, project teams must provide a Tenancy Fitout Guide outlining the benefits of including plants in tenant fitouts.. Requirements for Nature Inspired Design, Views and Interaction with Nature must be met by the base building and cannot rely on tenants to deliver outcomes.

Credit	Minimum Expectation	Credit Achievement and Exceptional Performance
Grid Resilience	n/a	Refer Guidance section in credit regarding scope for tenanted spaces.
Energy Use (reference building pathway)	Refer Guidance section in credit regarding scope for tenanted spaces.	Refer Guidance section in credit regarding scope for tenanted spaces.

Green Star Buildings will introduce additional credits to address issues specific to tenanted spaces, particularly where the majority of those spaces are being delivered as a cold shell, or where the tenant works are being excluded from the rating. These credits will specifically reward green lease clauses, tenant emissions, and upfront carbon emissions from tenancies. These Sector Specific credits will be available for buildings with one or multiple tenants with more than 20% cold shell space.

For more information on Best Practice Lease Clauses refer to Better Building Partnership Green Leasing <https://www.betterbuildingspartnership.com.au/projects/green-leasing/>

Responsible Products Framework

In addition to the calculators and guides, Green Star Buildings also relies on the 'Responsible Products Framework' to measure the Responsible Products Value used in a number of credits in the Responsible category.

The 'Responsible products framework' is a new assessment methodology developed with the aim of assisting the supply chain to understand how it must evolve to address the challenges of the next decade. The framework recognises valuable sustainability efforts aligned with five key principles:

- **Responsible** – The product's impacts and contents are transparently disclosed and meet high standards.
- **Healthy** – The product is low or non-toxic and drives valuable social outcomes
- **Positive** – The manufacturing process avoids significant environmental impact and delivers climate positive outcomes
- **Circular** – The product is ready for low-carbon production and the circular economy
- **Leadership** – The product manufacturer has shown achievement in an issue that will lead to market transformation

The framework provides flexibility for product suppliers to have their initiatives be recognised in Green Star, provided they meet the principles outlined above. The framework rewards products for multiple distinct initiatives. Where products achieve more than one initiative scored in the Framework, those scores add together to form a final Responsible Products Value (RPV) score for the product.

The Responsible Products Value is the score that determines whether a product complies with the Green Star requirement. This score is unique to a product. It is a way of summarising and comparing the initiatives that a product has complied with when compared against the framework.

To demonstrate compliance with the relevant initiatives, product manufacturers can do this via a number of third-party verified schemes. Recognised schemes are assessed and listed on the GBCA website at <https://new.gbca.org.au/green-star/rating-system/responsible-products-framework/>. They are recognised in both Australia and New Zealand.

Green Star courses and further training

The NZGBC is a leading provider of training on sustainable practices in the built environment. As part of its mission, the NZGBC supports the property and construction industry with training on Green Star.

The NZGBC's continuing professional development (CPD) program supports this mission and is designed to provide practitioners with vital knowledge on the implementation of Green Star tools, strong networks in the industry, and news of the latest innovations, technologies, and trends.

To encourage sustainability initiatives throughout a project, having a Green Star Accredited Professional on a project is rewarded in the Industry Development credit.

The first step of becoming a Green Star Accredited Professional is to attend a [Green Star Training Course](#). Following the course there is the opportunity to join the CPD program.

The NZGBC CPD program has two types of accreditation:

- Green Star Practitioner for those needing a basic level of Green Star knowledge
- Green Star Accredited Professional with specialisations based on the rating tool. Currently this includes Green Star – Design & As Built, Green Star – Performance, or Green Star – Communities, for those working on Green Star, needing an advanced level of knowledge and experience. The specialisations will be updated based on the Future Focus program. Please check the NZGBC website for updates.

For information on NZGBC training courses, the [CPD program](#), and how to become a Green Star Accredited Professional, please refer to the [Professional Development](#) section of the NZGBC website.

Feedback

As more research is undertaken in the sustainable built environment sector, Green Star rating tools are updated to reflect new information, practices, tools, and references. The Green Star Buildings rating tool will be regularly updated to reflect these changes.

Please see the Updates to the rating tool section for additional information.

The NZGBC encourages feedback on all Green Star rating tools, including the Green Star Buildings rating tool. Please submit your feedback to greenstarnz@nzgbc.org.nz for consideration by the NZGBC.