Energy Auditor (EA) & Quality Control Inspector (QCI) Certifications FAQs

1. Program overview

What are the Home Energy Professional certifications offered at AEE?

The Home Energy Professional — Energy Auditor (EA) and Quality Control Inspector (QCI) are two residential energy-efficiency credentials for which AEE has been designated a certification body.

An Energy Auditor evaluates the potential health and safety issues, durability, comfort, and energy use of a residential building. The EA conducts advanced diagnostic tests, gathers and analyzes data, and creates energy models to draw conclusions and make recommendations for improvements.

A Quality Control Inspector is a residential energy efficiency expert who reviews, inspects, and verifies the appropriateness, quality, and completion of energy retrofit work by conducting site visits, performing diagnostic testing, and evaluating work practices and documentation to improve the indoor environment, safety, durability, comfort, and energy efficiency of the building for the client.

How are these certifications tied to the Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)?

Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) is a federal program under U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) that has helped weatherize homes for low-income households since 1976, supporting an estimated 8,500 jobs and reaching roughly 35,000 homes a year. The EA and QCI credentials were developed to provide WAP with nationally recognized, standardized workforce credentials, with AEE serving as a certification body for these credentials.

Why is AEE offering Home Energy Professional pilot exams and what are the fees to participate?

The Home Energy Professional pilots help AEE establish appropriate passing standards and evaluate the quality, clarity, and relevance of the examination content. Candidate participation also contributes to the continuous improvement of the EA and QCI credentials. Both the EA and QCI exams are free of charge during the pilot phase.

What is the benefit of participating in the pilot exams?

The pilots give qualified professionals an opportunity to provide feedback and help establish validated certification standards. Successful candidates who meet all certification requirements can be among the first to earn these credentials at no cost, which are valid for five years.

Who can apply and do I need prior training?

Applications are currently open to U.S. participants only. No formal training is required to apply — both credentials are built around verified hands-on experience plus passing the exam(s), so candidates with field experience can apply directly. If you are interested in training opportunities, please click *here* for IREC accredited training options.

When will I receive my pilot exam results?

Because these are pilot examinations, the passing standards for them will be established through a Cut Score Study after the pilot period concludes. Pilot candidates will not receive official exam results until that study is complete.

What happens if I successfully complete the pilot?

Candidates who meet all certification requirements and successfully pass the exams will be awarded the respective certification. Credentials are valid for five years.

2. Energy Auditor (EA)

What does an Energy Auditor (EA) do?

An Energy Auditor (EA) evaluates the potential health and safety issues, durability, comfort, and energy use of a residential building. The EA conducts advanced diagnostic tests, gathers and analyzes data, and creates energy models to draw conclusions and make recommendations for improvements.

What experience do I need to qualify?

You need a minimum of **25 points**, earned within the past 5 years, across the categories below:

Activities	Maximum Points	Point Amount
Performing audits in a building science trade	20	10 points for each 1,000 hours
Home performance field/technical experience (e.g., weatherization, home inspection, HVAC)	20	10 points for each 1,000 hours
Building trades experience (e.g., framing, roofing, drywall, siding)	10	5 points for each 1,000 hours
Training from industry-specific training center (training whose content aligns with the content of the JTA for the certification)	10	5 points for every 40 hours
Related industry certifications (e.g., RESNET, Building Performance Institute, North American Technician Excellence, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, ASHRAE, Association of Energy Engineers). Other certifications also considered	10	5 points per certification

Is there a separate energy-modeling requirement?

Yes. Within the past 5 years candidates also need **one** of the following:

- 10 energy models complying with nationally recognized standards, or
- 8 hours of energy modeling training with a passing assessment, or
- 20 desk or file reviews of energy models for compliance verification

What does the exam involve?

The EA exam consists of two parts, scheduled and taken separately:

- Written exam — 100 multiple-choice questions, 2-hour time limit
- Field simulation exam — a virtual home walkthrough with diagnostic tests, complete energy-auditing tasks, 4-hour limit, with four gated items that must be completed successfully

Both are remote-proctored through ProctorU. https://www.aeecenter.org/remote-proctoring/

Do I have to travel to take the EA Written or Field Simulation Exam?

No. The EA written and simulation exams are completed remotely - candidates do not need to travel. The unique field simulation-based testing experience is currently offered exclusively by AEE.

How should I prepare for the simulation exam?

Before taking the EA Field Simulation Exam, candidates should:

- Review the Navigation & Simulation Guide
- Review the Simulation Diagnostic Tools Basic Manufacturer Instructions
- Watch the Simulation Walkthrough Video
- Access and successfully launch the Practice Simulation Environment
- Confirm that their computer and internet connection meet the technical requirements
- Log in to your ProctorU account and complete the required remote-proctoring equipment check

The practice simulation is not scored and does not affect the official exam result.

How is the EA different from AEE's Certified Energy Auditor (CEA)?

The EA is focused on single-family residential buildings and the competencies associated with residential energy auditing, particularly within the context of WAP. AEE's Certified Energy Auditor (CEA) certification focuses on energy auditing for commercial and industrial facilities.

How do I maintain my EA certification?

Renew every five years. You have two paths:

- Earn CEUs and pass the field exam. Log 30 Continuing Education Units (CEUs), pass the simulation exam, and submit a completed Renewal Form to AEE.
- Retake both exams. If you don't have 30 CEUs, you must retake and pass the written and simulation exams.

3. Quality Control Inspector (QCI)

What does a Quality Control Inspector (QCI) do?

A Quality Control Inspector (QCI) Reviews, inspects, and verifies the appropriateness, quality, and completion of energy retrofit work by conducting site visits, performing diagnostic testing, and evaluating work practices and documentation to improve the indoor environment, safety, durability, comfort, and energy efficiency of the building for the client.

Do I need to be an EA first?

Yes. QCI requires an active Energy Auditor (EA) certification. If you don't hold an EA certification yet, you'll need to meet the EA pilot prerequisites and pass the EA pilot exams before you're eligible for QCI.

What exam is required for QCI certification?

A remote-proctored, 50 question multiple-choice, closed-book exam, with a 2.5-hour time limit.

Is there a QCI simulation exam?

No, unlike the EA certification, there is no separate QCI field simulation exam.

Can someone without a current EA certification participate in the QCI pilot?

Yes, provided the candidate meets the applicable EA pilot prerequisites and completes the required EA pilot examinations. Candidates who do not successfully pass the EA pilot exams will not be eligible to receive the QCI certification

How do I maintain my QCI certification?

To maintain an active QCI certification at renewal, a QCI must maintain a valid EA certification and either earn the required continuing education or pass the QCI written examination, in accordance with AEE's renewal requirements. Candidates must accumulate six CEUs over the five-year certification period as the continuing-education pathway.

4. Applying, timelines & contact

How far ahead do I need to apply?

Submit your application at least **4 weeks** before your preferred exam date. Once approved, exams themselves need to be scheduled at least a week in advance.

Where do I apply or find the full candidate handbook?

Each credential has its own application page and downloadable candidate handbook with the full job task analysis and remote-proctoring procedures. We strongly encourage reviewing the handbook before applying for the respective certification.

Apply — Energy Auditor (EA)

Apply — Quality Control Inspector (QCI)

[HEP program overview]

Who can I contact with questions about the EA or QCI certifications?

For questions about eligibility, applications, scheduling, or the pilot exams, please contact the AEE Certification Department at certifcation@aeecenter.org.