

# BCMA™ Exam Relaunch – Frequently Asked Questions



## Why did ISA choose to suspend the exam?

The ISA Board made its decision based on user feedback to improve the exam experience and better accommodate the global reach of this program. While there is never a good time to suspend an exam for a credential, ISA based the decision on historical data that shows May to October is typically the slower exam administration months of the year; therefore, suspension during that time impacted a smaller number of individuals who might be applying for the exam.

## Is the new test more difficult than the current exam?

The overall difficulty of the exam remained unchanged with the cut score being determined by an industry standard process known as the Angoff Method. This method systematically validates the new cut score based on the level of difficulty of the new exam. In addition, the overall domains or areas of knowledge have not changed maintaining a consistent level of difficulty for the exam. The general format of the BCMA™ exam was also updated to include pictures and descriptive information with exam questions, when necessary, to further explain the scenarios being tested. Some scenarios were revised to ensure a more international focus, and other scenarios were condensed somewhat to eliminate unnecessary text and/or photos.

## How did the exam revision process work?

The revision process began with the BCMA Test Committee's evaluation of exam questions to be used in the updated exam. This evaluation included assistance from a professional in test development known as a Psychometrician. The committee was provided direction on how to write good exam questions that clearly and correctly tested the knowledge and skill level required to become a Board Certified Master Arborist™. The revised exam was then administered to 300 Beta Test applicants during a Beta process. The beta process provided the committee with the necessary test statistics to ensure that a proper cut score was determined in order to accurately assess future applicants' knowledge and level of experience in tree management principles and practices.

## What score is required to pass the revised BCMA™ exam?

Individuals must earn a passing score of 70% to earn the BCMA™ credential.

## What are the requirements to be eligible to take the updated exam?

The requirements for exam eligibility have not changed and are outlined in the [application handbook](#).

## If I had been studying to take the BCMA™ test before the suspension, do I need to prepare differently for the updated exam?

The new test has a more robust set of questions with a clear set of answers. Some of the scenarios and pictures have been updated but the information suggested to study in preparation for the exam are the same.

## What is the cost for the new test?

ISA set the fees for the updated exam based on test administration fees from our Computer Based Exam Vendor. Fees are as follows: ISA Member, \$475; Non-member, \$575; Exam Retake, \$300.

## What are the CEU requirements associated with the new exam?

CEU requirements associated with the BCMA™ program remain the same. 60 CEUs must be earned in the three (3) year period—20 each in Science, Practice, and Management.

## If I already had the BCMA™ credential, does an updated exam affect the validity of my credential?

An updated exam does not affect the validity of previously earned credentials and CEU requirements for new and prior credential holders are the same. This review and revision demonstrates ISA's commitment to the highest standard possible for all of our credential holders worldwide.