

SDG&E Designer Qualification Program (2024)

1. Purpose

- The Designer Qualification Program allows external distribution designers, both Applicant Designers (AD) and Contract Designers (CD), to become pre-qualified by the utility to perform design for SDG&E, and subsequently gain access to SDG&E design systems such as ICUE.
- SDG&E requires Applicant Designers to be pre-qualified by the utility, as allowed under the Tariffs.
- SDG&E's Supply Management may require "Qualified" designers within contract language and Requests for Proposals (RFP's) as opportunities arise for Contract Design services.
- This Program tracks external designers who perform Applicant Design, Contract Design, and those who perform both.
- Qualified external designers who perform Applicant Design are posted externally for SDG&E customers. Qualified external designers performing Contract Design are posted internally for SDG&E business purposes.
- SDG&E Design Managers reserve the right to disqualify and remove access to design tools to external designers if necessary.
- The DQP is specifically designed for non-employees who are actively engaged in design work for SDGE or its applicants. Current SDGE employees, or those without contractual obligations to an external company, are not eligible for the DQP. Please note that the DQP serves as a qualification mechanism, not a certification, for conducting design work.

2. Definitions

- **Qualified (per discipline)** – For the purpose of this program, "Qualified" is defined as an external designer who has passed a DQP Exam (within the discipline) and is approved to perform Applicant Design or Contract Design for SDG&E (within that discipline). The term Qualified does not measure the level of design experience. Each discipline has a unique exam.
- **Discipline** – Type of design, commonly referred to as Overhead (OH), Underground (UG), Gas, or Transformer Vault. All disciplines in this program and document refer to distribution.
- **Applicant Designer** – Refers to an individual performing Applicant Design work through Tariff (Rule 15/16/13). SDG&E does not pay the vendor for this design work.
- **Contract Designer** – Refers to a contractor who is performing Contract Design work for SDG&E through a vendor.
- **Supply Management** – Refers to the SDG&E organization supporting company contracts and agreements with vendors.

3. Overview

- Enrollment into the program begins when an external designer registers (aka applicant) for an exam within one of four disciplines.
- Upon passing the exam, the applicant will be “Qualified” within that discipline and the applicant will be given access to SDG&E design tools.
- The Transformer Vault exam is only made available to designers who are qualified in Underground Electric.
- Interested candidates and vendors should visit: <https://www.sdge.com/designer-qualifications-resources>
 - Content includes information such as:
 - About the program
 - How to become a Qualified Designer
 - Resources
 - Firms interested in Contract Design
 - Looking for a Qualified Applicant Designer
 - Frequently Asked Questions

4. Testing

- As mentioned previously, the Qualification Program offers four exam disciplines: Overhead Electric, Underground Electric, Gas, and Transformer Vault. Each discipline has its own unique test.
- The applicant will be tested in the discipline or disciplines they wish to pursue. These tests will demonstrate their knowledge of design, including but not limited to GO95, GO128 and SDG&E Construction and Design Standards, Overhead, Underground and Gas engineering calculations, SDG&E construction methods and Service Standards.
- Applicants may enroll in one or any combination of disciplines with one exception:
 - The Transformer Vault exam will be made available to designers who are qualified in Underground Electric.
- Exams are online and will be proctored.
- Detailed exam instructions will be provided prior to each exam.
- Proctoring will capture video, screenshots, and audio during the exam.
- Proctoring provides DQP team with anomalies which will be reviewed to identify whether cheating occurred. Anomaly types will be discussed prior to the exam.
- Each exam instance is designed to be unique. Many questions rely on question banks which randomly choose questions.
- SDG&E does not provide contractor training. Training is the vendor’s responsibility.
- Fees: Although SDG&E creates, maintains, and pays hosting fees for online exams, the applicant is required to pay a small proctoring fee, per exam, to the proctoring vendor, to cover the cost

of their services. The Underground Exam consists of two exams, one in the morning and one in the afternoon.

- If an applicant does not pass an exam, they will be required to wait three months to register for another exam in that discipline. This applies to all exams.
- After multiple failed attempts within a given discipline, SDG&E, at its discretion, may limit further testing.
- It is the responsibility of the designer's company to provide training for the exam. The Designer Qualification Program will provide information needed, such as manuals, standards, and calculators during the exam.

5. Disqualification

- SDG&E reserves the right to remove qualification status at any time, such as, but not limited to:
 - When the DQP Team is instructed by SDG&E's Legal Department.
 - When DQP is instructed by SDG&E Design Managers
 - If program misconduct occurs such as exam cheating or program violations. Cheating will not be tolerated.

Note – Disqualification includes removing access to SDG&E design tools.