



Tree Risk Assessment Qualification Application Guide



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What Is the ISA Tree Risk Assessment Qualification (TRAQ)?

The International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) offers TRAQ as an instructor-led credential that demonstrates professional knowledge in tree risk assessment through participation in a training course and passing its accompanying exam. The TRAQ program offers tree care professionals the opportunity to expand their knowledge of the fundamentals of tree risk assessment by learning a standardized, systematic process for assessing tree risk and providing information to tree owners and risk managers for making informed decisions that will promote the safety of people and property and enhance tree benefits, health, and longevity.



Which Areas of Study Does the TRAQ Course Include?

The course content is based on ISA's *Tree Risk Assessment Manual* and is divided into nine modules:

1. Introduction to Tree Risk Assessment
2. Levels of Assessment
3. Target Assessment
4. Site Assessment
5. Tree Biology and Mechanics
6. Tree Inspection and Assessment
7. Data Analysis and Risk Categorization
8. Mitigation
9. Reporting

Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for ISA Certification Holders

If you complete the ISA Tree Risk Assessment course and hold an ISA certification, you can earn 14.5 ISA CEUs for the instructional portion of the program. These CEUs can be applied to your ISA Certified Arborist® credential, including the Tree Worker credentials. For an ISA Board Certified Master Arborist®, 6 CEUs go to practice, 6 to management, and 2.5 to science.

What Are the Course Objectives?

- Comprehension of the fundamentals of limited-visual and basic tree risk assessment as defined in the *ISA Best Management Practices: Tree Risk Assessment*;
- Knowledge of the principles of advanced diagnostic techniques for assessing tree risk;
- Mastery of methods for gathering and evaluating information to assess tree risk;
- Development of reasoned judgments and recommendations for mitigating identified risk.

How Are the TRAQ Course and Exam Presented?

The standard ISA TRAQ course is a two-day, in-person training course followed by a half-day examination. (Instructors may extend the time/length of the course in specific circumstances.) Lectures, discussions, small-group activities, applied case studies, and field activities are all a part of the training process.

The examination consists of two parts:

- **Written exam:** 100 multiple-choice questions. Each question has four answer choices, and only one is correct. You will have two hours to complete the written exam.
- **Performance-based exam:** An actual, outdoor tree assessment will test your ability to apply tree risk principles to a tree at the training site. You will have one hour to complete the performance-based exam.

Who Is Eligible to Apply for the TRAQ Course?

An eligible applicant for a TRAQ course must have earned at least one of the following credentials:

- ISA Board Certified Master Arborist®
- ISA Certified Arborist®
- ISA Tree Risk Assessment Qualified
- A degree in arboriculture, urban forestry, traditional forestry, or horticulture that is part of a national qualifications framework or is from a college or university that is accredited or recognized under a system that is substantially similar to accreditation.
- AHC30810 Certificate III in Arboriculture (Australia)
- ASCA Registered Consulting Arborist (RCA) status
- Connecticut Arborist License
- European Tree Technician
- European Tree Worker
- Fachagrarwirt Baumpflege
- Louisiana Arborist License
- Manitoba Arborist Training and Licensing Program

- Maryland Tree Expert
- Massachusetts Certified Arborist
- New Hampshire Arborists Association Certified Arborist
- New Jersey Certified Tree Expert
- New Zealand National Certificate in Horticulture (Arboriculture) (Level 4)
- Rhode Island Arborist License
- Society of American Foresters Certified Forester
- United Kingdom Qualifications and Credit Framework Level 2 Certificate or Diploma in Arboriculture

ISA maintains records of its own credential holders; however, ISA credentials that expired in 2001 or earlier may require documentation. Applicants must provide valid documentation of any other credentials to demonstrate eligibility.

Instructions for submitting documentation vary by course host and are provided as part of the course registration process. If you hold a credential or have completed a program of study not listed above, go to the ISA website for information on eligibility appeals.*

Nondiscrimination

The ISA Qualifications Program does not discriminate in determining eligibility on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law.

Accommodations for Participants with Disabilities

It is the intent of ISA to provide accessibility to ISA courses to any qualified participant with a documented disability upon reasonable notice and without requiring ISA to take action which would result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of the course or an undue financial burden to ISA or the course host.

If you have a special need and require an accommodation for a course, please complete the Special Accommodations Request Form* and submit it to qual@isa-arbor.com. Your request will be reviewed, and you will be notified of a determination.

How Do I Apply for a TRAQ Course in my Area?

Course Dates and Locations

Qualification courses are offered through ISA via ISA chapters and associate organizations, and other hosts. Contact ISA* or visit the ISA TRAQ Courses web page* for information about dates and locations of courses in your area.

Fees

- Pricing may vary by course and host. To find the price for a specific course, go to the ISA TRAQ Courses web page*, click the course date you are interested in, and follow the links to the registration information.
- When ISA Headquarters co-hosts a TRAQ course, the fee is set at \$625 USD for ISA members and \$750 USD for nonmembers. Membership with the local chapter or associate organization is not required to qualify for the ISA member price.

Submitting Your Application

To apply for an ISA qualification course, go to the ISA TRAQ Courses web page*, click the course you are interested in attending, and follow the links through the registration process.

- Questions about your application? Please contact the course host.
- Your completed application and full payment must be submitted on or before the registration deadline. No exceptions.
- The course host will contact you regarding any problems with the application or payment that must be corrected before you may attend the training.
- Onsite registrations are not available for TRAQ courses.

Confirmation

You will be notified

- When your application is received
 - After your application is approved
- (Timeline may vary dependent on course host.)

A confirmation packet will be shipped to you three weeks prior to the course date, which includes

- The *Tree Risk Assessment Manual*
- The *Tree Risk Assessment Workbook*
- A letter containing the date and time of the course

No refunds or discounts are given if you already own the *Tree Risk Assessment Manual*.

Cancellations

Cancellation requests must be received by the course host before the course registration deadline. If requests are not received before the deadline, a refund may not be issued. The host's contact information and refund policy will be detailed with each course listing.

Privacy

By applying, you authorize the release of any information for the purpose of verifying your application. ISA has the right to contact any person or organization as part of the review and to notify appropriate organizations if your application contains false information. You also authorize ISA to provide your contact information to your local chapter/associate organization and ISA's professional affiliates for information-sharing about educational seminars and other events. Your name, location, and credential will also be available to the public on the ISA website. If you do not wish to have your name included on the ISA website or in lists for distribution, contact ISA Customer Service at isa@isa-arbor.com.

*See reference links on page 7

How Should I Prepare for the TRAQ Course?

What to Study Before the Course

Be sure to thoroughly review the *Tree Risk Assessment Manual* and complete the pre-work activities in the *Tree Risk Assessment Workbook* before arriving at the course location.

Items to Bring with You

- A government-issued photo identification card, such as a driver's license, passport, or military ID
- *Tree Risk Assessment Manual*
- *Tree Risk Assessment Qualification Workbook* (Workbook is required to complete the course.)
- Writing utensil(s), including at least one #2 pencil
- Clipboard or hard surface for taking notes outdoors
- Appropriate attire for both indoor and outdoor activities
- High-visibility vest, coat, or clothing
- Hard hat

What Are the Rules and Policies for Participating in a TRAQ Course?

Admission

- Arrive at the course site 30 minutes before the start time of the first day of the course. (See confirmation packet for exact time, date, and location.)
- The course host will check your government-issued photo ID and have you sign a check-in sheet. If you do not have a photo ID with you at the start of the course, you must produce one by the exam day or you will not be allowed to sit for the exam.

Site Rules

- Dress appropriately for both indoor and outdoor activities. Indoor temperature and outdoor weather conditions may vary.
- Visitors are not permitted in the training or exam areas.
- The following are not permitted during the exam and may result in score invalidation or confiscation of exam materials:
 - The manual, workbook, and/or any notes you have taken
 - Cell phones, pagers, PDAs, or other electronic devices
 - Writing on the exam booklet
 - Looking at others' exams or talking
- Follow all regulations and directions provided by the instructor.

Inappropriate Application and Exam Conduct

Participation in the TRAQ program is intended to be a professionally relevant, informative, and rewarding experience for all candidates. All participants are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate and professional manner during the course and exam.

When ISA or an ISA-designated representative finds that a candidate has engaged in inappropriate conduct or behavior, ISA reserves the right to respond with actions including, but not limited to, the following:

- Rejecting an application for qualification
- Prohibiting or precluding a person from participating in a course
- Prohibiting or precluding a person from participating in an examination, including removing a person from the testing site
- Invalidating or nullifying examination results
- Issuing and enforcing any other lesser response or action determined to be appropriate or necessary

Inappropriate conduct or behavior includes, but is not limited to:

- Misrepresentation
- Failure to disclose requested information
- Cheating
- Unauthorized possession, use, or distribution of copyrighted or legally protected material
- Verbal or physical disturbances of the course and/or examination
- Failure to pay fees in a timely manner
- Any other objectionable, improper, or unprofessional actions by a person participating in the ISA qualification process

By submitting an application for qualification, each participant acknowledges that he or she understands and agrees to the terms of this policy.

Failure to Attend or Complete the Course and Examination

No refunds or discounts will be issued if you do not attend or complete the course and examination. Should this occur, you will need to retake both in order to obtain the credential.

How Will I Find Out if I Have Passed or Failed the Exam?

Completion Requirements

To obtain the Tree Risk Assessment Qualification, you must complete the training course and achieve the passing scores of 75 percent for the written component and 80 percent for the performance-based component.

Exam Scoring

ISA Headquarters grades written exams through electronic scanning and scoring to ensure the most reliable grading. The performance-based exam is scored onsite by the instructor administering the exam. Your scores are then reported to ISA Headquarters. ISA will notify you of your overall results.

Exam Results and Notification of Qualification

Your results will be mailed approximately six weeks after your exam date. You will be notified of your pass/fail result; for exam security purposes you will not receive a list of questions that were answered correctly or incorrectly. Your results are confidential and your score will not be disclosed to any third party. Results cannot be obtained over the phone, by fax, or by email.

If you have questions concerning your exam results, direct them in writing to ISA Customer Service at isa@isa-arbor.com.

Can I Retake the Exam if I Fail?

Retaking the Exam

If you do not pass both the written and performance-based portions of the exam, you will receive a failure notification and details for retaking the exam. To obtain the qualification, you will be required to retake both the written and performance-based portions of the exam, even if you failed only one of them. There are a limited number of seats available at upcoming TRAQ courses for those needing to retake the exam. You must contact ISA at +1 217.355.9411 to schedule a retake and file an application prior to the published registration deadline on the ISA TRAQ Course web page* of the event where you wish to retake your exam.

There is a \$150 USD fee per retake for up to one year from the original date of your exam. If you do not pass within one year, you will be required to complete the full TRAQ course and examination and pay the full fee.

Appeals and Complaints

Appeals and complaints are accepted and resolved in accordance with the ISA Credentialing Appeals and Complaints policy*.

If you believe that an error was made in the grading of your exam, you may request that it be regraded. Contact ISA Customer Service at isa@isa-arbor.com. A fee of \$35 USD applies to each regrade.

I Passed! What Else Do I Need to Know about My Qualification?

Successful Qualification

Those who pass the TRAQ examination will receive a certificate. Your qualification is personal to you and may not be transferred or assigned to any other individual, organization, or entity. When publicizing your credential, you must comply with the requirements in the ISA Branding and Style Guide*.

What Does an ISA Qualification Represent?

By successfully completing the Tree Risk Assessment Qualification course and exam, you have demonstrated knowledge of the material covered in the TRAQ course, which is considered relevant for the five-year term of your qualification. No other conclusions may be drawn concerning qualification holders. ISA qualifications do not represent licensure, registration, or other authorization to practice or to conduct business activities for a fee or otherwise.

Qualifications are not subject to ongoing requirements, such as adherence to a code of ethics or participation in continuing education activities.

Terms of Validity and Renewal

The ISA TRAQ credential is valid for five years. To reinstate your qualification after each five-year period, you must take a one-day refresher course and exam, the TRAQ Renewal Course, which includes five hours of instruction and three hours to complete the exam. A reminder will be sent near the end of your validity period, so be sure to notify ISA promptly if your contact information changes, as we are not responsible for undeliverable notifications.

You may complete the TRAQ Renewal Course or full course as early as one year prior to your expiration date. Once you have successfully passed the requirements, you will be given 5 years from the date of your previous expiration allowing you to take full advantage of the 5 year period granted with the credential.

When you complete the TRAQ Renewal Course, you can earn 5 CEUs for the instructional portion of the program. These CEUs can be applied to your ISA Certified Arborist® credential, including the Tree Worker credentials. For an ISA Board Certified Master Arborist®, 2 CEUs go to practice, 2 to management, and 1 to science.

Fees

- Pricing may vary by course and host. To find the price for a specific course, go to the ISA TRAQ Courses web page*, click the course date you are interested in, and follow the links to the registration information.
- When ISA Headquarters co-hosts a TRAQ Renewal Course, the fee is set at \$220 USD for ISA members and \$260 USD for nonmembers. Membership with the local chapter or associate organization is not required to qualify for the ISA member price.

Invalidation of a Qualification

Your qualification may be invalidated for

- Falsification of application
- Violation of testing procedures
- Misrepresentation of your identity or other information

If your ISA qualification is invalidated, you must immediately stop using and/or displaying any designation indicating an affiliation with the ISA Qualification Program and comply with any additional directives from ISA.

Liability Disclaimer

Practitioners of the skills taught in ISA qualifications courses practice at their own risk. Neither the International Society of Arboriculture, course instructors, nor the authors of the course and related materials accept any responsibility, explicit or implied, for liability, loss, or consequential damage arising from the manner in which the materials presented in the course are used in the field. The instruction and training materials provided are considered to be reasonable and sufficient to provide the user with a thorough understanding of when and how to practice the relevant skills. The contents of the course and related materials are provided “as is” and “where is” and may change without notice as research and understanding of the subject matter evolve.

*See reference links on page 7

Reference Links:

TRAQ Eligibility Appeal Form: http://www.isa-arbor.com/certification/resources/cert_Cred_TRAQ_EligibilityAppeal.pdf

Special Accommodations Request Form: http://www.isa-arbor.com/certification/resources/cert_AccommodationsRequest.pdf

ISA Credentialing Appeals and Complaints Policy: http://www.isa-arbor.com/certification/resources/cert_Credential_Appeals.pdf

ISA Branding and Style Guide: https://www.isa-arbor.com/styleGuide/ISA_BrandingGuide.pdf

List of TRAQ Courses: <http://www.isa-arbor.com/events/workshopsandsymposia/traqevents.aspx>

For questions about the TRAQ course and exam, contact ISA: isa@isa-arbor.com



2014 TRAQ Course in Monticello, IL, US

Learn more about educational opportunities at www.isa-arbor.com



International Society of **Arboriculture**

www.isa-arbor.com • p. +1 217.355.9411 • isa@isa-arbor.com