

STUDENT HANDBOOK

CODE

OFFICIAL

ACCREDITATION

PROGRAM





WABO Code Official Accreditation Program

FORWARD

This edition of the WABO Code Official Accreditation Program Student Handbook updates and replaces previous editions of this handbook and reflects the applicable requirements and intent of the program.

This Handbook has been published as follows:

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2nd Edition August 2022

3rd Edition April 2023

4th Edition July 2024

5th Edition May 2025



WABO Code Official Accreditation Program

PREFACE

This handbook is intended to be a resource for students and will not necessarily address all situations that might arise now or in the future. WABO's Code Official Accreditation Program's main goal is to train future code administrators. As such, any activity or behavior that is not consistent with industry standards for public service will be addressed as they arise.



WABO Code Official Accreditation Program

MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

Welcome to WABO's Code Official Accreditation Program (COAP).

The Washington Association of Building Official's Code Official Accreditation Program is a first-in-the-nation completely online program designed to provide in-depth training tailored to prepare individuals for positions within Washington State building departments. You are joining an elite group of individuals who will be the highly trained, highly skilled and in demand code officials of the future. It is WABO's commitment to help you achieve your career goals. Your employers (present and future) need staff with these skills. You will be the industry leaders of the next generation.

WABO instructors are highly experienced professionals with expert knowledge in the industry. Take advantage of the time you have with them and your cohort. This will prove to be the foundation for relationships that will carry on for many years to come. Be prepared to have the self-discipline necessary to participate in each class with all the challenges and demands of being a successful student. Make the commitment to yourself, your current or future employer and the industry to learn as much as you can. Challenge yourself to join the elite who have completed the entire program.

As I am sure you are aware, change is on the horizon as we pledge forward into the next generation of code officials. We are confronted with the realization that many of the most experienced and seasoned industry professionals have earned the right to move on. By committing to this program, you are skyrocketing learning opportunities while gaining institutional wisdom that our industry desperately needs.

We are embarking on a new chapter in the realm of the built environment. Now more than ever, this industry demands the highest level of technical knowledge, equally partnered with the soft skills necessary to navigate the many challenges that we encounter daily. That is the very purpose of this program to coalesce a holistic code official that has the expertise and confidence to address the endless competing priorities with an expert level of assurance.

This brief "[Student Handbook](#)" is intended to help you be a successful student. This packet provides much of the information needed to ensure a successful experience. Please read through the sets of responsibilities and familiarize yourself with the processes.

We look forward to helping you achieve success this year and all the years you are in the WABO COAP program.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'James Tumelson'.

James Tumelson, CBO, MCP, ACO
Dean of Students and Committee Chair



WABO Code Official Accreditation Program

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Updated: May 2025

Section	Title	Page Number
1	Student Responsibilities	6
2	Online Expectations	6
3	Communication and Participation	7
4	Time Management	7
5	Study Environment	7
6	Course Materials	7
7	Computer Skills	8
8	Course and Late Work Policies	8
9	Grading Policy	9
10	Academic Code of Conduct	10
11	Academic Dishonesty Procedure	11
12	Disciplinary Sanctions and Terms and Conditions	11
13	Guidelines for Student Grievance and Appeal	12
	End of Course Survey	13
	Pathway for Accreditation	14
	Student Handbook Acknowledgement	15



WABO Code Official Accreditation Program

1. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1.1. Access to all required books before the first week of class
- 1.2. Access to Computer or Tablet
- 1.3. Access to reliable internet
- 1.4. Download or print Academic Calendar
- 1.5. Complete a COAP registration form each quarter (3 times a year)
- 1.6. Complete a COAP enrollment agreement each quarter (3 times a year)
- 1.7. Pay all tuition and related fees each quarter (3 times a year)
- 1.8. Complete the Course Evaluation Form each quarter
- 1.9. Active participation in all structured learning environments
- 1.10. Complete readings, assignments, discussions, and quizzes on schedule
- 1.11. Practice professional behavior at all times
- 1.12. Follow all policies and expectations

2. ONLINE EXPECTATIONS

2.1. STUDENT ROLE IN ONLINE COURSES

WABO COAP's online structured learning courses are designed to provide students with a safe and convenient way to learn and complete their course. However, WABO COAP's online courses maintain the same quality and rigor that can be found in traditional classroom settings. These courses will challenge and help prepare students to move forward as a code professional. To complete their courses students need to be motivated, dedicated, organized, and determined.

2.2. ONLINE PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

WABO COAP is dedicated to ensuring productive, safe virtual classrooms for all students and instructors. WABO COAP students, instructors and staff represent a diverse community. Behaviors that do not support a respectful learning environment are not acceptable and will result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the COAP program.

2.2.1. Online Professional Behavior Expectations:

- 2.2.1.1. Awareness of the intended audience (e.g., classes are meant for students currently enrolled in the course and must not enter or share a class meeting with unauthorized individuals).
- 2.2.1.2. General virtual etiquette (e.g., mute microphones when not speaking, raise hand virtually to ask a question, turn off camera if stepping away).
- 2.2.1.3. Discussions (e.g., students can disagree with others but should do so respectfully and constructively).
- 2.2.1.4. Privacy (e.g., students should consult with the instructor to receive permission to record the class).
- 2.2.1.5. Communicate instances of disruptive behaviors to the proper instructor, administrator, or escalate the complaint when necessary.



WABO Code Official Accreditation Program

2.2.2. Examples of Unacceptable Online Professional Behavior:

- 2.2.2.1.** Offensive and/or inappropriate discussion posts or submissions.
- 2.2.2.2.** All forms of bias including race, religion, ethnicity, gender, disability, national origin, veteran status, and creed as demonstrated through verbal and/or written communication and/or physical acts.
- 2.2.2.3.** All types of dishonesty, including cheating, plagiarism, knowingly furnishing false information to the institution, forgery, and alteration or use of institution documents with intent to defraud.
- 2.2.2.4.** Harassment of others, either inside or outside of the course space.
- 2.2.2.5.** Inappropriate or confrontational email, classroom, group, or telephone communications.
- 2.2.2.6.** Violation of published school policies.

3. COMMUNICATION AND PARTICIPATION

WABO COAP students are expected to be active participants in the course. While students will not see classmates and instructors in person during class, courses are designed to include discussion and other forms of collaboration and communication. WABO COAP believes a student's success depends on regular attendance. Students are expected to log into their scheduled course weekly and participate in class activities, assignments, online discussions, and complete assessments. Students are expected to complete all assignments, assessments, and any other activities by the due date.

Students are strongly encouraged to contact their instructor if they have questions regarding course concepts and assignments. Students should contact their instructor well in advance of an assignment due date with questions or concerns. Some instructors have set aside specific times to be available for phone conferences or virtual chat sessions if needed for additional course-related support. When emailing questions to the instructor the response time is two business days (48 hours) except weekends and holidays identified on the academic calendar. If a response has not been received in the allotted time, contact the WABO COAP Administrative Office for further assistance.

4. TIME MANAGEMENT

Managing time is essential in virtual structured learning courses. Successful students are very organized in their studies and take ownership of their own learning. A recommended approach is to set aside specific time each day to focus on the coursework and studies. Ideally, the set time should be the same time each day.

5. STUDY ENVIRONMENT

Setting up a consistent, familiar study environment is just as essential as managing time. If possible, students should find a well-lit setting that is free of distraction. Students should schedule course studies around the time they have access to a distraction-free environment as they may find they will make better use of their time.

6. COURSE MATERIALS

Students are responsible for maintaining course files, which include any files, papers, projects, assessments, presentations, etc. In addition to keeping a digital copy of files on a personal computer, tablet, or external storage device, students should also make use of a cloud-based storage solution (e.g., Dropbox, Box.com, OneDrive). Once a course is complete, neither WABO COAP nor the instructor is responsible for providing lost course-related digital files, resources, or materials.



WABO Code Official Accreditation Program

7. COMPUTER SKILLS

Students will need to have basic computer skills. Students are expected to:

- 7.1. Attend virtual class
- 7.2. Open files in standard formats (e.g., MS Office documents, PDFs, and images (JPG, JPEG, GIF, and PNG))
- 7.3. Create, save, organize, and maintain digital files
- 7.4. Interact with the Learning Management Systems (LMS)
- 7.5. Communicate electronically
- 7.6. Basic knowledge of web browsing and searching

8. COURSE AND LATE WORK POLICIES

In class students will be expected to demonstrate work habits that will help them succeed in the WABO COAP program as well as any current or future employment. These work habits include regular and prompt attendance – i.e., logging in regularly, submitting assignments on time, and refraining from distracting behavior.

Regular participation is an expectation in class. In order to keep up with class, weekly activity is required.

Email communications should include title of assignment or subject matter being referenced and identified. It is always appreciated to address the instructor by name. The more information and clarity included in the email the better the likelihood of a complete and quick response. Please keep in mind that the instructor's response time is two business days (48 hours) except weekends and holidays identified on the academic calendar. If a response has not been received in the allotted time, contact the WABO COAP Administrative Office for further assistance.

8.1. DUE DATES

Due dates are the last date the assignment should be turned in. Students may turn in assignments anytime during the week when the module is open, but if the assignment is submitted after the due date, it will be considered late. Due dates for each assignment, quiz, and discussion post are outlined in the class syllabus.

8.2. EMAILED ASSIGNMENTS

Instructors **DO NOT** accept emailed assignments. This is so none of the work gets overlooked or lost.

8.3. MLA (MODERN LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION) STYLE FORMAT

All assignments (unless otherwise stated) are to be formatted in MLA style. Instructors do not accept hand-written papers (The exception to this are worksheets. Those worksheets can be printed, filled out by hand, and scanned to Canvas).

8.4. SUBMITTING WORK FOR CREDIT

Please be aware **if the work submitted cannot be viewed, credit may not be received.** For example, Google Slides requires permission to view and if a presentation is submitted as a Google Slides presentation without permission, credit will not be received for that assignment. Always be sure that work uploads properly to Canvas. Also, be aware that "Pages" and similar programs are proprietary to Apple and cannot be accessed using Microsoft. Please do not use these programs. If you are not sure, please contact the instructor prior to creating a document.



WABO Code Official Accreditation Program

8.5. LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Late assignments will only be accepted up to **one week** after the original due date. Late assignments will be worth up to 50% of the original credit. There are exceptions in cases of serious illness or other hardships beyond the student’s control. Please notify the WABO COAP Administrative Office and instructor by email if there are extenuating circumstances that will cause an assignment to be turned in late. Second chances on an assignment will **only** be granted by permission.

8.6. Quizzes, Final Exam, Capstone Project & End of Course Survey will not be accepted late.

8.7. WEEKLY DISCUSSIONS

Weekly discussions are the online equivalent of group discussions that happen organically in a normal classroom setting. Online discussions are an exchange of ideas and a chance to get to know each other and the assigned material. The discussions are a two-part process. The initial response to the discussion subject for that week should be submitted by Wednesday at 11:59 PM. After the initial post is submitted, the expectation is to comment/respond to two other classmates’ posts by Sunday at 11:59 PM. The posts should add value and promote further conversation. See the discussion post rubric in the Syllabus on how discussions will be evaluated.

9. GRADING POLICY

At the beginning of each course the instructor will provide every student with the grading criteria for that course. The quality of a student’s performance in a course is recognized by a grade.

WABO COAP Instructors use the following grading scale:

<u>GRADING SCALE</u>			
LETTER GRADE	PERCENT GRADE	LETTER GRADE	PERCENT GRADE
A+	97 - 100	C+	77 - 79
A	93 - 96	C	73 - 76
A-	90 - 92	C-	70 - 72
B+	87 - 89	D+	67 - 69
B	83 - 86	D	65 - 66
B-	80 - 82	F	BELOW 65

Grades will be reported as a percentage – not a letter grade in Canvas. Grades will be reported as a letter – not a percentage on the Student Transcript. Students must successfully complete the current quarter with a minimum score of 65% in order to advance to the next quarter. If a student stops attending and does not withdraw from the course, a grade of “F” will be recorded on the permanent record. ***Students who fail to satisfactorily complete the course may re-enroll when the course is offered again.***

9.1. INCOMPLETES

In cases of serious illness or other hardships beyond the student’s control and the student is performing at a passing level during the quarter, but is unable to complete all the requirements during the scheduled quarter, a **grade of Incomplete** may be given. A student must complete and submit the missing work, as directed by the instructor. If a student fails to complete the work by the deadline the Incomplete reverts to a grade of “F” on any work still outstanding. The student may not register for the next quarter until the final grades have posted and the student has earned an overall passing grade of 65% or higher per the grading policy.



WABO Code Official Accreditation Program

9.2. WITHDRAWALS/DROPS

A student may withdraw from class at any time during the quarter and receive no credit or CEU's. Withdrawal notice must be submitted in writing to the WABO COAP Administrative Office by mail or email, the instructor cannot withdraw a student. Without written notice the student continues to be enrolled in class, attendance and course work will be expected. A student who stops attending class and does not properly withdraw will receive a grade of "F". Once proper notification is given, the student will be removed from the class roster. Students working towards certificates of completion and accreditation will need to re-register and complete class when offered again. The student may be eligible for partial refund of tuition based upon the date notice was received and will not be eligible for scholarship reimbursement for the class.

9.3. GRADE REPORTS/TRANSCRIPTS

Students will receive a grade report at the end of each quarter through the LMS dashboard. Transcripts are available upon request and must be submitted in writing to the WABO COAP Administrative Office. Transcript requests will not be approved if the student has not fulfilled all financial obligations, such as outstanding tuition and/or fees. Please allow up to two weeks to issue a transcript. School must maintain transcript for a minimum 50 years from date of enrollment or until the school ceases to be licensed.

10. ACADEMIC CODE OF CONDUCT

The WABO Code Official Accreditation Program (COAP) expects students to fulfill their academic obligations through an honest effort. Dishonesty violates the code of ethics expected of students and is considered a serious offense subject to disciplinary actions. Academic dishonesty is considered any act of course-related dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and fabrication.

- 10.1.** Cheating includes, but is not limited to, using, or attempting to use, give, or obtain any material, assistance, unauthorized collaboration, or source which has not been authorized to satisfy any expectation or requirement in an instructional course, or obtaining, without authorization, test questions, answers, or other academic material that belongs to another individual relating to the completion of an academic assignment.
- 10.2.** Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, using, or attempting to use, another individual's ideas, writings, or other work in an instructional course without properly citing the ideas, writings, or work of the individual in completing an academic assignment. Prohibited conduct may also include the unauthorized submission for credit of academic work that has been submitted for credit in another course.
- 10.3.** Fabrication includes, but is not limited to, falsifying data, information, or citations in completing an academic assignment and also includes, but is not limited to, providing false or deceptive information to an instructor concerning the completion of an assignment.
- 10.4.** Academic dishonesty also includes, but is not limited to, submitting in an instructional course either information that is known to be false, while concealing that falsity, or work that is substantially the same as that previously submitted in another course without the current instructor's approval.
- 10.5.** No individual shall be allowed to withdraw from a course or the program to avoid the consequences of academic dishonesty.



WABO Code Official Accreditation Program

11. ACADEMIC DISHONESTY PROCEDURE

Generally, the instructor is responsible for handling instances of actual and potential academic misconduct consistent with the following:

The instructor who, upon investigation, suspects a student of academic misconduct will, if possible, confer with the student and allow for their input.

- 11.1.** If the instructor determines the student is not responsible for engaging in academic misconduct, the matter will be considered resolved and no further action will be taken.
- 11.2.** If the instructor determines the conduct at issue was unintentional, the violation will be explained and a penalty or disciplinary action appropriate to the conduct (Ex: written warning, reduction in points, make up assignment, etc.) may be imposed at the discretion of the investigating instructor. The Dean of Students and the WABO COAP Administrative Office will be notified in writing of the incident and the outcome.
- 11.3.** If the student admits responsibility for academic misconduct, or if the student is otherwise found responsible for the academic misconduct, the investigating instructor may award an “F” on the assignment or impose other penalties or disciplinary action in addition to the penalties stated in the syllabus. The student will be notified in writing the results of the instructor’s decision. The Dean of Students and the WABO COAP Administrative Office will be notified in writing of the incident and any action taken.
- 11.4.** The instructor and/or Dean of Students can elect to pursue behavioral misconduct consequences for academic misconduct by referring the issue to the WABO Accreditation Committee for further disciplinary action.

12. DISCIPLINARY SANCTIONS AND TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Disciplinary sanctions may be imposed upon students found to have violated the academic code of conduct.

12.1. DISCIPLINARY WARNING

A written statement to a student that there is a violation and continued violation may be cause for further action.

12.2. WRITTEN REPRIMAND

Formal written notice that the student has violated one or more terms of the code of conduct and continuation of the same or similar behavior may result in more severe disciplinary action.

12.3. DISCIPLINARY PROBATION

Formal action placing specific conditions and restrictions upon the student’s continued attendance depending on the seriousness of the violation. If the student continues the same or similar behavior disciplinary probation may result in suspension or dismissal from the program. Such action will take effect immediately without further review. Probation will remain in effect for the remainder of the student’s academic year.

12.4. DISCIPLINARY SUSPENSION

Suspension from the program for a stated period of time. Tuition and fees for the quarter disciplinary suspension is imposed are forfeited.

12.5. DISMISSAL

The revocation of all rights, privileges, and exclusion from the program without the possibility of return. Tuition and fees for the quarter in which dismissal is imposed are forfeited.



WABO Code Official Accreditation Program

13. GUIDELINES FOR STUDENT GRIEVANCE AND APPEAL

Washington Association of Building Officials and the Code Official Accreditation Program strive to be fair to all students, faculty, and staff. However, if a student has a grievance – the following procedures are to be followed:

13.1. APPEAL INSTRUCTOR DECISION TO DEAN OF STUDENTS

Student grievances must be submitted in writing to the WABO COAP Administrative Office. A student may appeal the findings and/or penalty determined by the instructor. The student must initiate the appeal process by filing an appeal request with the WABO COAP Administrative Office within three (3) business days of receiving the instructor’s written decision. The written request will be forwarded to the Dean of Students. If a decision is made to reconsider the instructor’s initial determination, the Dean will allow all parties the opportunity to submit information they would like considered. The Dean will review the appeal request and determine if there are proper grounds for appeal and if the evidence submitted warrants reconsideration of the instructor’s decision. All parties will be notified in writing of the Dean’s decision. The Program reserves the right to impose discipline, up to and including dismissal, based on the nature and circumstances of each confirmed violation. There are cases where the allegations and potential consequences are so serious and complex that the matter may be submitted, at the outset, to the WABO Accreditation Committee for investigation and disposition. Decisions regarding student appeals ultimately rest with the Dean of Students and WABO Accreditation Committee.

13.2. APPEAL DEAN OF STUDENTS DECISION TO WABO ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE

A Student may choose to pursue the grievance further by appealing in writing to the WABO Accreditation Committee. The student must initiate the appeal process by filing an appeal request with the WABO COAP Administrative Office within three (3) business days of receiving the Dean of Student’s written decision. The written request will be forwarded to the Committee. The Committee will review the appeal request and determine if there are proper grounds for appeal and if the evidence submitted warrants reconsideration of the Dean’s decision. All parties will be notified in writing of the Committee’s decision. The Program reserves the right to impose discipline, up to and including dismissal, based on the nature and circumstances of each confirmed violation. Decisions regarding student appeals ultimately rest with the Dean of Students and WABO Accreditation Committee.

13.3. APPEAL WABO ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION TO WABO EXECUTIVE BOARD

A Student may choose to pursue the grievance further by appealing in writing to the WABO Executive Board. The student must initiate the appeal process by filing an appeal request with the WABO COAP Administrative Office within three (3) business days of receiving the WABO Accreditation Committee’s written decision. The written request will be forwarded to the Board. The Board will review the appeal request and determine if there are proper grounds for appeal and if the evidence submitted warrants reconsideration of the Committee’s decision. All parties will be notified in writing of the Board’s decision. The Program reserves the right to impose discipline, up to and including dismissal, based on the nature and circumstances of each confirmed violation. Decisions regarding student appeals ultimately rest with the Dean of Students and WABO Accreditation Committee.

13.4. APPEAL WABO EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION TO WORKFORCE TRAINING AND EDUCATION BOARD

After a decision has been made by the WABO Executive Board a concern or complaint may be made to the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, 128 10th Ave SW, Olympia, WA 98501, (360) 709-4600, workforce@wtb.wa.gov



WABO Code Official Accreditation Program

END OF COURSE SURVEY

At the end of each quarter students will be asked to complete a brief survey about their experience with registration, class, instructor, and overall satisfaction with the program. Feedback on these surveys assist the WABO Accreditation Committee identify possible areas of improvement. The following is a sample survey that will be available through the LMS dashboard to all students.



The WABO Accreditation Committee appreciates you taking the time to participate in this voluntary survey. For your participation you will receive 5 extra credit points towards your overall grade and know that your answers/comments are anonymous. All responses whether positive or negative will be reviewed to help improve the program. Space is given at the end of the survey to expand on your experience.

1. I would take another course from this instructor.

- Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

2. I would recommend this class to my colleagues.

- Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

3. The course learning objectives were clearly defined, understandable, and the instructor met these expectations.

- Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

4. The online Canvas platform was easy to navigate and use.

- Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

5. The class registration and payment process was clear and understandable.

- Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

6. What did you like the most about this class?

7. What did you like the least about this class?

8. Please add any additional comments regarding the instructor, coursework, online environment, registration, or technical support you feel we should know. (Optional)



WABO Code Official Accreditation Program

PATHWAY FOR ACCREDITATION



1. CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

Upon successful completion of each year the student will be awarded a WABO Code Official Accreditation Program Certificate of Completion. The Certificate of Completion will be mailed to each student within 30 days from the date final grades are to be posted.

2. CERTIFICATE OF ACCREDITATION

Aspiring students who have also achieved the prerequisite International Code Council (ICC) certification may then apply for the prestigious WABO COAP Accreditation. This elite designation demonstrates the highest level of credibility and competency that embodies the essential knowledge, skills and abilities of a holistic code administrator.

The WABO COAP Accreditation complements and bolsters the ICC certifications and on-the-job training provided by employers. The WABO COAP Accreditation serves as a launchpad for limitless career potential as a code administrator and these students are then elevated as leaders within the industry. Those that aspire to become WABO COAP accredited, differentiate themselves from their competition during hiring opportunities. Many jurisdictions already list this credential as a preferred qualification for employment.

The Certificate of Accreditation will be mailed within 30 days from the date the student applies and is approved. Accreditation expiration dates are based off a student's ICC certification expiration date. A list of all actively accredited professionals will be posted on WABO's web site. ICC certifications that are used to obtain accreditation must remain current for accreditation to remain active. To maintain WABO accreditations, renewal notices will be sent to the address on file prior to expiration dates. Accreditation renewal fees will be denoted on renewal notices.

CERTIFICATION HOLDERS BENEFIT FROM:

- Increased recognition by peers and respect of colleagues in the profession
- Improved opportunities for employability and advancement
- Greater confidence in their professional competence
- Increased professional trust from employers or the public
- Increased autonomy in the workplace
- Better compensation and career longevity

EMPLOYERS BENEFIT FROM:

- Qualified individuals for employment or advancement
- Recertification requirements for continued or enhanced competence
- Commitment to public safety and/or consumer protection
- Reduced risk of errors, accidents and/or legal liability
- Reduced employee turnover and increased job satisfaction
- Justification for potential compensation differential



WABO Code Official Accreditation Program

STUDENT HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I have received a copy of the Student Handbook. I have read the handbook and understand all the policies and expectations. I agree to be responsible for following all policies and expectations of the program and understand the consequences for failing to follow the requirements. I understand that this handbook may be amended during the year without notice. This handbook in the latest version will be available on the WABO website (www.wabo.org) and is applicable to all students upon the implementation of any change. The administration will endeavor to notify all students of any changes to the handbook as soon as practical.

Student's Name: _____

Student's Signature: _____

Date: _____

EXAMPLE