

HQE™ certification: Whom for? What for? How?

HQE™ (High Quality of Environment) certification has been designed for **buildings' owners, managers, users, developers and investors**, as well as for **urban planners and local authorities**.

HQE is not a norm but a **label**, which testifies that the **project owner's initiative** to aim at a sustainable building or a sustainable territory – according to the principles of **sustainable development** - has been successful. This approach applies **anywhere in the world**, whichever regulatory, cultural or climatic conditions prevail.

It covers residential, commercial, administrative or service **buildings**, in all activity areas, be they **under construction, renovation or already in operation**. It also covers **urban developments** (district, cluster, campus...)

Benefits of a certification are now well documented and economically assessed by several studies:

- Better **satisfaction** of the site inhabitants or users
- **Quality of life** and wellbeing at work, better productivity, better staff loyalty
- Reduced **fixed and operating costs** (monitored energy and water consumption, waste management)
- Increase in **asset value**
- Optimisation of **sales or rental conditions** (faster and at a higher price)
- **Obsolescence** pushed back
- Reduced **risks** (health, equipment...) sometimes allowing for lower insurance rates
- Project management system contributing to the **professionalization of the project teams** and to a better control of quality, cost and delays
- Social responsibility valorisation

The two latter benefits also apply to certification of territories.

Cerway designed **generic Certification Schemes**, which are adaptable to each country's specificities: climate, regulation, construction habits, and organisation systems. The **project team** sets **its own objectives** within the specific framework of the project and remains free to choose its **architectural and technical solutions**. Objectives are then assessed according to the Certification Scheme requirements or, if need be, by principles of equivalence.

The certification process provides a guideline to the project owner all along the duration of the project **from design phase to full completion**. It encourages the reduction of the building's environmental impact and of water, energy and waste consumption, and the improvement of health, comfort and life quality for the users. HQE approach relies on an assessment system which is **scientifically based and performance-oriented**.

An **independent third party auditor** will assess the achievement of the objectives **at each main phase** of the project. A certificate will then be issued by Cerway, for each of these phases as well.

Cerway

Cerway is the only operator for HQE™ global offer outside of France, and a subsidiary of Certivéa and Cerqual, who respectively belong to CSTB (*Centre Scientifique et Technique du Bâtiment*) and *Association Qualitel*. The HQE brand belongs to Association HQE. It was created over 20 years ago and it is well recognised internationally.

Our main mission is to encourage the improvement of stakeholders, buildings and territories' performance, and to assess it, within a sustainable development perspective. A building performance is testified under 4 items: **energy, environment, health, comfort**.

HQE™ global offer also includes **training of professionals** in order to facilitate the development of sustainable projects, and the training of **Référents Certification (RC) HQE™**, whose capacity to assist in, and ease, the certification process is recognised by Cerway.