

Lean Six Sigma FAQs

LEAN SIX SIGMA is a Quality Management Methodology that focuses on the continual improvement of a process or its product over time. It does not “fix” a process with a single improvement, but looks to constantly make it better able to meet the customer’s specifications consistently. To do this, Lean Six Sigma uses concepts and tools from both the Six Sigma Quality Management Model and from Lean. It uses statistical tools and analysis to understand the process and identify the most significant improvements to make. Lean and Six Sigma both have the aspirational objectives of producing High Value (Quality) at Lower Costs (Efficiency). They approach these objectives in somewhat different manners, however. So it is important to understand that Lean Six Sigma is actually a discipline of Six Sigma that formally includes tools and concepts from Lean. It is itself NOT a Lean methodology. Students looking to learn the Lean/Kaizen approach to quality should look to a different course instead of this one.

Lean Six Sigma approaches its goals for quality by continuously applying a rigid and systematic project-based methodology that follows a 5 phase structure best known as DMAIC: Define, Measure, Analyze, Improve and Control. Our courses introduce the students to the concepts, tools and deliverables commonly used within this methodology and gives them the opportunity to earn certifications to prove that knowledge.

Who is the certifying body for the exam?

BOTH OUR GREEN BELT AND BLACK BELT courses are taught through a partnership with the Lean Sigma Corporation, headed by Michael Parker, a recognized Master Black Belt. While there is currently no central body governing Quality Management certifications, Michael Parker has taken the time and effort to get his curriculum and certifications accredited and recognized by two of the most recognized bodies attempting to set Six Sigma standards, the International Association for Six Sigma Certification (IASSC) and the Council for Six Sigma Certifications. In short, this means that this certification is internationally recognized and the credential can be confirmed through an online registry of certification holders.

What are the differences between the Green Belt and the Black Belt classes and exam process?

OUR GREEN BELT CERTIFICATION CLASS is delivered over 3 days. It introduces the students to the concepts, vocabulary and tools used in a Lean Six Sigma project. It does not focus on performing the statistical analysis, but instead focuses on how to interpret results. In order to earn their certification Green Belt candidates must pass 5 tests and 1 comprehensive exam. The tests can be taken repeatedly over their 3 months access, but the exam can only be attempted twice. Upon successful completion of these tests and the exam, Lean Sigma Corporation will send out their certification.

Our Black Belt certification class is delivered over 5 days. It covers all the materials from Green Belt but with greater depth and focus on choosing the tools and performing the analysis. It also discusses how the Design of Experiments model can be used as a tool within a Lean Six Sigma project. Due to the amount of materials covered we have set attendance of a Green Belt course as a pre-requisite for attending the Black Belt, as there would simply not be time to cover everything if the students have not already received an introduction to the concepts. In order to earn their Black Belt certifications students will again have 3 months to pass 5 chapter-ending tests and 1 comprehensive exam. They will again have unlimited attempts to pass the 5 tests within the 3 months, but they will only have 2 attempts at the exam. When the tests and exam have been passed, the Black Belt candidate will need to complete a Lean Six Sigma Project. This project must be completed within 6 months of the class. The project is used to demonstrate the ability to apply the model to a process of the student’s choosing. The instructor will act as a mentor and merely validate that the model is being followed accurately. Upon completion of the tests, the exam, and the project the student will have earned their Black Belt certification.

How do students sign up for the exam?

ON THE FIRST DAY OF CLASS students in both the Green and Black Belt courses are taken out to the Lean Sigma Corporation website where they register an account that gives them access to the courseware, quizzes, exercises and study tools. This site also hosts their tests and exam for certification. The cost of the tests and exam are already included in the price of the course. Students have 3 months to complete the requisite tests and exam toward earning their certification.