

Quidos

Excellence in Efficiency

Title: Quidos QA Standards for NDEAs

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3.0	07/03/2014	07/03/2014	
3.1	09/02/2015	09/02/2015	
4.0	17/11/2016	17/11/2016	06/02/2019 (BS)
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5.1	09/06/2022	09/06/2022	
5.2	04/08/2022	04/08/2022	12/10/2023

This document shall apply to all accredited Non-Domestic Energy Assessors, regardless of national registration, and supersede any previous copies.

These Standards shall be read in conjunction with the Quidos Code of Conduct of Energy Assessors.



Non-Domestic Assessment Quality Assurance

1. Overview

As an Accreditation Scheme, we are responsible for ensuring that the quality of work carried out by our members is of a consistently good standard. In a relatively new sector, such as that of EPCs and ACRs, it is important that high standards are established and maintained throughout every strand of the industry. This will help maintain the credibility of such reports as an important document for both cutting carbon emissions, and reducing energy consumption in businesses within the UK. It is vital that these high standards are implemented; both by us as an Accreditation Scheme, and you as an Energy Assessor.

2. Surveillance Auditing Requirements

Requests for an audit should not be seen as a burden, or be perceived as a punishment. For those Energy Assessors who maintain high standards in their work, QA can be an opportunity to demonstrate this, or even to develop better practice. By periodic auditing of our members, we aim to ensure that all Energy Assessor can prove themselves capable of providing the best service to the customer and the industry.

As a general rule, the following minimum surveillance requirements are in place:

- At least 2% of all reports lodged through the scheme are audited;
- Minimum of 0.5% of Energy Certificates lodged through Scheme;
- Energy Assessors are randomly audited on at least 1 report per accredited strand per 4 year period;
- Each new Energy Assessor with the Scheme shall have their first lodged report audited;
- Audits which trigger risk-based selection criteria.

Given that Quidos must audit 2% of all lodgements, it would be more than likely that Energy Assessors will receive more than the minimum requirement.

There are other circumstances which would require surveillance checks:

- Customer complaints.

In addition to these requirements, we also undertake auditing on those reports that have been re-lodged following a surveillance auditing failure.

3. Risk-Based Auditing Selections

In addition to random periodic auditing, Quidos also utilises risk-based audit selections in an attempt to focus our auditing efforts on areas of higher risk. This should help promote greater quality within the Scheme and industry as a whole. Other Accreditation Schemes refer to these as 'smart audits', although this gives an impression that they are audited differently; the rules allow use to select audits based on risk, so that's what we've called them.

RBAS audits are considered separately to the minimum periodic audit requirement, therefore an Energy Assessor *may* receive many more audits per year than minimum if they are found to be meeting those trigger criteria.

The RBAS trigger rules are available within iQ-Energy for NDEAs to review, and these will be noted on auditing feedback.

Quidos will not call more than three RBAS audits in any given month, and these selections will be based on the priority ordering of the rules.

4. Surveillance Audit Evidence

As a practicing member of the Quidos Accreditation Scheme you are expected to keep detailed records of all reports lodged. These records must be of a professional standard, and enable us to adequately audit the submitted work.

When uploading your files, the QA team would hope you ask yourself:

“Would another assessor be able to recreate the report fully from this evidence without question?”

If *you* wouldn't be able to, the auditor almost certainly wouldn't either.

In this respect, the most important evidence that you can collect are your site notes. These give an Energy Assessor the opportunity to record their thought process, reasoning for any assumptions made or Conventions followed, and to highlight any limitations or issues raised whilst carrying out an assessment.

The full details of the suggested evidence which can be provided for surveillance auditing can be found in the following appendices:

Appendix A1 – NDEA EPC (Level 3/4);

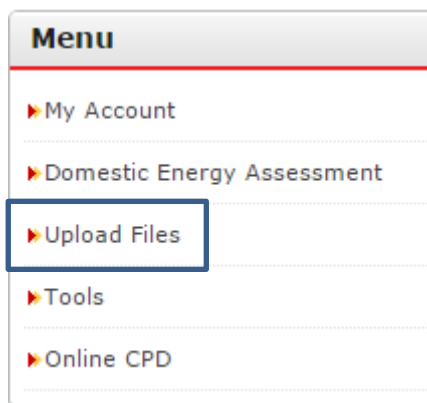
Appendix B1 – Display Energy Certificates;

Appendix C1 – Air-Conditioning Reports (Level 3/4).

4.1 Uploading your evidence

All evidence **MUST** be uploaded through iQ-Energy, and cannot be submitted by email or Dropbox to the QA Team. This preserves the audit trail between assessors and auditors, and makes the EA solely responsible for management of their data.

Your audit RRN will appear in your Control Panel in iQ-Energy as well as a link to upload. Alternatively, evidence may be uploaded manually using the **Upload Files** button in the Control Panel menu. Just search for the requested RRN and upload your files. Using the Upload Files option is also handy if you need to add further documentation to your evidence pack after you initial confirmation.



It's really important that EAs double- and triple-check all files before pressing the **Confirm QA Upload** button. Once you press this button, you are confirming that all of the evidence you have uploaded are sufficient for the auditor to complete the survey.

By pressing confirming your upload, you are acknowledging that you have checked all the files necessary for audit have been uploaded. The audit is liable to failure for insufficient evidence with no grounds for appeal if this is not the case.

The evidence you provide should be clear, concise, and of a high enough standard to enable the auditor to review your work accurately.

Photographic evidence is of particular importance, ensuring that they are clear and in context for the purposes required. We request that photographic evidence be uploaded as separate files, and not pasted into a single document. This enables the auditors to check each image thoroughly, however allowances will be made for large photosets which could be required.

All photographic evidence must retain the photographic metadata created when the pictures is taken, or have an in-image date/time stamp. You should ensure that, if using an image resizing program to aid in image uploading for audit, the metadata (EXIF) is maintained.

If the photographic evidence is deemed to be of underwhelming quality, the Energy Assessor will be advised that more care is required in future. If it is deemed that the evidence provided is not of sufficient quality to allow accurate auditing, the report cannot be audited, resulting in an audit failure, with the Energy Assessor requiring follow-on auditing.

As detailed in the Quidos Code of Conduct, it is essential that Energy Assessors keep the records of each report both secure and readily accessible. **We will not accept excuses related to missing assessment information and data.**

APPENDIX A: Surveillance Audit Process for NDEA EPCs (Level 3/4)

Once the evidence has been submitted, it will be audited by a member of our Surveillance Auditing team. The Surveillance Auditor will review the work and establish whether or not the report is acceptable, providing the Energy Assessor with a feedback report upon the completion of the audit.

How the Non-Domestic EPC gets audited

1. The SA works through the supplied evidence and data entries.

2. At each data field where you believe there is a need to change the data, make the change and recalculate the BER.
3. Note the difference in the BER points result as a positive value whether the difference is negative or positive.
4. Changes to recommendations and/or description of the Energy Certificate will also be noted.
5. Reset the field in question to the members' original value.
6. Move to the next entry field and repeat testing from step b) above.
7. Carry on until all entry fields have been checked.
8. Add all the differences found to arrive at the cumulative error.
9. Enter all corrected data fields and recalculate the Energy Certificate.

The Audit Result

If any cumulative errors are within 10% of the BER rating, or less than 5 kgCO₂/m² of the rating calculated, the audit shall be marked as a pass. An audit pass is a great validation of your work as an Energy Assessor.

If this cumulative error exceeds either 10% variance to the BER rating, or 5 kgCO₂/m² of the rating calculated, the audit shall be marked as a fail and the Certificate declared defective.

Failure Consequences

In the event that the Certificate is declared defective, it will need to be cancelled and re-lodged within the correct information in place within 10-working days. The onus is on the assessor themselves to do this, using the auditor's feedback and guidance to successfully complete the new lodgement.

Defective EPCs shall always be cancelled by the Energy Assessor. Although lodging a new certificate make the latest version most accessible to download from the Non-Domestic EPC Register, it does not 'overwrite' or remove the incorrect report.

Cancellations shall be processed through iQ-Energy by selecting the report in question and pressing '*Cancel Report*'. Energy Assessors shall provide the RRN of the lodged replacement Certificate, as well as the reason for cancellation. The QA team will occasionally process cancellations following audit failures, but the expectation shall always be that the Energy Assessor shall cancel.

If you provide further evidence which would prove the EPC correct, you will not have to re-lodge the report, however it would still be classified as an audit failure.

Although this might seem harsh, we expect NDEAs to be professional in their operation, particularly in ensuring the collection of sufficient evidence to prove their EPC is an accurate reflection of the building, and provided in time for the audit to be completed. If this is not the case, we cannot turn a blind eye and obliged to use a failure and follow-on audit as a sanction.

From the date of failure, NDEAs will also have 10-working days within which to appeal against the audit decision.

Appeals

If you genuinely believe that an EPC has been incorrectly audited against the evidence supplied, SBEM Methodology or Conventions, you have the opportunity of lodging an appeal against the decision. Within the '*Evidence*' section for the report, you will see an **Appeal** button.

By giving your reasons for appeal, we can review the auditor's decision and make a judgement. Audit appeals are never considered by the Surveillance Auditor that completed the audit. A member of the QA team who was not involved in the audit will consider the appeal.

When considering an appeal, we will always look at the audit as a whole and review all evidence and data inputs. This moderates the work of the Surveillance Auditor, and ensures that the Energy Assessor is provided with the best possible feedback. This can mean that errors which were not initially noted by the Surveillance Auditor would contribute to a possible failure.

Follow-on Auditing

Where a randomly-selected or RBAS audit fails, the NDEA will be required to complete a single follow-on audit. This will either be based on the next triggering of the failed RBAS rule, or another randomly selected audit.

Follow-on audits will be selected from the next available lodgement data after date of failure.

An RBAS follow-on audit will remain pending for six months. If the rule has not been triggered after that time, it will be wiped as pending, and subsequent triggers assessed in the normal manner.

In order to ensure the timely completion of these audits, the upload deadline will be limited to five working days. These allows prompt upload and review to ensure that any systemic issues are noted and resolved promptly.

Where the follow-on audit subsequently fails, the Energy Assessor will be immediately suspended, pending the completion of appropriate corrective action. Energy Assessors should be aware of this condition when submitting a follow-on audit as this will prevent further lodgements until the matter has been resolved.

Where an NDEA fails three RBAS audits in succession for the same RBAS trigger, Quidos are able to impose the ultimate sanction of striking off the NDEA from the Central Register. This action would only be taken in the most extreme circumstance.

In addition, where three random audits in succession fail for the same technical reasons, the Scheme may also decide to strike-off the Energy Assessor.

Moving forward

In applying these Quality Assurance requirements, we are helping to ensure that quality is considered paramount in the Energy Performance industry. Energy Assessors should take pride in the quality of their work, and know that the higher the quality of Certificate they produce, the more they are contributing to helping cut the UK's carbon emissions and non-domestic energy usage. The better the standard of product that is produced, the more respectable and professional our industry will become.

We understand that this extra level of administration will add to the workload of an Energy Assessor, but we are confident that all will appreciate the benefits of a quality product.

Audit/EPC Help and Advice

The QA and Tech Support team is always available to aid EAs with any queries they might have about the auditing process.

The best way to contact the QA team is through the Quidos Support Log. This can be found by logging onto <http://support.quidos.co.uk>; alternatively, you can send an email which will log a support ticket to support@quidos.co.uk.

The telephone helpdesk service should only be used for URGENT telephone queries, such as an assessor on-site with a complex query which requires resolving.

As previously noted, whilst we appreciate that Energy Assessors have a right to contact the technical support team if they have a query, the over-use of these support channels will result in targeted auditing to confirm your confidence in completing EPCs.

APPENDIX A1: NDEA EPC Evidence Collection Guidance

Evidence for upload	Notes
EPC	<i>A copy of the lodged EPC to be provided</i>
Software date file	<i>E.g NCT file from iSBEM showing all data inputs to produce report</i>
Detailed floor plan and zoning	<i>Plan view, elevations, section, building logbook etc which allowed EPC to be calculated, endorsed/confirmed 3rd-party drawings Annotated drawing of the building identifying zones. In buildings with many zones, photographic evidence to be provided to support zone classification</i>
Site notes	<i>Written notes of anything that would support your decision-making, use of default values, amendments to recommendations, etc. Evidence that inspection of a particular element is impractical, using site note to explain any lack of photographic evidence</i>
Supplementary calculations	<i>E.g. Over-shading, common values, CoP/SEER/EER, SFP, extraction rates, mechanical ventilation</i>
Recommendations report	<i>If no recommendations have been eliminated, the QAA shall check that recommendations don't relate to a technology that does not exist within the building or is no appropriate</i>
Data collection forms	<i>Details of the data collected whilst on-site which has been used for data input into the calculation software</i>
Photographic Evidence:	All images must be date-stamped within the image or retain photographic metadata for checking
Aerial view of building	<i>From Google Maps or similar</i>
All external elevations	<i>Front, rear, sides (if applicable)</i>
Construction types	<i>Include demonstration of presence of insulation</i>
Glazing types	<i>Information to support site notes, g-value, etc</i>
Roof construction	<i>Include roof-lights if applicable</i>
Ventilation/exhaust systems	
Full range of HVAC systems	<i>Including but not limited to make/model, SEER, EER, Chiller/generator type, Heat recovery, Fuel type, controls within zones/areas, heat emitters/cooling units, DHW, Mechanical Ventilation (SFP).</i>
Full range of lighting systems	<i>Including but not limited lamp types, lighting schedule, controls, sensors, lux measurements/calculations</i>
As-Built Checks:	<i>New build – ensure to include evidence from above as well</i>
Evidence that building has been built as per the design	<i>Statement from developer, or equivalent to provide a professional judgement, that building has been constructed in line with design Pressure test certificate and/or Building Compliance confirmation Accredited Construction Details (ACD) certificate</i>

APPENDIX B: Audit Process for Display Energy Certificates

Once the evidence has been submitted, it will be audited by a member of our Surveillance Auditing team. The Surveillance Auditor will review the work and establish whether or not the report is acceptable, providing the Energy Assessor with a feedback report upon the completion of the audit.

How the Display Energy Certificate gets audited

1. The SA works through the supplied evidence and data entries.
2. At each data field where you believe there is a need to change the data, make the change and recalculate the DEC rating.
3. Note the difference in the DEC rating as a positive value whether the difference is negative or positive.
4. Changes to recommendations and/or description of the DEC will also be noted.
5. Reset the field in question to the members' original value.
6. Move to the next entry field and repeat testing from step b) above.
7. Carry on until all entry fields have been checked.
8. Add all the differences found to arrive at the cumulative error.
9. Enter all corrected data fields and recalculate the Display Energy Certificate.

Advisory report auditing

1. Check DEC conventions have been followed.
2. Check evidence that the building and services description are accurate: *The Surveillance Auditor shall fail the Advisory Report audit if the description of building and services is incorrect and correction results in a change in recommendations. The auditor shall fail the Advisory Report audit if the description of the building and services is sufficiently inaccurate to raise doubts as to the validity of the report in the mind of a typical client.*
3. Review of advisory report impacts and costs: *The Surveillance Auditor shall review whether the ratings are consistent with a considered approach. Where an EA routinely used an assessment of "medium" for relative cost effectiveness, the Advisory Report audit shall be marked as a fail unless the evidence provided is such as to support the assessment.*

The Audit Result

If any cumulative errors is less than either 5% variance to the DEC rating, or within 4 absolute points of the rating calculated, the audit shall be marked as a pass. An audit pass is a great validation of your work as an Energy Assessor.

If this cumulative error exceeds either 5% variance to the DEC rating, or greater than 4 absolute points of the rating calculated, the audit shall be marked as a fail and the Certificate declared defective.

Failure Consequences

In the event that the Certificate is declared defective, it will need to be cancelled and re-lodged within the correct information in place within 10-working days. The onus is on the assessor themselves to do this, using the auditor's feedback and guidance to successfully complete the new lodgement.

Defective DECs shall always be cancelled by the Energy Assessor. Although lodging a new certificate make the latest version most accessible to download from the Non-Domestic EPC Register, it does not 'overwrite' or remove the incorrect report.

Cancellations shall be processed through iQ-Energy by selecting the report in question and pressing '*Cancel Report*'. Energy Assessors shall provide the RRN of the lodged replacement Certificate, as well as the reason for cancellation. The QA team will occasionally process cancellations following audit failures, but the expectation shall always be that the Energy Assessor shall cancel.

If you provide further evidence which would prove the DEC correct, you will not have to re-lodge the report, however it would still be classified as an audit failure.

Although this might seem harsh, we expect DECEAs to be professional in their operation, particularly in ensuring the collection of sufficient evidence to prove their DEC is an accurate reflection of the building, and provided in time for the audit to be completed. If this is not the case, we cannot turn a blind eye and obliged to use a failure and follow-on audit as a sanction.

From the date of failure, DECEAs will also have 10-working days within which to appeal against the audit decision.

Appeals

If you genuinely believe that a DEC has been incorrectly audited against the evidence supplied, OR Methodology or Conventions, you have the opportunity of lodging an appeal against the decision. Within the '*Evidence*' section for the report, you will see an **Appeal** button.

By giving your reasons for appeal, we can review the auditor's decision and make a judgement. Audit appeals are never considered by the Surveillance Auditor that completed the audit. A member of the QA team who was not involved in the audit will consider the appeal.

When considering an appeal, we will always look at the audit as a whole and review all evidence and data inputs. This moderates the work of the Surveillance Auditor, and ensures that the Energy Assessor is provided with the best possible feedback. This can mean that errors which were not initially noted by the Surveillance Auditor would contribute to a possible failure.

Follow-on Auditing

Where a randomly-selected or RBAS audit fails, the DECEA will be required to complete a single follow-on audit. This will either be based on the next triggering of the failed RBAS rule, or another randomly selected audit.

Follow-on audits will be selected from the next available lodgement data after date of failure.

An RBAS follow-on audit will remain pending for six months. If the rule has not been triggered after that time, it will be wiped as pending, and subsequent triggers assessed in the normal manner.

In order to ensure the timely completion of these audits, the upload deadline will be limited to five working days. These allows prompt upload and review to ensure that any systemic issues are noted and resolved promptly.

Where the follow-on audit subsequently fails, the Energy Assessor will be immediately suspended, pending the completion of appropriate corrective action. Energy Assessors should be aware of this condition when submitting a follow-on audit as this will prevent further lodgements until the matter has been resolved.

Where a DECEA fails three RBAS audits in succession for the same RBAS trigger, Quidos are able to impose the ultimate sanction of striking off the DECEA from the Central Register. This action would only be taken in the most extreme circumstance.

In addition, where three random audits in succession fail for the same technical reasons, the Scheme may also decide to strike-off the Energy Assessor.

Moving forward

In applying these Quality Assurance requirements, we are helping to ensure that quality is considered paramount in the Energy Performance industry. Energy Assessors should take pride in the quality of their work, and know that the higher the quality of Certificate they produce, the more they are contributing to helping cut the UK's carbon emissions and non-domestic energy usage. The better the standard of product that is produced, the more respectable and professional our industry will become.

We understand that this extra level of administration will add to the workload of an Energy Assessor, but we are confident that all will appreciate the benefits of a quality product.

Audit/EPC Help and Advice

The QA and Tech Support team is always available to aid EAs with any queries they might have about the auditing process.

The best way to contact the QA team is through the Quidos Support Log. This can be found by logging onto <http://support.quidos.co.uk>; alternatively, you can send an email which will log a support ticket to support@quidos.co.uk.

The telephone helpdesk service should only be used for URGENT telephone queries, such as an assessor on-site with a complex query which requires resolving.

As previously noted, whilst we appreciate that Energy Assessors have a right to contact the technical support team if they have a query, the over-use of these support channels will result in targeted auditing to confirm your confidence in completing DECs.

APPENDIX B1: DEC Evidence Collection Guidance

Required Evidence	Notes
DEC	<i>A copy of the lodged DEC/AR to be provided</i>
Software date file	<i>OR file used to calculate the DEC Must be provided whether site visited or not.</i>
Floor plan	<i>Plan view, elevations, section, building logbook etc which allowed DEC to be calculated, endorsed/confirmed 3rd-party drawings, identification of conditioned/unconditioned areas</i>
Site notes	<i>Written notes of anything that would support your decision-making, use of default values, amendments to recommendations, etc. ** MUST BE SIGNED AND DATED **</i>
Energy information from client	<i>Include signed and authenticated by client or suitably-qualified person (paper copies or spreadsheets), source of energy data, units used etc. Must be provided whether site visited or not.</i>
Occupancy hours	<i>To demonstrate extended occupancy hours; should be evidenced in a manner similar to site notes, e.g. photo of “opening hours”, and validated by client or suitably-qualified person; evidence of no changes if no visit required Must be provided whether site visited or not.</i>
Separable energy use	<i>E.g. photograph of activity associated with separable energy use, and documentation associated with energy use in this area; evidence of no changes if no visit required Must be provided whether site visited or not.</i>
Benchmarking evidence	<i>Provided through combination of photographs and site notes</i>
Supplementary calculations undertaken outside of DEC software	<i>Can form part of site notes</i>
Additional features	<i>When no site visit required: Written evidence from client or suitably-qualified person to confirm that no changes to the building since last visit. Proof that the EA visited the building previously: This shall include requesting information associated with the DEC where the EA claimed to have visited the building</i>
Photographic Evidence:	All images must be date-stamped within the image or retain photographic metadata for checking
All external elevations	<i>Front, rear, sides (if applicable)</i>
Advisory Report:	
Evidence associated with building and services	<i>Site schematic, site notes detailing key system. Photographs as necessary</i>
Any other evidence required to justify the suppression or inclusion of additional recommendations	
Evidence of site visits	<i>Signed and dated site notes. Photographs of building and services</i>

APPENDIX C: Audit Process for Air-Conditioning Inspection Reports

Once the evidence has been submitted, it will be audited by a member of our Surveillance Auditing team. The Surveillance Auditor will review the work and establish whether or not the report is acceptable, providing the Air-Conditioning Inspector with a feedback report upon the completion of the audit.

How the Air-Conditioning Inspection Report gets audited

The SA shall form a view as to whether the member has correctly classified the air conditioning system as Level 3 or Level 4 against the requirements of TM44.

The SA shall review the ACIR against the requirements of TM44 and to determine if Conventions have been followed in preparing the report.

The SA shall review the Comprehensibility of report – can a typical client be expected to understand recommendations.

The SA shall review the Evidence supplied by the member to determine if it meets the requirements in terms of content, quality and context.

The SA shall review the submitted evidence and content of the report to identify any of the following omissions:

Minor Omissions

Omission of ONE item of required additional evidence (excluding those items required in Major Omission A)

Additional evidence incomplete

Essential basic inspection information not compiled adequately either before, or on, completion of the inspection

Essential basic inspection information does not justify selection of components for sampling

The number of components inspected meets the minimum sampling number but a larger sample would have given a more representative sample

Naming convention is used in an unusual manner which is not clearly explained

On average, 1 to 2 queries on use of technical language per 10 pages of report

On average, less than 20 blank “Findings” or “Notes and Recommendations” per 10 pages of report

Significant Omissions

Failure to follow the guidance in the current version of TM44

Omission of TWO or more items of required additional evidence (excluding those items required in Major Omission A)

Executive Summary omits a required piece of information (e.g. building description; use and description of each AC sub-system)

The number of components inspected is below the number required to meet the minimum Sampling requirements

The naming convention is used incorrectly

The cooling assessment calculation is incorrect in a way which affects the conclusion drawn

The SFP calculation is incorrect in a way which affects the conclusion drawn

Major Omissions

Omission of an item of 'essential' information as detailed in TM44: 2012 (Table 2.1 for Level 3 inspections and Table 2.5 for Level 4 Inspections)

Essential advice and information is not provided (e.g. advice regarding R22 not given even though it is present)

Omits basic energy saving advice relating to the sub-systems inspected

Provides incorrect energy saving advice relating to the sub-systems inspected

Fails to advise on significant issues identified during inspection (e.g. refrigerant leaks, legionella risk, unsafe equipment, etc)

The Audit Result

Where the Surveillance Auditor notes fewer than 4 single minor omissions and/or fewer than 2 single significant omissions, the audit shall be marked as a pass. An audit pass is a great validation of your work as an Energy Assessor.

Where the report contains a single major omission, and/or greater than 2 single significant omissions, and/or greater than 4 single minor omissions, the audit shall be marked as a fail and the ACIR declared defective.

Failure Consequences

In the event that the ACIR is declared defective, it will need to be cancelled and re-lodged within the correct information in place within 10-working days. The onus is on the Air-Conditioning Inspector themselves to do this, using the auditor's feedback and guidance to successfully complete the new lodgement.

Defective ACIRs shall always be cancelled by the Air-Conditioning Inspector. Although lodging a new certificate make the latest version most accessible to download from the Non-Domestic EPC Register, it does not 'overwrite' or remove the incorrect report.

Cancellations shall be emailed to the QA team for completion. Air-Conditioning Inspectors shall provide the RRN of the lodged replacement ACIR, as well as the reason for cancellation. The QA team will occasionally process cancellations following audit failures, but the expectation shall always be that the ACI shall request cancellation.

If you provide further evidence which would prove the ACIR correct, you will not have to re-lodge the report, however it would still be classified as an audit failure.

Although this might seem harsh, we expect ACIs to be professional in their operation, particularly in ensuring the collection of sufficient evidence to prove their ACIR is an accurate reflection of the building, and provided in time for the audit to be completed. If this is not the case, we cannot turn a blind eye and obliged to use a failure and follow-on audit as a sanction.

From the date of failure, ACIs will also have 10-working days within which to appeal against the audit decision.

Appeals

If you genuinely believe that an ACIR has been incorrectly audited against the evidence supplied, TM44 Methodology or Conventions, you have the opportunity of lodging an appeal against the decision. Within the *'Evidence'* section for the report, you will see an **Appeal** button.

By giving your reasons for appeal, we can review the auditor's decision and make a judgement. Audit appeals are never considered by the Surveillance Auditor that completed the audit. A member of the QA team who was not involved in the audit will consider the appeal.

When considering an appeal, we will always look at the audit as a whole and review all evidence and data inputs. This moderates the work of the Surveillance Auditor, and ensures that the Air-Conditioning Inspector is provided with the best possible feedback. This can mean that errors which were not initially noted by the Surveillance Auditor would contribute to a possible failure.

Follow-on Auditing

Where a randomly-selected or RBAS audit fails, the ACI will be required to complete a single follow-on audit. This will either be based on the next triggering of the failed RBAS rule, or another randomly selected audit.

Follow-on audits will be selected from the next available lodgement data after date of failure.

An RBAS follow-on audit will remain pending for six months. If the rule has not been triggered after that time, it will be wiped as pending, and subsequent triggers assessed in the normal manner.

In order to ensure the timely completion of these audits, the upload deadline will be limited to five working days. These allows prompt upload and review to ensure that any systemic issues are noted and resolved promptly.

Where the follow-on audit subsequently fails, the Air-Conditioning Inspector will be immediately suspended, pending the completion of appropriate corrective action. Energy Assessors should be aware of this condition when submitting a follow-on audit as this will prevent further lodgements until the matter has been resolved.

Where an ACI fails three RBAS audits in succession for the same RBAS trigger, Quidos are able to impose the ultimate sanction of striking off the ACI from the Central Register. This action would only be taken in the most extreme circumstance.

In addition, where three random audits in succession fail for the same technical reasons, the Scheme may also decide to strike-off the Energy Assessor.

Moving forward

In applying these Quality Assurance requirements, we are helping to ensure that quality is considered paramount in the Energy Performance industry. Air-Conditioning Inspectors should take pride in the quality of their work, and know that the higher the quality of Reports and Certificates they produce, the more they are contributing to helping cut the UK's carbon emissions and non-domestic energy usage. The better the standard of product that is produced, the more respectable and professional our industry will become.

We understand that this extra level of administration will add to the workload of an Air-Conditioning Inspector, but we are confident that all will appreciate the benefits of a quality product.

Audit/ACR Help and Advice

The QA and Tech Support team is always available to aid ACIs with any queries they might have about the auditing process.

The best way to contact the QA team is through the Quidos Support Log. This can be found by logging onto <http://support.quidos.co.uk>; alternatively, you can send an email which will log a support ticket to support@quidos.co.uk.

The telephone helpdesk service should only be used for URGENT telephone queries, such as an assessor on-site with a complex query which requires resolving.

As previously noted, whilst we appreciate that Air-Conditioning Inspectors have a right to contact the technical support team if they have a query, the over-use of these support channels will result in targeted auditing to confirm your confidence in completing ACIRs.

APPENDIX C1: ACIR Minimum Evidencing Requirements

Required Evidence	Notes
<p>Report & Certificate</p>	<p><i>A copy of the lodged AC Report and Certificate MUST be provided</i></p> <p><i>Executive Summary section of the report should include the following information:</i></p> <p><u><i>Building Details</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · <i>Location of the building</i> · <i>Construction details of the building – roof, floors, walls, glazing, lighting info</i> · <i>Details of any separate heating systems within the building</i> · <i>Details about the occupants</i> <p><u><i>Cooling Equipment</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · <i>List of all cooling equipment present including:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o <i>Cooling plants – make/models, ages, refrigerant types, COPs, efficiencies</i> o <i>Air handling units – make/models, ages</i> o <i>Terminal units – make/models, type</i> o <i>System controls – types</i> · <i>Total kW output of cooling systems along with conditioned floor area</i> · <i>Brief assessment on condition of equipment</i> · <i>Whether systems are operational and functional</i> <p><u><i>Documentation</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · <i>What documentation was available on site relating to air-conditioning systems</i> · <i>F-Gas register availability (if applicable)</i> <p><u><i>Maintenance</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · <i>Availability of maintenance records</i> · <i>Evidence of maintenance being undertaken</i> <p><u><i>Sampling</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · <i>Description of what equipment was sampled during inspection</i> <p><u><i>Summary</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · <i>Overview of the air-conditioning systems present</i> · <i>Summary of the condition of systems</i> · <i>Comment on the main recommendations</i>

Names of any individuals who assisted the ACI in the preparation of the report and their roles	<i>Confirmation that all were covered by appropriate insurance, risk assessment, and the ACI can produce evidence that they meet the relevant competence requirements</i>
Dates and times of inspection	<i>ACI's site notes shall normally be sufficient for this, but where these notes are contradictory with other evidence submitted, the Scheme shall seek verification, including contacting the client to verify dates and times</i>
Signed and dated site notes	<p><i>Site notes shall be contemporaneous</i></p> <p><i>The EA shall provide within the site notes anything used in support of:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>o Confirming data input or decision making that cannot be substantiated by other sources of evidence</i> <i>o Reflective thought, hand calculations, or amendments to recommendations (identifying building age, construction, assessing primary heating system etc), which is not provided through other sources of evidence.</i> <i>o Format of the Site Notes shall be in line with that of the appropriate template</i>
Design floor plan, elevations, sections which allow the ACR to be assessed	<i>Aerial view from Google Maps, or similar, that clearly identifies the building and site layout, or a hyperlink to the satellite view of the building. Inspectors must follow the terms and conditions attached to the use of such material</i>
ACI-produced schematics (Level 4 only)	<i>Contemporaneous schematics demonstrating AC systems in buildings. Can be representative so long as they are produced to cover the full range of systems in use in the building</i>
Evidence of sub-system zoning and schedule of what is in each zone	<p><i>Evidence of sub-system zoning shall be by way of an annotated drawing of the building identifying the zones.</i></p> <p><i>In buildings with many zones, photographic evidence shall be provided to support zone classification, and system types</i></p>
<p>Photographic evidence</p> <p><i>- All external elevations: front, rear and side(s) where practical and appropriate</i></p> <p><i>- Photos supporting identification of existing system, component, or practice failures</i></p>	<p><i>Where the inspector believes that photographs are not practically achievable, but a particular element/energy using device is present, site notes shall explain why the photographic evidence is not available. The QAA shall form a view as to whether the claim is reasonable. In this regard, the QAA needs to record reasons why the absence of photographic evidence has been accepted.</i></p> <p><i>Photographs shall be dated within the image to avoid the use of stock images.</i></p>
Supplementary calculations undertaken by the ACI	
Additional evidence to justify the inclusion of recommendations	

APPENDIX D: Auditing Time Limits

From:	To:	Max. Time Limit	Exceptions	Sanctions
Scheme first requests audit evidence	Evidence uploaded to iQ-Energy	15 Working Days	5 working day extension for illness, hols, etc	Suspension if failure to upload ¹
Evidence received	Auditing completed	15 Working Days	Circumstances beyond our control	
Audit feedback (failure)	Lodgement of replacement EPC	10 Working Days	Appeals received within 10 working days	Suspension if not re-lodged
Audit feedback (failure)	Appeal deadline	10 Working Days	We request all audit appeals to be submitted within 10 working days from the date of feedback receipt	
Follow on (random) request²	Evidence uploaded to iQ-Energy	5 Working Days	5 working day extension for illness, hols, etc	Suspension if failure to upload ⁴
Follow on (RBAS) request³	Evidence uploaded to iQ-Energy	5 Working Days	5 working day extension for illness, hols, etc	Suspension if failure to upload ⁴
Follow-on audit feedback (failure)	Where a follow-on audit fails, the Energy Assessor shall be suspended immediately pending the completion of remedial action. Any appeals for follow-on audits are fast-tracked.			

¹ Where a surveillance audit is uploaded after the specified timescale without extension or a 'reasonable or compelling' reason for late upload, the surveillance audit will be reviewed as normal for errors, but will fail automatically for insufficient evidence.

² Follow-on audits from random failures will be selected from the next month's audit selections.

³ Follow-on RBAS audits are called on the next instance of the rule being triggered by the assessor.

⁴ Follow-on audits are requested for upload within 5 working days in order to quickly follow up on a previous auditing failure.

APPENDIX D: Sanctioning Process

