

CIBSE CERTIFICATION LTD ANNUAL REPORT 2017



Foreword

During 2017 CIBSE Certification continued to certify the competence of energy professionals with over 750 certified energy assessors for the purposes of the Energy Performance of Buildings Regulations including 60 in Scotland and over 900 Low Carbon Consultants. At the midpoint of the ESOS 4 year cycle there were over 200 ESOS Lead Assessors on the register at the end of 2017.

In 2017 CIBSE Certification continuously worked to raise the profile of the scheme to reinforce the reputation of Low Carbon Consultants (LCCs) and Low Carbon Energy Assessors (LCEAs) for high quality, expert services.

For CIBSE Certification, the LCC Register is an important mechanism for raising competence across the industry, and in 2015 UKAS accreditation to certify Energy Management Systems (ISO 50001) meant that CIBSE Certification were also be able to support companies operating Energy Management Systems, by providing third party verification that their systems are being operated in conformity with the Standard. In 2017 CIBSE Certification extended this capability by completing the application process to certify Quality Management Systems in conformity with ISO 9001. A decision is due from UKAS in early 2018. CIBSE Certification have applied to add ISO 14001 to their portfolio next and have already issued their first (non-accredited) certificate as part of this process.

The Background

The LCEA scheme grew from the activities associated with the development of the Low Carbon Consultants (LCC) Register. The LCC register was started in 2006 with the aid of a Carbon Trust grant. Its objective was to produce a cadre of individuals with expertise in carbon management both in the design and operation of buildings. It also offered registration to those with expertise in building simulation. In January 2008, with the approval of CIBSE Certification's application to be a certification body for energy assessors, the existing low carbon expertise of this group, and new applicants, were used to create a new register – Low Carbon Energy Assessors. In 2010 a new register was opened to showcase the expertise of consultants able to implement Energy Management Systems in accordance with the international standard. The accreditation of CIBSE Certification to certify Energy Management Systems has raised the profile of this register. Using CIBSE Certification, individuals can be certified competent and where appropriate registered under the following categories:

- LCC Design
- LCC Design (Scotland)
- LCC Operation
- LCC Simulation
- LCC Energy Management Systems (from February 2010)
- LCEA EPC (non-domestic only)
- LCEA EPC (Scotland) (non-domestic only)
- LCEA DEC
- Air Conditioning Inspector
- Green Deal Advisor
- ESOS Lead Assessor
- Heat Networks Consultant
- Section 63 Adviser (Scotland)

Review of 2017

CIBSE Certification has played an active role in the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) convention groups and Cross Scheme Moderation meetings resulting in some helpful refinements to the Scheme Operating Requirements. At the instigation of the Property and Energy Professional Association, an organisation representing the interests of all of the MHCLG approved energy certification schemes, CIBSE Certification have been working the other schemes to develop new Scheme Operating Requirements throughout 2017. This is building on the risk based approach to Energy Certificate auditing was successfully trialled for domestic EPCs in 2016. CIBSE Certification expect to take a leading role in the development of the non-domestic rules in 2018.

The CIBSE Low Carbon Energy Assessors continue to approach 20% of DEC's being lodged and almost all of the Level 5 EPCs. The number of EPCs lodged, both Level 4 and Level 5 increased in the year. ESOS Lead assessor numbers were maintained at around two hundred for most of the year.

Make-up of the Register

The majority of LCEAs were previously LCCs and many are also CIBSE members. CIBSE Certification certifies individuals under the Approval of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) route where experience as well as knowledge and understanding is assessed, typically including design and specification of energy using systems in buildings. They generally have the background and experience which would make it unnecessary to take a further vocational qualification in energy assessment to produce Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs), Display Energy Certificates (DECs) or Air Conditioning Inspections. CIBSE Certification also welcomes applications from individuals holding appropriate vocational qualifications.

The introduction of the ESOS Lead Assessors and the subsequent re-vitalising of the LCC (EnMS) Register has continued the broadening of the LCC register with many professionals from related fields being attracted to the CIBSE Certification as the place to go for energy professionals.

Lodgements

Lodgement evidence suggests that most CIBSE Low Carbon Energy Assessors do not expect to carry out energy assessments full time, but rather offer assessments as part of a portfolio of services, or in order to complete other work already being undertaken.

A report on lodgements and assessor numbers is contained in the confidential annex to this report.

Application process

Those who apply for energy assessor certification through CIBSE Certification Ltd take the following route:

1. Supply a CV and personal statement for pre-screening (Pre-APEL) using the online system
2. If successful at pre-screening, the applicant will:
 - 2.1. Complete the online APEL.
 - 2.2. Arrange any top-up training necessary to help them prepare to demonstrate their knowledge of the regulations and aspects of the NOS and with CIBSE's Low Carbon requirements (pass an exam).
 - 2.3. Arrange assessment in the use of their chosen software if required.
 - 2.4. Submit certificates from assessments.
 - 2.5. Submit test DEC or test EPCs.
 - 2.6. Online APEL forms are then reviewed by an independent APEL assessor to determine compliance with APEL requirements.
 - 2.7. Test DEC or EPC certificates reviewed by an independent assessor to determine acceptability.
3. If all elements are to the required standard and meet the scheme requirements, the applicant will be certified.

For the air conditioning strand applicants take the following route:

1. Candidate supplies a CV and personal statement for pre-screening using the online Pre-APEL system
2. If successful at pre-screening, the applicant will:
 - 2.1. Complete the online APEL.
 - 2.2. Arrange top-up training if necessary.
 - 2.3. Online APEL forms reviewed by an independent APEL assessor.
3. If all aspects are satisfactory the applicant is provisionally approved.
4. The applicant submits three example air conditioning reports which will be assessed to see if they are deemed satisfactory.
5. If all elements are to the required standard and meet the scheme requirements, the applicant will be certified.

Great care is taken to ensure that only those with genuine competence and experience in the industry are admitted to the CIBSE Certification scheme. CIBSE Low Carbon Energy Assessors are recognised by clients as offering a high degree of experience and competence in providing solutions which will work in practice. Therefore each application is thoroughly reviewed by independent APEL assessors selected for their knowledge and experience, who are familiar with the requirements of the APEL regime and the National Occupational Standards.

Applicants for EPC and DEC assessors holding a relevant vocational qualification can be registered with CIBSE Certification, subject to satisfying the requirements to join the appropriate LCC register as well.

Quality Assurance – Audit Procedure and Methodology

CIBSE Certification provides a QA system that aims to assure clients that they will receive a service which is compliant with the Scheme Operating Requirements set by MHCLG, and one which additionally is truly first class in terms of engineering competence and thus will help clients achieve real reductions in their energy costs. In line with the requirements of the latest Scheme Operating Requirements (SORs) from MHCLG, the CIBSE QA scheme is now mainly a desktop process which includes the production of shadow certificates to MHCLG criteria in order to provide a 'truth' comparator against which the certificate is judged. The exception to this is the Level 5 strand where assessors are visited at their place of work to review the QA case.

Each month, a sample of LCEAs is identified for auditing. In line with the requirements set out by MHCLG, a minimum of two per cent of certificates lodged are audited and each active assessor will be audited at least once in each six month period.

The objective of the Quality Assurance system is to provide a fair, consistent and robust audit procedure and methodology. Documents describing the audit procedure and methodology have been entered and recorded into CIBSE Certification management and document systems setting down the audit methodology, audit procedures, and the MHCLG requirements. The documents used by Low Carbon Energy Assessors are available via the CIBSE Energy Centre website.

Internally, the lodgement system performs electronic analysis providing additional support to the quality assurance process, checking the consistency of data input (assessor and building details) revealing any errors before a lodgement is attempted.

Externally, the audit process is broken down into the key aspects of management systems and energy certificate production. A set of pre-audit documents informing the LCEAs of requirements is issued in advance of any audit. This set of documents consists of an audit itinerary, an LCEA questionnaire and checklist and feedback questionnaire to facilitate improvements to the service offered.

Code of Conduct: EAs are reminded of the importance of maintaining the standards of their profession. The CIBSE Certification Code of Conduct was last revised in 2016 to incorporate new registers that were being introduced. They should make all in-house teams aware of the Code of Conduct and have copies readily available. The Code of Conduct should also be communicated to any third parties commissioned by the LCEA to contribute to the production of energy certificates.

Ethics: LCEAs are also alerted to the need for the production of energy certificates in a truthful, honest and accurate fashion. It is recognised that LCEAs will sometimes be under pressure from clients to adopt a particular approach to their assessment and they are encouraged to use the CIBSE Certification Code of Conduct which is available on the CIBSE Certification website and can be used by LCEAs to present to clients in order to endorse their personal ethics.

Having the knowledge that the LCEA has been through a thorough and rigorous assessment process from CIBSE Certification gives confidence that they are getting a competent and professional service. The Certification of individuals for the LCC register, Design and Operation, and for EPC and DEC production is also accredited by UKAS to BS EN ISO 17024 Certification of Persons. This also includes the certification of Green Deal Advisors.

CIBSE Certification Support - Email Management System

Customer response – E-mail enquiries / software applications

CIBSE Certification’s email management system adds efficiency to the way it manages and responds to emails from assessors. All incoming messages are received by a central email server where they are assigned and routed to the appropriate person or department using rules and conditions that reflect the workflow and processes. By this means CIBSE Certification aims to:

- improve response time;
- improve response quality by the use of templates, pre-set answers and seamless access to articles in our FAQ/Knowledgebase, which will also ensure that responses are accurate and consistent; and
- use tracking tools to prevent messages from getting lost (and keep customers from getting frustrated while waiting for replies).

Designed and encoded for busy customer service organisations, CIBSE Certification’s ticketing system routes, tracks and delivers customer correspondence quickly and efficiently.

Customer Communication Performance 2017

A total of 15848 tickets were dealt with in 2017. A sample of cases relating to Energy Performance of Buildings are illustrated below and show that the aim of responding to enquiries within 24 hours is being achieved.

<i>Description</i>	<i>Example folders</i>	<i>Average response time</i>
Support Requests	Lodgement Support 592 tickets	6 hours
	EPC Support 576 tickets	13 hours
	Case cancellation 200 tickets	5 hours
	Software support 170 tickets	19 hours
	Code of Conduct 40 tickets	5 hours
	Air Conditioning Reports 46 tickets	5 hours

Finance

The financial report can be found within the confidential annex.

In its tenth year of operation the scheme continues to generate a surplus. However, there is some uncertainty about future performance and this relates to three major areas:

- the unpredictable economic environment which may reduce absolute numbers of EPCs required
- continuing low levels of compliance with the regulations
- competition to provide lowest cost building energy certificates has resulted in customer expectations of low cost and low value, which is inconsistent with the quality approach of CIBSE Certification certified LCEAs.

The relatively low level of compliance, particularly in respect of commercial EPCs and air conditioning reports, has become a matter of concern. It affected the ability of the Energy Performance in Buildings Regulations to contribute to the UK achieving its carbon targets. In 2017 CIBSE Certification has worked closely with the cross-industry group, the Property and Energy Professional Association to raise awareness of non-compliance issues with all relevant stakeholders. The Minimum Energy Performance Standards being introduced for the private rented sector does appear to have changed this with EPC lodgements having increased for 2 years in succession.

CIBSE Certification views the LCC and LCEA as important in raising competence across the industry and for providing a much needed cadre of competent persons who can play an active role in reducing the carbon emissions of the UK. Therefore it is committed to continue to invest in the LCC and LCEA scheme and indeed to extend its influence as demonstrated with the development of the ESOS Lead Assessor Register and the certification of Energy Management Systems.

Looking forward

CIBSE Certification will continue to work to maintain and enhance the position of the scheme, raising the profile of CIBSE LCCs and LCEAs and to fully service their existing needs with ongoing support and development opportunities.

At the same time, CIBSE Certification is committed to building on the quality of its existing scheme and operations and introducing new areas of business. ISO50001 was introduced in 2015, and ISO 9001 accreditation is expected shortly, to be followed by ISO14001 and ISO18001. This will enable us to meet client requirements where they are seeking an integrated management system approach. We will also be looking to introduce new competency schemes in the coming years.

CIBSE Certification in 2017

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