

Technical Bulletin

Issue: March 2021



Welcome to the ecmk Quarterly Technical Bulletin

In this issue we cover:

- Heating Systems - Secondary
- 2 Main Heating Systems
- CPSU – Gas & Electric
- Acceptable Evidence inc. Associated Conventions
- ecmk Surgery
- Excessive use of Help Desk
- PAS Retrofit – to lodge or not to lodge
- Retrofit Coordinators
- New register address look-up
- Road map out of lockdown

Please do contact us if you would like any other subjects to be covered in future bulletins.

Many thanks and we hope you enjoy the bulletin.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S Farrow", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Stephen Farrow
Scheme Manager

Heating systems secondary room heaters and types

A common issue we come across within audit reviews is the incorrect identification between flush fitting live fuel effect gas fires and decorative fuel effect gas fires. This can be an easy but costly mistake to make as some of the fires do look very similar but have quite a large difference in efficiency. This can often result in quite a large SAP point difference, and in some cases, could lead to an audit failure.

Flush fitting live fuel effect gas fires are brought as complete units and sit within a fireplace opening which effectively seals the fireplace and are assumed to be 40% efficient. They have an open flue that is less than 200mm in diameter and is not included in the open fireplace count. Some of the more modern fuel effect fires have pebbles in the grate instead of imitation coals.



Decorative fuel effect gas fires are the least efficient type of gas fire at 20% efficient. The identification of this fire is the chimney - it will be fully open with a diameter more than 200mm. Therefore, the chimney is included in the open fireplace count. The unit itself sits on the grate (look for evidence of a gas pipe) and the heat is allowed to escape up the chimney.



Pre-1980 open-fronted (open flue)

The main difference between a pre and post 1980 gas fire is the absence of a heat exchanger above the ceramic tiles, though a grill may still be visible across the top of the casing.

Pre 1980 fires are very rare.



Post 1980 open-fronted (open flue)

Also referred to as “modern open” these fires are fitted with a heat exchanger radiating heat from the grill at the top of the casing.

Modern open fires can also look very similar to the closed fronted fan flue fire.



Closed-fronted (fan flue)

The fire in appearance is very similar to a glass fronted modern open, the main difference being, the fire is not open to a chimney.

The fire works in the same way as an inset fuel effect fan assisted fire, a similar flue will be visible on an outside wall.

Fan flues are normally used if a fire is located on an internal wall with no chimney, the fan extracts the fumes along ducting to an external wall.



Fire or wall heater (balanced flue)

The Baxi Brazilia being the most common, usually brown in colour, these wall heaters are normally found in properties with partial heating.

The balanced flue on the exterior of the property is very similar in looks to a fan flue from a boiler.



Flueless fires are usually fitted if no suitable outside wall or chimney/flue is available. Catalytic converters turn the carbon monoxide into carbon dioxide.

Due to ventilation requirement RdSAP assumes an efficiency of 90% for these fires.



Please remember all portable room heaters are disregarded even if it is the only form of heating present.



2 Main Heating Systems

There have been more and more encounters of properties with substandard heating systems which are failing audits. Room heaters should be recorded as main heating only where no boiler is present. Where there is no boiler present in the property and 2 types of room heaters are present then convention 4.09 should be followed and mentioned or referred to within site notes.

Convention 4.09

RdSAP allows for 2 main heating systems. Main system 1 & 2 cannot be room heaters except in the case of the dwellings heating consisting solely of room heaters.

When there are 2 main systems:

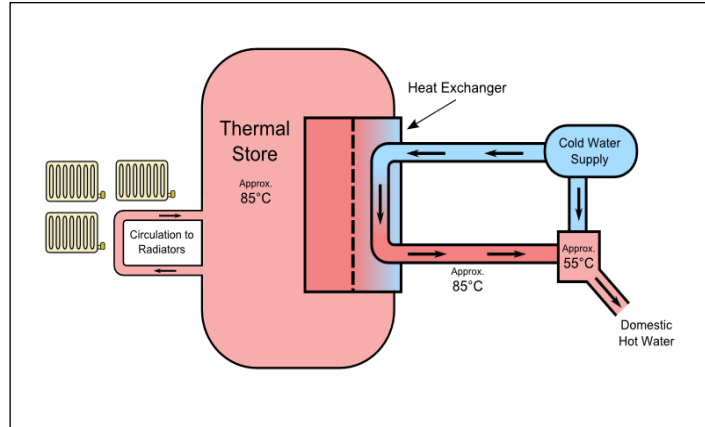
A – System 1 always heats the living area

B – When both systems heat the living area, main system 1 is the one that heats the most habitable rooms

C – When both systems heat the same number of habitable rooms, main system 1 is the system that provided water heating

D – When neither or both main heating systems heat water, main system 1 is the system cheapest to run (fuel cost from SAP table 12 divided by the efficiency of heating system)

CPSU - gas and electric



A storage boiler sometimes called a combined primary storage unit (CPSU) has the central heating boiler and hot water cylinder combined in one big box, this provides large amounts of hot water whenever required by the homeowner. It is similar to a combination boiler in that all the heating components are inside the boiler casing and there is no requirement for cold water storage tanks in the loft. However they do address the disadvantages of a combination boiler in that they can cope with much higher demands, being able to run a bath & and a shower at the same time.

Direct

This boiler is the most similar to a gas Combi boiler i.e. it uses a heating element to heat water on demand.

Storage

A storage electric boiler includes a hot water tank either within the unit or separately. This enables you to heat water overnight, when energy costs are lower, and store it for use the next day.

Electric CPSU

Combined Primary Storage Unit, or CPSU, stores lots of hot water within the boiler so it can meet demand much quicker and at higher pressure. However, they tend to be quite large

Dry Core Storage

Dry core boilers are similar to storage heaters as they use cheaper night time tariffs to heat bricks overnight, but the heat is then released into water to be used in central heating and hot water, rather than being released directly into the home.

Convention 4.15

Electric CPSU an electric CPSU uses 10 hour or 18 hour tariff. If on 7 hour tariff treat as water storage boiler, if on single tariff record as direct acting electric boiler.

Acceptable Evidence – homeowner enquiries is not acceptable

It has been noted in recent audits that EAs are recording certain factors including insulation and especially glazing (window age data pre and post 2002) with no evidence of such data and a site note mentioning the data was collected by the “enquiries of the owner”.

This type of evidence has never been acceptable evidence within the SORs and will not be accepted by ecmk. Please see conventions regarding acceptable evidence by schemes.

Acceptable evidence

convention 9.02 – Acceptable documentary evidence

official letters from RSL (Registered Social Landlords), certificates, warranties, guarantees, relating to the property being assessed

NB. Evidence of intent to install does not qualify as acceptable documentary evidence

convention 3.03b – Unknown insulation

when there is conflicting evidence (inspection and/or documentary) of added insulation whose presence cannot be ascertained conclusively

convention 3.13 – Age of room in roof

planning applications – dated photographs of property concerned with date stamp

convention 3.12a – Glazing age

manufacturing date on the frame or the spacer bar – presence of thermal spacer bar – FENSA, CERTASS, Building Control certificates or manufacture guarantee – property build date if after 2002

ecmk online Surgery for new starters & learners still to qualify

ecmk are proud to offer a DEA Surgery to all new starters and those still qualifying to be a DEA. The link for the zoom session can be found on the Quals Direct system Forum page and new starters will be able to use the link from the immediate previous course, please note older course links will not work.

This will be an open drop in session to aid all new starters or those still completing the course, in getting through to the end of the course and becoming fully qualified and also helping with the issues and differing scenarios facing inexperienced energy assessors.

There will not be any CPD assigned to this session so none can be claimed. The session will be open to discuss any matters of concern, issues with software or conventions etc and any scenarios faced by newly qualified assessors.

All ecmk members are also entitled to 4 hours of FREE CPD each year.

Your 4 hours of FREE CPD can be claimed at any time. Simply email into training@ecmk.co.uk and advise us of your preferred CPD session including the date and time. This information can be found on the ecmk website in the "Training" section.

Once we receive your request you will be sent a confirmation email confirming your place on the CPD session with the link to the CPD session to follow closer to the event.

Newly qualified energy assessors will be required to use 1 hour of the 4 free hours allocated for an Audit CPD session. This will better prepare newly qualified assessors for audit procedures and regimes whilst a member of ecmk. This will also reduce many audit requests which then have no evidence attached within the allocated time period as per Scheme Operating Requirements, leading to suspension of the EAs account.

We are constantly striving to update and perfect our training and CPD events and we could not progress without feedback from our members, be it good or bad. So please help us to ensure a quality service to all of our members by giving feedback on our CPD and Training sessions.

For feedback forms for CPD and training sessions delivered by ecmk – please click [here](#)

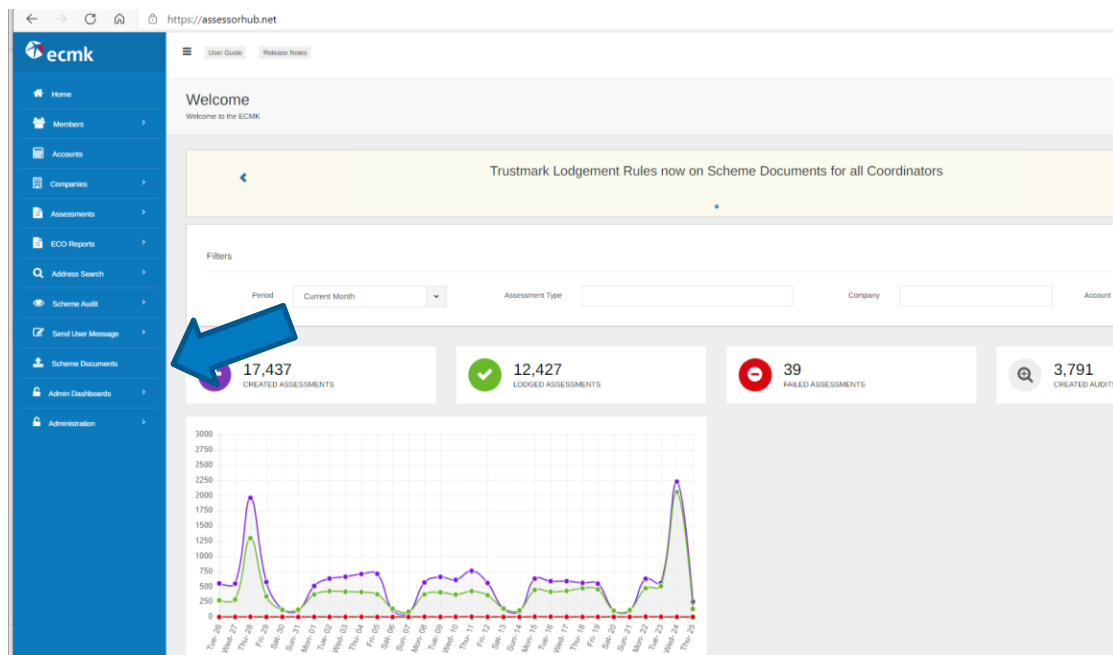
Excessive use of help desk

Before calling the helpdesk please refer to the scheme documents and the tools provided by ecmk. Many member calls can be rectified by using and reading the documents provided thus freeing up vital time on the helpdesk for other more complicated member queries. Members are reminded that each unanswered call to the helpdesk generates a "ticket" which will be placed in a queue on our systems and answered as soon as possible by an ecmk consultant.

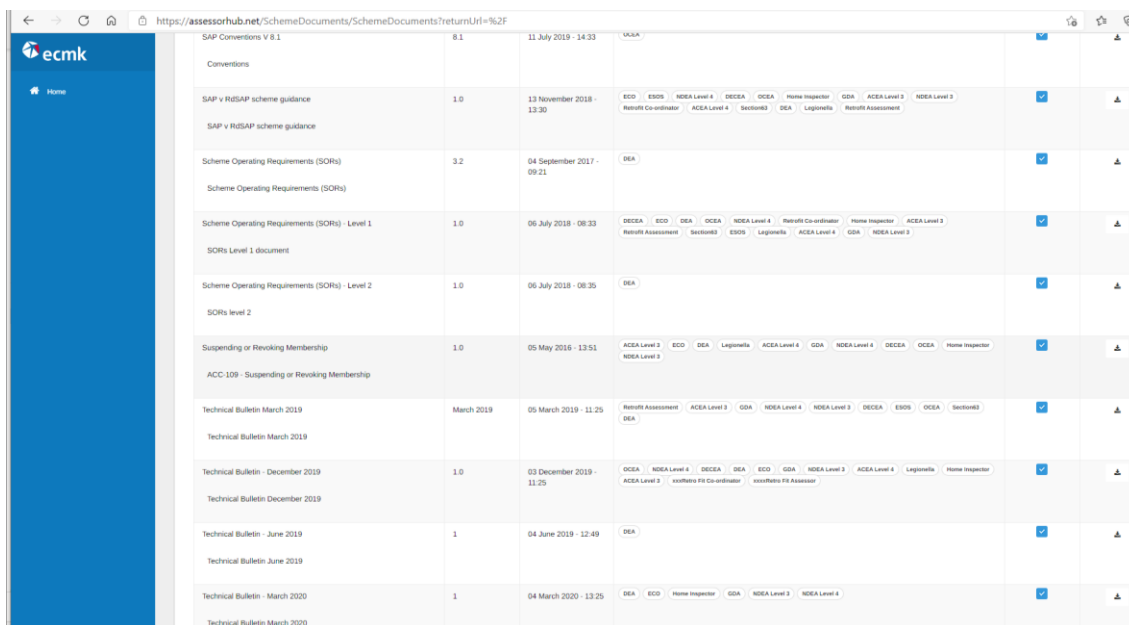


Members who constantly call back after the initial unanswered call will automatically generate more tickets giving a false indication of unanswered queries, for example 10 calls from the same member will generate 10 tickets but the EA or member may only have a single issue or query.

We have lots of calls to the helpdesk on a daily basis and we pride ourselves in delivering an excellent service, answering a high percentage of calls usually within a single ring. However, some queries could be answered by the EA using the online tools provided.



The Scheme Operating Requirements will give all information regarding subjects such as audit regimes and procedures, including evidence requirements for audit.



Document Title	Version	Effective Date	Accessed By	Download
SAP Conventions V 8.1	8.1	11 July 2019 - 14:33	VKAA	
Conventions				
SAP v RdSAP scheme guidance	1.0	13 November 2018 - 13:30	ECO, ESDS, NDEA Level 4, DECEA, OCEA, Home Inspector, GDA, ACEA Level 3, NDEA Level 3, Retrofit Co-ordinator, ACEA Level 4, Section 63, DEA, Legionele, Retrofit Assessment	
SAP v RdSAP scheme guidance				
Scheme Operating Requirements (SORs)	3.2	04 September 2017 - 09:21	DEA	
Scheme Operating Requirements (SORs)				
Scheme Operating Requirements (SORs) - Level 1	1.0	06 July 2018 - 08:33	DECEA, ECO, DEA, OCEA, NDEA Level 4, Retrofit Co-ordinator, Home Inspector, ACEA Level 3, Retrofit Assessment, Section 63, ESDS, Legionele, ACEA Level 4, GDA, NDEA Level 3	
Scheme Operating Requirements (SORs) - Level 1				
Scheme Operating Requirements (SORs) - Level 2	1.0	06 July 2018 - 08:35	DEA	
Scheme Operating Requirements (SORs) - Level 2				
Suspending or Revoking Membership	1.0	05 May 2016 - 13:51	ACEA Level 3, NDEA Level 3, ECO, DEA, Legionele, ACEA Level 4, GDA, NDEA Level 4, DECEA, OCEA, Home Inspector	
ACC 109 - Suspending or Revoking Membership				
Technical Bulletin March 2019	March 2019	05 March 2019 - 11:25	Retrofit Assessment, ACEA Level 3, GDA, NDEA Level 4, NDEA Level 3, DECEA, ESDS, OCEA, Section 63, DEA	
Technical Bulletin March 2019				
Technical Bulletin - December 2019	1.0	03 December 2019 - 11:25	OCEA, NDEA Level 4, DECEA, DEA, ECO, GDA, NDEA Level 3, ACEA Level 4, Legionele, Home Inspector, ACEA Level 3, Retrofit Co-ordinator, Retrofit Assessment	
Technical Bulletin December 2019				
Technical Bulletin - June 2019	1	04 June 2019 - 12:49	DEA	
Technical Bulletin June 2019				
Technical Bulletin - March 2020	1	04 March 2020 - 13:25	DEA, ECO, Home Inspector, GDA, NDEA Level 3, NDEA Level 4	
Technical Bulletin March 2020				

The current version of the RdSAP Conventions can be located on the Scheme Documents Tab within Assessor Hubs online platform. Conventions V11.1 can also be found on the BRE website and goes through certain scenarios which may be encountered by an EA ie,

If a property has storage heaters as the main heating system, these can only be recorded as storage heaters if there is a dual electric meter in place, if only a single rate meter is present then these heaters must be recorded as standard electric panel heaters. Convention 4.02

4.01b	Design flow temperature for condensing boilers and heat-pumps	The design flow temperature for condensing boilers and heatpumps should be recorded as unknown unless there is a documentary evidence that the system has been designed and commissioned as a low temperature one	Added Dec 2017 amended 01 Sep 2019*
4.02	Storage heaters on single tariff electricity.	If storage heaters are present as main heating but there is only a single rate meter – enter as panel heaters and include Addendum 6.	Sept 2009 amended Mar 2010 amended April 2015 amended 31 Dec 2017*

PAS Retrofit – to lodge or not to lodge (That is the EPC Question)

Retrofit assessments are required to be submitted to Core Logic using the PAS Software. Retrofit Assessors are reminded that the RdSAP EPC will be audited within the standard audit practices, if lodged onto the central register as part of the Retrofit assessment. The Green Home Energy Grant Funding Mechanism does not require a lodged EPC within the Retrofit assessment as it utilises the energy data collected and only requires the EPC to recommend the specific measures which are being implemented, so the Retrofit software only uses the RdSAP recommendations engine which can be highly manipulated to make certain recommendations.

An example of this is recording a gas meter in a property with inadequate electric heating only, which in fact does not have a gas meter in place, nor any gas appliances within the property. The gas meter in this case is recorded as being present in order to manipulate the RdSAP recommendations engine to recommend a full gas central heating system install, with a change of fuel to gas. As a Retrofit assessment this is fine and acceptable if not lodged, but if lodged it will be audited and will ultimately fail the audit for no evidence of a gas meter and an incorrect recommendation for a gas central heating system when no gas is present.



Convention 8.02 Mains Gas Available

Only if a gas meter or a gas burning appliance (eg gas cooker) is within the property. A closed off gas pipe does not count. Where a boiler is present attached to a heating system (not in box), and the mains gas meter has been removed for security reasons, enter as gas boiler as main form of heating and indicate that mains gas is present

If lodging the RdSAP EPC then please ensure the data within the report is correct and has not been manipulated to make incorrect recommendations.

Many funding mechanisms require a lodged EPC, so dependent on the funding mechanism being used, the Retrofit assessor should be able to ascertain whether to manipulate the report or not, but please be aware any reports lodged onto the central register will be open to the standard RdSAP audit procedures and conventions.

Retrofit Coordinators

Trustmark have developed a document to assist RFCs assistance on to what documentation is required for upload to the Data Warehouse.

The PAS Hub software has the required 'Evidence Category' sections, so please do attached the correct documents to the correct category.

The document can be found [here](#).

In summary we expect the following documents;

Intended Outcomes Document; please upload the

- PAS PIO document

Risk Assessment; please upload the

- Included within the PAS Assessment report (see below)

Assessment report; please upload

- RdSAP site notes (the most recent version) (Path B&C only)
- PAS Assessment report (the most recent version)

Retrofit Design; please upload your

- design documents,
- heat demand calculator (if applicable),
- thermal bridging details,
- manufacturers details of the product, any other information that supports the reasoning for using that material
- Ventilation upgrades and the output from the ventilation calculator
- Qualifications of any required third parties in the design process and do they meet the Risk Path requirements?

Medium Term Plan; please upload your

- Copies of your Medium Terms plans (there should be a minimum of three different versions) (Path B&C only)

Improvement Option Evaluation Plan

- Improvement Option Evaluation Plan (Path B&C only)

Compliance to the PAS 2030

- Compliance document (from Installer)

Compliance to the PAS 2035

- Compliance document (from Coordinator)

Handover documents; please upload

- Guarantees
- Certificates
- Manuals
- Any correspondence of information to and from the customer

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Details and/or the result from the customer feedback forms

We must remind our coordinators, that there must be sufficient evidence for a third party to replicate your assessment plans and projects to ensure they meet the PAS2035 compliance, and all the correct documents are labelled in the correct category's and lodged at the Data Warehouse.

We also recommend you use the Core Logic documents provided as guidance or use them to meet the required compliance and PAS 2035.

Also please remember that Trustmark also audit and monitor your reports.

If you do have any questions or queries, then please do contact the team.

New register and address look up service

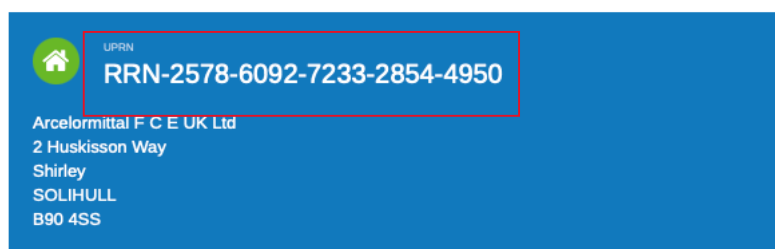
With the introduction of the MHCLG register for EPCs in September we are still experiencing members that are having issues.

We advise members to read and understand the 'New EPC Register Guidelines' document found on Assessor Hub>Scheme Documents.

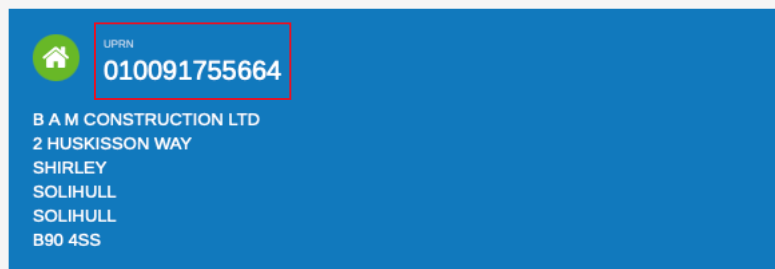
There is also a link to a video on how to enter and check the address [here](#).

Below is an example of what is correct and incorrect:

Arcelormittal F C E UK Ltd, 2 Huskisson Way, Shirley, SOLIHULL, B90 4SS



B A M CONSTRUCTION LTD, 2 HUSKISSON WAY, SHIRLEY, SOLIHULL, B90 4SS



DO NOT USE the RRN as the address number.

You must use the UPRN (Unique Property Reference Number).

Finally, also check if you are cloning an old report as these address details are also copied over and may require to be re-validated.

Roadmap out of lockdown for Energy Assessors

Guidance

For Government guidance on the Spring 2021 COVID-19 Response – [click here](#)

Coronavirus (COVID-19): Energy Performance Certificates

Advice on meeting the regulatory requirement to secure a valid Energy Performance Certificate on marketing a property during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

Applies to: Wales and England

Published 2 April 2020

Last updated 8 January 2021

For MHCLG guidance on Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) requirements when selling or letting a property – [click here](#)

For MHCLG guidance on EPCs and the government's advice on the national lockdown in England – [click here](#)

For Further MHCLG guidance – [click here](#)

Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) requirements when selling or letting a property

A valid Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) is a legal requirement when a property is sold, let or constructed and must be completed by an accredited assessor unless an exemption can be applied.

Where a building is to be let or sold, the Energy Performance of Buildings (EPB) Regulations require that all reasonable efforts must be made to obtain a valid EPC for the building before the end of a period of 7 days starting with the day on which the building was first put on the market.

If all reasonable efforts have been made to obtain a valid EPC but this has not been possible, a further 21 days are allowed as a grace period. After this period, enforcement action can be taken by enforcement authorities in line with the EPB Regulations.

EPCs and the government's advice on the national lockdown in England

This guidance is applicable in England. EPC assessments in Wales, Northern Ireland or Scotland may be subject to different advice which is available from the relevant Devolved Administration's website.

The legal requirement to obtain an EPC before selling or letting a property remains in place.

Energy assessments can continue in both domestic and non-domestics properties and should only be conducted in accordance with:

- **New guidance published on 4 January 2021** - this guidance explains what you can and cannot do during the national lockdown. Please see, in particular, the advice around going to work where the work cannot be done at home and the workplace is open; and staying safe when you leave home and whilst at work. For more information – [click here](#).

- **government advice on working safely during coronavirus (COVID-19)** - this advice supports employers, employees and the self-employed understand how to work safely during the coronavirus pandemic. For more information – [click here](#)
Particular attention should be paid to the specific guidance in relation to work carried out in people's homes. To read more - [click here](#)
- **government advice on home moving during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak** - this advice supports those who wish to move home, to conduct the key activities around moving home safely. For more information – [click here](#).

Protecting everyone

Where it is possible to conduct an assessment safely, assessors should communicate with households prior to any visit to discuss how the work will be carried out to minimise risk for all parties.

In accordance with NHS advice, assessment visits should not take place in properties where anyone is symptomatic or self-isolating. For more advice from the NHS – [click here](#).

Landlords should consult tenants on whether it is appropriate for an assessment to be conducted, based on the tenant's personal situation.

Landlords should also seek further information on coronavirus (COVID-19) and the enforcement of standards in rented properties.

If you are unable to undertake an assessment for which you have been booked, you should seek to reschedule your appointment when it is safe to do so.

COVID-19 and renting: guidance for landlords, tenants and local authorities

Non-statutory guidance for landlords, tenants and local authorities in the private and social rented sectors in the context of Coronavirus (COVID-19).

Applies to: England

Published 28 March 2020

Last updated 19 February 2021

To see all updates – [click here](#)

For Guidance for landlords and tenants – [click here](#)

For Technical guidance on eviction notices – [click here](#)

For Guidance for local authorities – [click here](#)

This guidance provides advice to landlords and tenants on the provisions in the Coronavirus Act 2020, and further advice for landlords, tenants and local authorities more broadly about their rights and responsibilities during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Related content

- For Government advice on finding out what support you can get if you're affected by coronavirus – [click here](#)
- For Government advice on home moving during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak – [click here](#)
- For Government advice on Rogue landlord enforcement: guidance for local authorities – [click here](#)
- For Government advice on Houses in multiple occupation and residential property licensing reform: guidance for local housing authorities – [click here](#)

Retrofit Assessor Training

Every building that undergoes energy retrofit work will first need to be assessed by a trained and certified Retrofit Assessor.

ecmk have developed formal training and certification to offer energy assessors. ecmk's PAS2035 Retrofit Assessor Scheme delivers training and CPD sessions geared around the Retrofit Assessor Role where by DEAs will be authorized to carry out a Retrofit Assessment which is a non-intrusive on site assessment allowing a retrofit coordinator to carry out a Medium Term Improvement Plan based on the evidence gathered from the assessment.

PAS2035 Retrofit Assessor Training

£300 + VAT

4 Day ONLINE COURSE

If you have any further questions, please contact us via email: training@ecmk.co.uk



www.trustmark.org.uk



Upcoming 1 hour CPD Sessions ****ONLINE****

	March	Cost (+VAT)
PAS Retrofit Medium Term Plan	Tues 2 @ 1030-1130	£25.00
Water Heating	Weds 3 @ 0900-1000	£25.00
Mini Audit: Tips and Hints - How Not To Fail	Fri 5 @ 1600-1700	£25.00
Heating Primary	Thurs 11 @ 1500-1600	£25.00
PAS Retrofit Assessor Mini Audit Hints & Tips	Fri 12 @ 1500-1600	£25.00
Heating Advanced	Fri 12 @ 1600-1700	£25.00
PAS Retrofit Thermal Bridging	Tues 16 @ 1030-1130	£25.00
Plan Up	Weds 17 @ 1500-1600	£25.00
Heating Controls	Fri 19 @ 1600-1700	£25.00
Flats and Maisonettes	Thurs 25 @ 1500-1600	£25.00
Secondary Heating	Fri 26 @ 1600-1700	£25.00

Upcoming Courses ****ONLINE****

		March	Cost (+ VAT)
PAS2035 Retrofit Assessor *ONLINE*	4 Day Course	Mon 8 – Thurs 11	£300.00
DEA Bootcamp (CPD) *ONLINE*	1 Day Course	Weds 10	£50.00
CERT DEA *ONLINE*	5 Day Course	Mon 15 – Fri 19	£1000.00
PAS2035 Retrofit Assessor *ONLINE*	4 Day Course	Mon 22 – Thurs 25	£300.00
DEA Bootcamp (CPD) *ONLINE*	1 Day Course	Weds 24	£50.00

For further information, more course dates and to book your place:

Email: training@ecmk.co.uk or [click here](#)