

CIBSE CERTIFICATION LTD ANNUAL REPORT 2015



Foreword

During 2015 CIBSE Certification continued to certify the competence of energy professionals with over 850 certified energy assessors for the purposes of the Energy Performance of Buildings Regulations including 50 in Scotland and over 1000 Low Carbon Consultants. Additionally over 300 ESOS Lead Assessors were certified in 2015.

In 2015 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. The success of the ESOS register was a demonstrable outcome of this.

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) means that CIBSE Certification will 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.

The Background

The LCEA scheme grew from the activities associated with the development of the Low Carbon Consultants Register. The Low Carbon Consultants 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 an accreditation body for energy assessors, the existing low carbon expertise of this group, and new applicants, were used to create a new register – The 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 DEC
- Air Conditioning Inspector
- Green Deal Advisor
- ESOS Lead Assessor
- Heat Networks Consultant

Review of 2015

CIBSE Certification continued to improve its services in 2015 with the introduction of a new lodgement portal. The previous portal had been in use since the start of the scheme and had provided good service. The new portal provides a more interactive lodgement process for assessors, with errors from pre-lodgement checks being identified on the screen making rectification straightforward.

CIBSE Certification has played an active role in the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) convention groups and Cross Scheme Moderation meetings resulting in some helpful refinements to the Scheme Operating Requirements.

The CIBSE Low Carbon Energy Assessors continue to approach 20% of DEC's being lodged and almost all of the Level 5 EPC's.

The CIBSE ESOS Lead Assessor Register peaked at around 325 and was the largest register by a considerable margin, reflecting the growing reputation of CIBSE Certification as the go to organisation for competent energy professionals

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.

The introduction of the ESOS Lead Assessors has resulted in a broadening of the LCC register with many professionals from related fields being attracted to the CIBSE ESOS register, which had the pre-requisite of LCC registration.

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.

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, 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 scrutinised and if they are deemed satisfactory, certified status will be accorded to the applicant.

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 drawn from the CIBSE membership, mainly at 'Fellow' level, who are familiar with the requirements for, and are often assessors for Engineering Council registration, as well as being thoroughly conversant with the APEL regime and the National Occupational Standard.

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 DCLG, 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 DCLG, the CIBSE QA scheme is now mainly a desktop process which includes the production of shadow certificates to DCLG 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 DCLG, 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 DCLG 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.

Codes of Conduct: EAs are reminded of the importance of maintaining the standards of their profession including the CIBSE LCEA. The CIBSE LCEA Code of Conduct was revised in 2012 to align it with the DCLG SORs and is issued to all LCEAs. 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 LCEA Code of Conduct which is available on the CIBSE Energy Centre 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 (EMS):

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 EMS routes, tracks and delivers customer correspondence quickly and efficiently.

Customer Communication Performance 2015

A total of 19356 tickets were dealt with in 2015. A sample of cases relating to Energy Performance of Building Regulations are illustrated below.

<i>Description</i>	<i>Example folders</i>	<i>Average response time</i>
Support Requests	EPC Inbox: 776	47 Hrs
	CASA Support: 478	22 Hrs
	Case cancellation: 19	12 hrs
	Software Support for LCEAs: 229	31 Hrs
	Technical Helpdesk: 353	45 Hrs

Finance

The financial report can be found within the confidential annex.

In its eighth 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

In addition, 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 2015 CIBSE Certification has worked closely with a cross-industry group, the Property and Energy Professional Association to raise awareness of non-compliance issues with all relevant stakeholders.

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 the position of the scheme, continuing to raise the profile of CIBSE LCCs and LCEAs and to fully service their existing needs with ongoing support and development opportunities.

In working with companies to certify their Energy Management Systems CIBSE Certification are building on this and raising their profile in new areas of business.

CIBSE Certification in 2015

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