



Energy Assessors

Accreditation of prior experiential learning (APEL) framework



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Note: this document is relevant to England and Wales only.

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1. Background and introduction

Registration with an Energy Assessor Accreditation Scheme can be attained in one of two ways:

- Achievement of a qualification based on approved EPBD-related National Occupational Standards and accepted within the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

OR

- Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL).

APEL has been developed in recognition of the requirements of experienced energy assessors already operating in the market place. This Framework has been developed for use by Accreditation Schemes in assessing an individual's application for APEL accreditation. The Framework sets out:

- a) the underlying principles for the route.
- b) the criteria to be adopted when assessing applications.
- c) the application process.

A series of Annexes to the Framework provide templates for use by applicants for each type of Energy Assessor in logging evidence, as follows:

Annex 1: Domestic Energy Assessors

Annex 2: On Construction Domestic Energy Assessors

Annex 3: Operational Rating Energy Assessors

Annex 4: Non-Domestic Energy Assessors, Levels 3, 4 and 5

Annex 5: Air Conditioning Systems Inspectors (Note that APEL arrangements for Air Conditioning Systems Inspectors vary slightly from those for the other strands).

For the purposes of the Framework the phrase 'energy assessor' is used to define the role for all strands.

2. Underlying principles

APEL allows candidates direct access to accreditation without the need for a Government-approved energy assessor qualification.

To achieve APEL accreditation candidates must demonstrate that they have met all the performance criteria, knowledge and understanding set out in the National Occupational Standards for the strand for which they are applying. Candidates may undertake a limited amount of top – up training in certain elements of the NOS. The elements for which top – up training is permitted are identified in the appendices for the relevant strand of energy assessment.

In determining applications for APEL, accreditation schemes will need to exercise a high degree of judgement to ensure that only fully competent candidates are admitted for this route.

Once accredited by a particular accreditation body, Energy Assessors may apply for membership of one or more alternative schemes but the decision on whether to accept such applications lies with the ‘receiving’ Scheme, which will take responsibility for the future performance of their accredited assessors.

Once accredited, all Energy Assessors must continue to undertake Lifelong Learning (CPD, Continuing Professional Development) the requirements for which will be advised by individual accreditation schemes. Lifelong Learning will relate to a number of topics as they emerge, including updates on and revisions to the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive itself.

3. Core criteria

To gain accreditation via APEL candidates must:

- a) Show competent use of the current methodology appropriate to the provision of Energy Performance Certificates, energy reports or Display Energy Certificates relating to the Strand for which they are applying;
- b) Meet 100 per cent of the Performance Criteria and Knowledge and Understanding set out in the relevant NOS, although top – up training in specified elements of the NOS is permitted.

Some professional body memberships and other relevant qualifications can be approved in advance as satisfying parts of this APEL Route, provided that those professional body memberships and qualifications have been endorsed by Communities and Local Government. Note: Candidates seeking APEL are, of course, also required to comply with all other Accreditation Scheme requirements (other than those relating to the approved qualification).

4. The application process

4.1 Criteria

Individuals applying for APEL must demonstrate a mixture of experience, skills and knowledge that demonstrate that they are already competent in all of the NOS for the relevant strand of energy assessment for which they are seeking accreditation. Schemes may offer an initial filtering service to allow candidates to determine whether they are likely to be successful in achieving accreditation via APEL prior to completing a full application.

It is acknowledged that APEL candidates may not be able to show evidence of the full process of preparing EPCs, DECAs, associated recommendations or energy reports prior to accreditation. Therefore, top-up training is allowable in order to satisfy certain pre-determined elements of the NOS. The elements for which top-up training is allowable are identified in the appendices for the relevant strand of energy assessment.

In addition to the specific areas identified in the templates/appendices referred to above the following general rule should be noted:

- An APEL candidate who proves that he or she already possesses ALL the necessary skills and knowledge required by the NOS in the area of Building Services will be allowed to undergo top up training in Building Construction and pathology.

Likewise a candidate who is already fully competent in Building Construction and pathology will be allowed to undergo top up training in Building Services.

Candidates who are not fully competent in either area cannot be accredited through APEL.

In order to satisfy the NOS applicants must demonstrate a minimum of two years experience (full time equivalent) within the last five years in the field of energy assessment for which they are seeking accreditation. A member of a relevant professional body who should have known the candidate in a professional capacity for at least two years must verify this experience.

Applicants must also have a record of relevant Lifelong Learning ideally undertaken over the last two years but other highly relevant Lifelong Learning may also be submitted. This may include a formal or informal qualification.

Note: Any Accreditation Scheme wishing to suggest alternative criteria for the above experience stipulation must present relevant proposals in advance to the external QA auditor, who will make the necessary judgement on behalf of Communities and Local Government.

4.2 Applying for APEL

Stage 1 – Application to Accreditation Scheme

Candidates must:

- Submit a fully completed APEL application form
- Provide Qualification certificates (if appropriate)
- Submit the APEL template relevant for the strand for which they are seeking accreditation, demonstrating that as a minimum all of the NOS where top-up training is not allowable have been satisfied and confirming the intention to undertake top-up training where allowable and necessary.

An APEL Assessor appointed by the Accreditation Scheme will then assess the documentation. If these documents are acceptable and show compliance with relevant parts of the NOS, the candidate will be granted partial APEL and will be invited to undertake top-up training.

Stage 2 – top-up training

Candidates must then proceed to undertake top-up training in those areas permitted (and shown on the Template for the strand in which they are seeking accreditation). Such training may be undertaken with any provider but Accreditation Schemes may make recommendations.

The candidate must then complete Stage 3 before continuing to accreditation.

Stage 3 – after top-up training

Following top-up training, candidates will be required to provide evidence that top-up training has been undertaken and to submit the following:

- For level 3 accreditations: three full EPCs with cost-effective recommendations, energy reports for air conditioning assessors or DECAs with an advisory report in accordance with the requirements for energy certificates for their strand of energy assessment. A maximum of two may be produced on the basis of simulated data
- For level 4 and 5 accreditations: EITHER five full EPCs with cost-effective recommendations, of a cross-section of property types and sizes. A maximum of three may be produced on the basis of simulated data OR three full EPCs with cost-effective recommendations plus evidence of satisfactory completion of a test. In the latter case, the scheme must ensure that the EPCs and assessment combined cover a cross-section of property types and sizes. One EPC can be produced on the basis of simulated data.

These documents must be checked and assessed by an APEL Assessor and quality assured by the Accreditation Scheme (see QA process). It is recognised that the documents will not have been lodged with Landmark as the energy assessor is not yet accredited.

Stage 4 – Accreditation

If the EPCs, DEC's or air conditioning reports meet the requirements of the Accrediting Body, the Assessor will become accredited and will be able to prepare energy assessments, subject to the usual QA requirement of their Accrediting Body.

If all the assessments do not meet the QA standards of the Accrediting Body, then further top-up training will be recommended by the APEL Assessor.

In this instance, the candidate could be referred back to the qualification route (although he or she will almost certainly be able to bring forward evidence of competence to his or her chosen Awarding Body – thus shortening the qualification process).

5. Assessing applications

Applications should be judged against the criteria set out in Sections 3 and 4. Accreditation Schemes may establish their own methods for assessing applications but the assessment of applications must be made by persons meeting the approved definition of a 'APEL Assessor' (see below).

Applications should be assessed as follows:

By a representative from the Accreditation Scheme

- i) all relevant documentation has been submitted.
- ii) evidence has been submitted that meets the requirements set out in the criteria in Section 3 and 4 above and the relevant Annex.
- iii) the APEL Assessor (see below) has adopted the correct approach to assessment.

By an APEL Assessor

- i) the candidate meets the initial requirements for APEL.
- ii) the candidate has undertaken relevant top-up training and provided competently produced energy assessments for the relevant strand of energy assessment.

APEL Assessors will be appointed by Accreditation Schemes and will meet the following criteria:

- a) Have a minimum of three years (full time equivalent) experience in the field of energy assessment for which they will be acting as an APEL Assessor.
- b) Hold a relevant qualification, certificate, or have passed an approved test relating to the relevant energy assessment methodology and/or software (eg SBEM, SAP, RdSAP, DSM, or the operational methodology relating to air conditioning or other government approved methodology or software relevant to the type of energy assessor),

- c) Have a sound in-depth knowledge of the relevant National Occupational Standards. Demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Accreditation Scheme the relevance of their experience to the National Occupational Standards. This should be by way of a CV cross referencing experience to the relevant National Occupational Standards.
- d) Demonstrate that planned and structured Continuing Professional Development/ Lifelong Learning activities relevant to energy assessment and building energy performance have been undertaken consistently over the last two years;
- e) Have attended a workshop conducted by the Communities and Local Government or by an APEL assessor who has attended the Communities and Local Government workshop to ensure that, in addition to being themselves fully competent in the technical areas they are assessing, they have the skills necessary to make valid and consistent judgments. They must also undergo further training from time to time if any accreditation scheme for which they work is judged by external QA monitors not to be properly and consistently making judgments on APEL applications.
- f) Be included on a list of APEL assessors list held by their accreditation scheme. This list will be available to Communities and Local Government or their appointed representatives for inspection.

6. Quality assuring APEL

In order to maintain rigour and consistency, Communities and Local Government will Quality Assure the APEL accreditation process in ways to be advised to accreditation schemes.

APPLICATION FORM FOR APEL ACCREDITATION

TYPE OF ENERGY ASSESSOR :LEVEL.....

1. PERSONAL DETAILS

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Other (please state):

Surname:

Forename(s)

Date of birth:

Email address:

Correspondence address:

Tel no (office):

Tel no (home):

Employer:

2. QUALIFICATIONS

Please list all relevant qualifications held (academic, vocational and/or professional)

Please number each separate entry by using the first column headed 'No.'

NO.	UNIVERSITY/ COLLEGE/ TRAINING PROVIDER/ PROFESSIONAL BODY	QUALIFICATION NAME/GRADE	RELEVANCE TO PROPERTY, CONSTRUCTION AND/OR ENERGY ASSESSMENT	DATE OBTAINED
1				

3. EXPERIENCE

Please detail all relevant employment experience, starting with the most recent, which directly relates to energy assessment

Please number each separate entry continuing number sequence from Section 2

NO	DATES	JOB TITLE	EMPLOYER	WORK EXPERIENCE RELEVANT TO ENERGY ASSESSMENT OF NON-DWELLINGS

4. ON-GOING LEARNING RECORD

Please either attach a copy of your CPD or Lifelong Learning Record for the last two years (older Lifelong Learning may also be submitted where particularly relevant) or complete the table below identifying your lifelong learning activities.

Note: if sending a copy of your Record this should make specific reference to how your learning has developed your competence as an Energy Assessor.

Please number each separate entry continuing number sequence from Section 3

NO.	DATE	SUBJECT AND TYPE OF ACTIVITY (e.g. course, conference, qualification, structured reading, video etc)	HOW THIS HELPED DEVELOP COMPETENCE (in the category of energy assessor for which you are seeking Accreditation)	HOURS LEARNING VALUE

5. NATIONAL OCCUPATIONAL STANDARDS

Please complete the following APEL template with details of how you have obtained the knowledge and understanding and met the Performance Criteria for each item of the NOS. Where NOS elements allow for top-up training and you need to undertake this please indicate this on the template. You should identify how you met the requirements by identifying the number(s) for the entry(ies) in this form on the template against the relevant NOS item.

If your professional body membership is approved against some of the NOS you should indicate on the template those NOS Units or Elements that are covered in this way.

6. PERSONAL STATEMENT

Please provide a short (no more than 500 words) statement to explain how the outcomes of your qualifications, lifelong learning and experience have helped you to meet the NOS requirements

8. WITNESS STATEMENT (FROM A MEMBER OF A RELEVANT PROFESSIONAL BODY).

Note: this can be your employer if the person signing is a member of a relevant professional body.

I confirm that I have known this candidate in a professional capacity for two years or more and the information submitted for this application is a true reflection of the candidate's experience and qualifications.

Signed **Date**

Capacity.....

9. SIGNATURE of APPLICANT

I confirm that the information submitted for this application is a true reflection of my experience and qualifications.

Signed **Date**

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