

Quidos

Excellence in Efficiency

Title: Quidos QA Standards for Retrofit Assessment
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Revision History

Issue	Issued	Approved	Reviewed
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This document shall apply to all accredited Retrofit Assessors, regardless of National registration, and supersede any previous copies.

These Standards shall be read in conjunction with the **Quidos Code of Conduct** and the **TrustMark Framework Operating requirements Annex C**.

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 high standard. In an evolving sector, it is important that high standards are established and maintained throughout every strand of the industry. This will help create the credibility of a Retrofit Assessment as an important part of the Retrofit Project that will result in the cutting of carbon emissions reducing energy consumption and saving money on fuel costs. It is vital that these high standards are implemented; both by us as an Accreditation Scheme, and you as an accredited Retrofit Assessor.

2. Surveillance Audit Requirements

Requests for audit should not be seen as a burden, or be perceived as a punishment. For those Retrofit 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 Retrofit Assessors 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 Retrofit Assessments lodged through the Scheme are audited;
- Each Retrofit Assessor will have their first Assessment audited for each risk path;
- Each Retrofit Assessor will be placed on 5% auditing for the first month or a minimum of 5 reports (whichever is achieved first);
- Where the assessor has achieved 5 successful consecutive audit 'pass' outcomes, they shall be placed on a minimum 2% auditing rate;
- Each Retrofit Assessor will be subject to further follow-on audits should these audits fail.

What is being audited?

The retrofit assessment will be audited as per PAS 2035 – Section 8. This will be dependent on the Risk Path for the project.

- Risk Path A will encompass the requirements of section 8.3
- Risk Path B will encompass the requirements of section 8.4 in addition to 8.3
- Risk Path C will encompass the requirements of section 8.5 in addition to 8.4 and 8.3

Quidos will use the results of assessment visits, previous audits and dispute investigation (complaints) to inform a risk rating, sample size and frequency of the ongoing audit regime for each accredited Retrofit assessor.

Audit timescales can be found in **Appendix A** of this document.

There are other circumstances which would require surveillance checks:

- Customer complaints.

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

3. Surveillance Audit Evidence

As a practicing member of the Qidos Accreditation Scheme, you are required to keep detailed records from all Retrofit assessments undertaken.

Whilst on-site, you should be asking yourself one question:

“Would another Retrofit Assessor be able to recreate the data set fully from this evidence without question?”

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

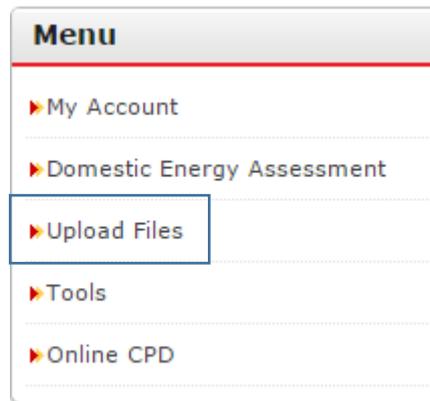
In this respect, the most important evidence that you can collect are your **site notes**. These give you an opportunity to record your thought process, reasoning for assumptions, and highlight any limitations or issues whilst carrying out an assessment.

The full details of the required evidence which can be provided for surveillance auditing can be found in **Appendix B** of this document.

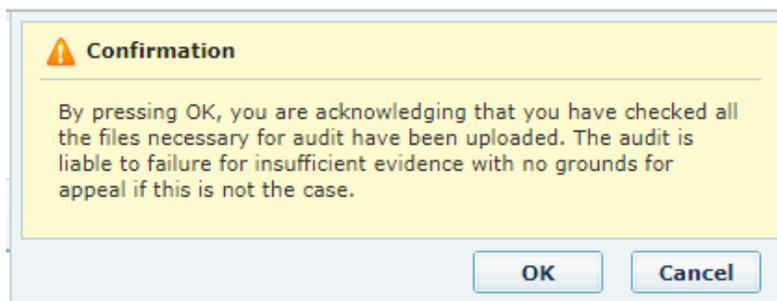
3.1 Uploading your Evidence

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 Retrofit Assessors and auditors, and makes the Retrofit Assessor solely responsible for management of their data.

The report to be audited will appear in your Control Panel in iQ-Energy with 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 report information and upload your files. Using the **Upload Files** option is also handy if you need to add further evidence to your evidence pack after your initial confirmation.



It's really important that Retrofit Assessors 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 compete the audit. If this is not the case, it is likely that your audit will fail.



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 surveillance auditors to check each image thoroughly.

All photographic evidence must include a date-stamp within the image or retain the associated metadata created by the camera when taking the photograph. 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 Retrofit 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 assessment cannot be audited, resulting in an audit failure, with the Retrofit Assessor requiring further follow-on auditing.

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

4. Surveillance Auditing Process

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

Retrofit Assessment is acceptable, providing the Retrofit Assessor with a feedback report for the audit upon completion.

Evidence Guidance can be found in **Appendix B** of this document.

4.1 How the report gets audited

- The SA works through the supplied evidence, RdSAP/SAP data entries, RdSAP/SAP data results, Occupancy Assessment data entries, Occupancy Assessment Results and the Condition report;
- Using a SA-generated copies of each document, each data input will be reviewed and amended if necessary to reflect the supplied evidence;
- Where evidence for a data input is omitted or insufficient to back up the assumption, the appropriate worst-case scenario will be input;
- At each data entry change in either the RdSAP data set, condition report or OA data set, the report is recalculated and each non-compliance is noted.
- This is repeated until all data inputs have been checked and amended (if necessary);
- The Auditor shall total the number of non-conformities and their type to determine the audit result.

4.2 The Audit Result

The audit will result in a Pass or Fail outcome. The Auditor shall total the number of non-conformities and their type to determine the audit result. An audit pass demonstrates that a Retrofit Assessor can competently and confidently follow the requirements of the PAS 2035 framework.

An audit shall be marked as a fail where 5 or more single minor non-conformities and/or any single major non-conformity have been identified.

Non-conformities are categorised as follows:

- *Minor Non-compliance*: No significant impact on the customer or other stakeholders associated with the non-compliance. The Scheme will inform the member of the nature of the shortcoming and require evidence of action taken to rectify the non-compliance.
- *Major non-compliance*: Compelling evidence that the member has failed to meet the Framework, in a way that has had a major impact on the customer or other stakeholders.

The Scheme will consider the following factors when reviewing the impact of the non-compliance:

- The level of harm which flowed from the non-compliance
- Whether the non-compliance has occurred in other cases
- Whether other bodies have imposed sanctions in relation to the non-compliance
- Whether the member has accepted responsibility for the non-compliance
- Whether the member made a financial benefit from the non-compliance, or intended to make such a gain for themselves or a commercial partner

5. Audit Outcomes

Pass

The audit passes with no feedback

Pass with comments

The audit passes, however feedback is given, and this should be read and understood by the assessor. The report does not need to be replaced, but errors noted should not be replicated on future assessments.

Fail (Technical)

The audit fails on a technical basis. This will relate to an unacceptable number of minor and/or major non-conformities in the report.

Where the number of minor non-conformities is 5 or more, the report, or the defective parts of the report, must be replaced by the Retrofit Assessor.

Where a major non-conformity is present, the Retrofit Assessor shall have their accreditation immediate suspended until such time as the matter is rectified.

Fail (Evidence)

The audit fails on the basis that the evidence is not supplied, or not sufficient in quality to allow the audit to be completed. This may cover all or part of the report.

- Where evidence is missing/poor quality but available, this shall be supplied by the Auditor following feedback and the audit can be reviewed. This evidence must then be passed onto the Coordinator following audit completion.
- Where evidence is missing and cannot be supplied, the audit remains a fail.
- Where evidence is not sufficient in quality and cannot be supplemented by quality evidence, the audit remains a fail.

All evidence errors must be acknowledged by the Retrofit Assessor and not replicated in future reports.

6. Audit Appeals

If you genuinely believe that a Retrofit Assessment has been incorrectly audited against the evidence supplied, you have the opportunity of lodging an appeal against the decision. Within the '*Evidence*' section for the assessment, 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 Retrofit Assessor is provided with the best possible feedback. This can mean that errors which were not initially noted by the Surveillance Auditor could contribute to a possible failure.

We would strongly advise Retrofit Assessors to make appeals within 5-working days of the audit feedback.

Once your appeal has been submitted, we will aim to resolve the appeal within 5 working days, however we will always prioritise appeals following the failure of follow-on audits.

The appeal feedback is the final and binding decision of the QA Team and will not be reconsidered unless compelling additional evidence is provided. Auditing appeals will not be taken further once a response has been given.

7. Failure Consequences

7.1 Resolving an audit failure

7.1.1 Relodgement

In the event that the Retrofit Assessment is declared defective, it will need to be cancelled and re-lodged. They must also inform the Retrofit Coordinator so the Data Warehouse can be updated with the correct information within 5 working days – Retrofit Assessor must also confirm this action with the Scheme. The onus is on the Retrofit Assessor themselves to do this, using the audit feedback summary as guidance.

Defective Retrofit Assessments shall always be cancelled by the Retrofit Assessor.

Cancellations shall be processed through iQ-Energy, giving the Scheme Reference Number to be cancelled, the Scheme Reference number of the replacement Retrofit Assessment, and the reason for cancellation. The QA team will occasionally process cancellations following audit failure, but the expectation shall always be on the Retrofit Assessor to cancel.

7.1.2 Additional Evidence

If you provide further evidence which would prove the Retrofit Assessment correct, you will not have to confirm a replacement, however it would still be classified as an audit failure.

Although this might seem harsh, we expect Retrofit Assessors to be professional in their operation, particularly in ensuring the collection of sufficient evidence to prove the Retrofit Assessment to be an accurate reflection of the dwelling. If this is not the case, we cannot turn a blind eye and are obliged to use a follow-on audit as a sanction.

From the date of failure, Retrofit Assessors will also have 5-working days within which to appeal against the audit decision.

7.2 Follow-on Auditing

Should a Retrofit Assessor fail an audit, they will be subject to an additional follow-on audit. This is to be confident that the Retrofit Assessor is following all the requirements of the PAS2035 methodology.

Where a Retrofit Assessor passes the follow-on audit, they will continue on the 5% requirement until they have reach 5 consecutive passes.

If the Retrofit Assessor fails the follow-on audit, they will be subject to a suspension pending the completion of remedial action. Once the remedial action is completed, the Retrofit assessor will have their suspension lifted but be subject to 5% heightened QA for 6 months.

The remedial action will be in the form of a questionnaire, which will be selected by the QA team based on the issues which has caused the Retrofit Assessor fail their audits.

Should a Retrofit Assessor continually fail audits and be seen to not taking the advice of Qidos, a site visit audit made be necessary.

If the failures persist after this, Qidos shall have to take further disciplinary action, which may include revocation of accreditation.

8. Additional Help and Advice

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

The best way to contact the QA team is through the Qidos 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.

The overuse of support channels *may* lead us to question your competency as a Retrofit Assessor, requiring additional auditing.

APPENDIX A: Auditing Time Limits

From:	To:	Max. Time Limit	Exceptions	Sanctions
Scheme first requests audit evidence	Evidence uploaded to iQ-Energy	5 Working Days	5 working day extension for illness, hols, etc	Suspension if failure to upload ¹
Evidence received	Auditing completed	10 Working Days	Circumstances beyond our control	
Audit feedback (failure)	Lodgement of replacement Retrofit Assessment	5 Working Days	Appeals received within 5 working days	Suspension if not re-lodged and Coordinator not informed.
Audit feedback (failure)	Appeal deadline	5 Working Days	We request all audit appeals to be submitted within 5 working days from the date of feedback receipt	
Follow on request²	Evidence uploaded to iQ-Energy	5 Working Days	5 working day extension for illness, hols, etc	Suspension if failure to upload ³
Follow-on audit feedback (failure)	<p>Where a follow-on audit fails, the Retrofit Assessor shall be suspended immediately pending the completion of remedial action.</p> <p>Any appeals for follow-on audits are fast-tracked.</p>			

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

APPENDIX B: Evidence Collection Guidance

For audit, Retrofit Assessors are required to supply sufficient evidence for the auditor to be able to replicate the Assessment without question.

The following list is suggested guidance for what Retrofit Assessors should be collecting whilst on-site undertaking an assessment. The provision of a detailed floorplan and detailed set of site notes and data collection forms can give more detail than a single photo out of context.

Evidence for Upload		Notes
REPORTS	RdSAP/SAP Dataset	<i>A copy of the RdSAP Dataset to be provide. (SAP Score, SAP Rating, Running costs estimate, CO2 estimate)</i>
	Occupancy Assessment	<i>Occupant data as well as estimated costs, recommendations and level of savings possible</i>
	Condition Report	<i>The physical state of the dwelling at the time of the assessment related to the features that may inhibit the performance of any future energy efficiency measures, typically containing photographic evidence and a written description.</i>
	Energy Report	
	Traditional Buildings Assessment	<i>A copy of the additional assessment required for traditional buildings.</i>
	Ventilation Risk Assessment	<i>For risk paths B and C this is required. Can be part of the condition report.</i>
	Advice	<i>Any advice given has to be evidence in a document and reasoning provided.</i>
	Dwelling dimensions (detailed floor plan)	<i>This is to support the dimensions (floor area) which are required to be uploaded to the data warehouse and to support the RdSAP dataset.</i>
	Site Notes	<i>Written description of anything that would support your decision-making, thoughts, or amendments to recommendations (property age, construction, heating system notes, etc.)</i>
	Additional Evidence	<i>Anything you feel appropriate for the Retrofit Coordinator to be aware of.</i>

Evidence for Upload		Notes
RdSAP Evidence	Elevations, Openings & Construction	<i>All dwelling elevations; wall, loft and floor construction; open fires, doors, windows, whole-house ventilation, conservatory.</i>
	Glazing details	<i>Multiple glazing, glazing manufacturing date, glazing gap,</i>
	Wall Insulation	<i>Clear evidence of insulation (i.e. drill pattern); certification</i>
	Floor Insulation	
	Loft Insulation	<i>Full loft space covered; measured in context (solid ruler against thickness)</i>
	Space Heating System	<i>Boiler identification plate, all heating controls, fuel tank (LPG/Oil)</i>
	Secondary Heating	<i>Open fire, fixed room heaters; solid fuel options</i>
	Water Heating System	<i>Cylinder size, insulation thickness, presence of cylinderstat</i>
	Multi-rate electricity meter	<i>Taken to confirm tariff</i>
	Additional features	<i>Other feature of the building whose presence or absence may be reasonably considered likely to affect the SAP rating (e.g. showers, renewables, FGHRs)</i>
Limitations	<i>Evidence that inspection of a particular element is impractical; either photographic or written in site notes</i>	
Documentary Evidence	<i>Any other evidence collected as part of the assessment, including such evidence as required by Conventions (insulation certificates, MCS, FENSA, building control sign-off, u-value calculations)</i>	
Dwelling Condition	Dwelling Heritage	<i>Photographic/Documentary</i>
	Architectural Features	<i>Photographic/Documentary</i>
	Dwelling Structure	<i>Photographic/Documentary</i>
	Dwelling Construction and Condition	<i>Photographic/Documentary</i>
	Dwelling Improvement Suitability	<i>Documentary</i>
Dwelling Appraisal	Thermal Transmittances (U-Value)	<i>Documentary</i>
	Moisture Properties for Main Building Elements	<i>Documentary</i>
	Dwelling Improvement Suitability	<i>Documentary</i>

Evidence for Upload		Notes
Defects	Construction Defects	<i>Photographic/Documentary</i>
	Structural Defects	<i>Photographic/Documentary</i>
	Leakage	<i>Photographic/Documentary</i>
Building Services	Ventilation	<i>Photographic/Documentary</i>
	Heating	<i>Photographic/Documentary</i>
	Hot Water	<i>Photographic/Documentary</i>
	Lighting Systems	<i>Photographic/Documentary</i>
	Heating Controls	<i>Photographic/Documentary</i>
	Building Services Locations	<i>Photographic/Documentary</i>
	Building Services Condition	<i>Photographic/Documentary</i>
Planning Constraints	Planning Constraints	<i>Documentary</i>
	Listed Status	<i>Documentary</i>
	Protected/Historical Status	<i>Documentary</i>
	Conservation Constraints	<i>Documentary</i>
	Tree Preservation Constraints	<i>Documentary</i>
Site Constraints	Elevation	<i>Photographic/Documentary</i>
	Exposure	<i>Photographic/Documentary</i>
	Access	<i>Photographic/Documentary</i>
	Right of Light	<i>Photographic/Documentary</i>
	Adjoining Property Consideration	<i>Photographic/Documentary</i>
Measures	Current Measures	<i>Documentary</i>
	Proposed Measures	<i>Documentary</i>
Additional Tests	Air Permeability	<i>Documentary - from appropriate person</i>
	Structural Engineer's Report	<i>Documentary – from appropriate person</i>
	Relevant In-situ Tests	<i>Documentary – from appropriate person</i>

Remember the Auditor needs to be able to repeat this process using the photographic and documentary evidence provided.