

## Technical Bulletin – 19/02/2018

### Contents

- Stock Images
- Domestic MEES
- ID Cards
- Sun Rooms



### Stock Images

Once again, it's that time of year where we have to remind assessors about stock images and the implications of their use. Last week alone, we started two stock image investigations into assessors.

Quidos defines stock images to be generic or previously-taken images submitted in place of evidence which should have been collected on-site. These images are generally not taken at the property being assessed. It is a requirement that all original images are provided for audit, including a date-stamp within the image, and that all metadata taken by the camera be retained.

#### *Is it really such a big issue?*

Yes! By manipulating your evidence, this will lead to concerns about the validity of the certificate as a whole, as well as whether the assessor had actually visited the property. If the certificate was used for the purposes of funding, such as RHI and FiT, this could even be classed as fraudulent activity.

In one instance, we noted that an assessor had used a photograph from their own house in order to back up their auditing evidence – clearly this is not acceptable situation, particularly if you found out that one of your competitors was doing something similar.

#### *But I only uploaded to pass the audit...*

It beggars belief but some would rather risk losing their livelihood as an energy assessor by using stock images that admit that they've made a mistake in not collecting evidence. We are all human, and are likely to miss evidence occasionally, but that does not give assessors permission to fabricate evidence, either from the Web, or previous assessments. If you make a conscious decision to select another image instead of one which should have been collected on-site, you are clearly intending to mislead the auditor.

#### *What can happen?*

If the suspected use of stock images was intended to mislead, under Section 8.6 of our Code of Conduct, we have no alternative but to **permanently** revoke the assessor's accreditation and strike-off their name from the Register of Assessors. This action means that an assessor will be unable to work as an energy assessor with Quidos, or any other accreditation scheme.

Taking away an energy assessor's livelihood is not a course of action we take lightly, which is why we undertake a thorough investigation to determine the facts and make our decision from there.

We should also add that any action taken against an assessor's accreditation is independent of their contractual membership agreement with Quidos. Assessors would still need to close their membership and pay off any outstanding balances.

## Domestic MEES

With the 1<sup>st</sup> April deadline approaching, domestic private landlords are beginning the panic getting their properties ready for the incoming minimum required rating.

As everyone should be aware by now, domestic private rented properties in England and Wales will be unable to be rented from 1<sup>st</sup> April if they do not reach an EPC E rating.

Firstly, we should make it clear the landlords are ultimately responsible for anything they wish to do with their property. The requirement of the Energy Assessor is provide as accurate an EPC as possible within the framework of the current methodology and Conventions; any questions about exemptions, next steps, should be taken by the landlord in consultation with their trade body and trading standards.

Next up, if landlords had read the [BEIS guidance on domestic MEES requirements](#), they would quickly realise that they have nothing really to worry about in terms of being able to continue to let their properties, as the guidance has given most of the power to the landlords.

The EPC recommendations only become 'relevant' in terms of the Regulations where there is a funding formula available, such as Green Deal, ECO etc. Where funding is not available, these recommendations do not need to be completed. Additionally, for recommendations such as external wall insulation, if the landlord can demonstrate expert advice that the recommendation is not practical for the dwelling, it too can be irrelevant for the Regulations and a five-year exemption applied for.

Below is an example from an F25 rated property:

Recommend Measures		Alternative Measures			
Select	Measure	Saving (£/year)	New SAP	New EI	Reason NOT Selected
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	B. Cavity wall insulation	568	41	45	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	W2.Floor insulation (solid floor)	161	46	50	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N. Solar water heating	37	48	52	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	U. Solar photovoltaic panels, 2.5 kWp	302	57	59	
Potential SAP Rating : D 57.0		Potential EI Rating : D 59.0			

Whilst there are a number of recommendations which would bring the dwelling up to the minimum band, and beyond, if the landlord can prove a lack of funding (Green Deal, ECO, local/central government) to complete any of these recommendations, it will be able to apply for a five year exemption, enabling a 'substandard dwelling' to be rented.

- Chapter 2 of the BEIS Guidance outlines information about improvements and funding.
- Chapter 3 deals with technical advice for Landlords,
- Chapter 4 deals with exclusions and exemptions.

Landlords and agents should be directed to this document or their own trade organisations (RLA, ARLA).

## Quidos ID Cards

Following feedback from a survey of EPC customers, we have noted that Energy Assessors might not be displaying their Quidos ID cards when inspecting a property.

We would like to direct Energy Assessors to the following passage from the Quidos Code of Conduct:

---

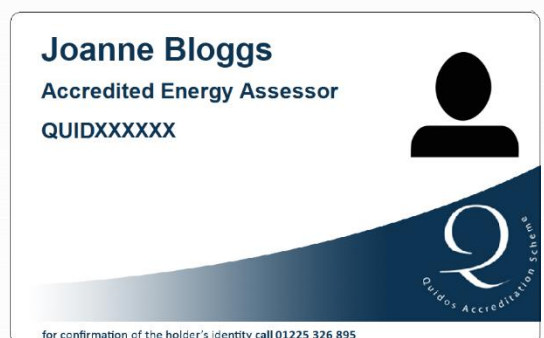
*3.5.2 Energy Assessors shall show identification [Quidos ID Card] to the person at the Property upon arrival.*

---

Energy Assessors are issued with an ID card when they join Quidos, or if they add additional accreditation streams to their account.

**Lost your card?** No problem; just contact the QAS Accreditation Team on [gas@quidos.co.uk](mailto:gas@quidos.co.uk) to request a replacement card. There is currently no charge for a replacement card.

In addition, we have a limited number of Quidos-branded lanyards and ID card holders in stock. These will be available for £3+VAT on a first-come-first-served basis. Again, contact the Accreditation Team for further details.



## Sun Rooms

Recently, there have been a lot of technical support questions requesting information on 'sun rooms' and how to model, enter them into the software. Convention 2.17 states:

---

*'For a highly glazed part of the dwelling, such as a sun room, which does not meet the criteria for a conservatory (50% of walls and 75% of roof glazed), in most cases use the glazing option of "more than typical". That adds 25% to the total glazed area of the dwelling. If you deem that this is not appropriate, assess window area by either:*

- a) measuring all windows and roof windows throughout the dwelling, or*
- b) measuring all windows and roof windows in the sun room, and use Table S4 to obtain the window area of remaining part of dwelling which is entered as a single window with orientation East.*

*Record method used in site notes.'*

---

In layman's terms, this means that when the definition of a conservatory is not met, this must be entered as an extension, with more than typical glazing.

However, confusion often arises when it comes to the wall construction and roof type.

Generally, you can tell what the wall type is and you only need to enter 'more than typical glazing', but there are occasions where it is not obvious. When there is not a traditional build type, 'system built' should be entered; non-traditional would include uPVC.

In terms of the roof type, the majority of the time it is obvious how it should be entered. There are situations when this is not the case. For example, if there is a Perspex roof or fully glazed roof. In scenarios like this, you should enter as is deemed fit. E.g if there is a pitch then enter as pitched. It may also be appropriate to enter as more than typical glazing.

## Technical Support

Don't forget, if you have any technical support queries, these should be emailed to our Support Log along with some photos so that we can provide the best advice as possible.

Your query can be logged directly with the Support Log at: <http://support.quidos.co.uk>.

Or email: [support@quidos.co.uk](mailto:support@quidos.co.uk)