

# NDEA Auditing Guide

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# Welcome to the Elmhurst NDEA Auditing Guide

This guide is here to help you gain a **better understanding of the auditing process** and show how you can make the most of the opportunity to learn, develop, and showcase your expertise and professionalism. Whether you're an experienced energy assessor or new to the field, read on for valuable information and handy tips to ace your audits.

**Please remember that we're always here to support you. If you have questions or concerns, get in touch and a member of our team will be happy to help.**



## Auditing Overview

### What is Auditing?

It's our way of monitoring the Energy Performance Certificates our members produce, ensuring they are **high-quality and accurate**. Auditing isn't just about catching errors - it's also a constructive experience, giving you the opportunity to learn and develop, as well as get a thumbs up for your excellent work.

### Why do we Audit?

Under the government's Scheme rules, all accreditation schemes in the UK are required to audit their members. This ensures that everyone is up to par with industry standards and gives you a chance to see if there are any areas you can improve on.

Audits are more than just paperwork - they're crucial for the integrity of the Energy Performance Certificate (EPC). This isn't just about ticking boxes; it's about helping homeowners and businesses make smarter energy decisions. The auditing process reinforces the importance of the energy assessment sector and ensures that Energy Assessors across the UK maintain a solid reputation.

### How often are you audited?

Auditing is your chance to showcase the quality of your work and how well you align with industry standards. **Auditing requests can occur under the following scenarios:**

#### Random Audits

A minimum of 2% of all EPCs lodged through the scheme are audited.

#### New Entrant Audits

All recently qualified members who have joined the scheme for the first time will have their first lodged Energy Certificate audited.

#### Complaint Audits

Audits undertaken due to a complaint.

#### Follow-on Audits

These audits result from failing another audit type to ensure members understand the feedback and correct any knowledge gaps.

#### Smart Audits

A risk-based audit designed to find potentially defective Energy Certificates. These audits are based on a pre-defined set of criteria, known as Smart Rules. The most up-to-date Smart Rules for NDEAs is available on our website: [NDEA and DEC Smart Rules](#).



#### Misconception

**If you call the support team, you are more likely to be audited**

**FALSE.**

Audits are not called following a phone call or email asking for assistance. **There are no repercussions** for asking for support, and our team is always happy to help.



#### Misconception

**Elmhurst complete more audits than needed**

**FALSE.**

As a scheme, we audit just over the required 2% for all strands per year.

# What to expect from an Elmhurst NDEA audit?

A NDEA audit can be broken down into three steps:



## Request for Audit

You are chosen for audit due to one of the reasons above. This triggers an auditing email to be sent to you containing the audit details, relevant timescales, and accompanying resources.

Following this, you have **three weeks to submit your evidence if you are located in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, and six weeks if you are located in Scotland**. If you have any questions, you can contact our support team (this will not affect the result of your audit).



## Reminder Emails

Following the initial email, you will receive **email reminders every 7 days for England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, and bi-weekly for Scotland**. These reminders are sent to ensure that you are aware of the audit and have all your evidence adequately prepared and sent over to us.

We always try to ensure that audit emails and reminders are not sent on weekends, holidays, or during festivities (such as Christmas). However, please be aware that these emails are automated, which means there's a possibility you may still receive them during these periods.



## Audit Review and Result

Once you submit your evidence, an appointed auditor has three weeks to complete their audit and provide the results.

The auditor will send you an email with either a pass or a failure notification with accompanying feedback and the next steps.

**Remember, our auditors are people. If you have any questions throughout this process, please contact the support team who will be happy to help.**



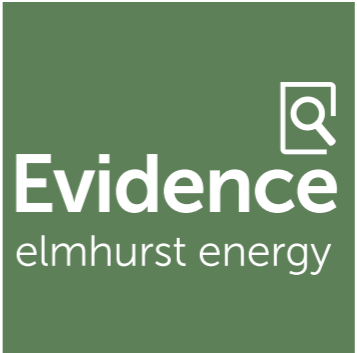
# Submitting Your Evidence

There are two ways to submit your evidence for the NDEA accreditation scheme. These include:



## Level 3 + 4 Non-Domestic EPC Only

**QA Hub & Audit Zone:** You can submit your evidence easily through the QA Hub & Audit Zone on Access Elmhurst.



**Evidence Folder:** You can upload and submit your evidence by creating an evidence folder on Access Elmhurst. The QA ready function will notify the team directly.

# What happens if you fail an audit?

**Failing an audit should not be seen as an attack on your ability or professionalism.** It simply means that a mistake was made and there is an opportunity to learn.

## Audit Fail Process

If you fail an audit, feedback is sent to you with the next steps. In most situations, a follow-up audit will be required to ensure that you understand and have taken on board the improvement feedback.

In some instances, you may be able to provide further evidence that proves that the EPC is correct. If this is the case, you will not have to re-lodge, but the audit will still be marked as a failure.

## Appeals

If you ever feel that an audit decision isn't right, you can voice your concerns via our appeals process. This will allow a support team member to review all the information and consider the appeal. You can submit an appeal by using our [Appeals Form](#).

## Corrective Action

If you fail a follow on audit, there's a process of corrective action in place. The type of action you undertake is at the scheme's discretion but will likely involve further training, CPD, or other measures to ensure you're able to learn and improve from the experience. Always remember, it's about progress, not perfection.

## Suspension

After a second audit failure, a temporary suspension is placed on your account, as mandatory under the Scheme Operating Requirements (SORs). This means that you won't be able to lodge or complete assessments until it's lifted. However, you can still upload evidence for the audit. Although this can come off as harsh, this process is essential for maintaining the quality of EPCs and ensuring the high standards of our members.

**Please remember that being suspended does not question your membership status or your credentials as an energy assessor. It's just a pause. Once you've completed the necessary corrective actions the suspension will be lifted, and you'll be back on track.**

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### Misconception

**Auditors are required to fail a certain number of EPCs**

**FALSE.**

Our auditors review submissions objectively and as per the evidence requirements. Failed audits are only classed as such should they not meet the pass criteria.

# Common reasons for audit failure

## Insufficient Evidence

An audit may be marked as a fail as a result of missing information or if a key piece of evidence is of insufficient quality. Examples include:

- Unclear or blurry images
- Images with no date stamps: A date stamp is found within a photo's meta description and confirms when the photo was taken. Sending a photo within the body of an email, rather than attaching the photo to the email, will remove the date stamp.

## Technical Failure

An audit may fail for this reason when a mistake, or an accumulation of mistakes, has been found to alter the BER by more than 10%.

## Too much irrelevant Information

Sending big files with multiple projects may mean that important information for the audit is lost or missed, leading to a failed audit.

\*Please note that images supplied directly from an iPhone are in HEIC format. Assessors must convert the images to JPG and compress them.



## Top Tips for Auditing Success

### Record Organisation

As a member of the Elmhurst Accreditation scheme, it's important to keep track of all your assessments. This means holding onto your site notes, plans, photographs, and other relevant details for all your assessments. By keeping everything organised and in its proper place, you'll find it much easier to submit evidence if an assessment is ever called for an audit. It's just good practice!

### Stay up to date with CPD

The industry is constantly changing. Completing your annual CPD ensures you have the most up-to-date knowledge and understanding of the NDEA scheme and methodology.

### Check Your Evidence

Before you submit your evidence for audit, double-check that you have everything you need. This can easily prevent a failed audit due to missing evidence or incomplete information.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What happens if I am unable to meet the Audit deadline?

If there are exceptional circumstances where it is not possible for you to complete your audit, feel free to reach out to the Elmhurst support team. In certain situations, they can grant extensions to accommodate. However, this is not guaranteed.

### What do I need to submit as evidence?

You can download the Minimum Evidence Requirements on the following links:

NDEA QA Minimum Evidence Requirements: England, Wales & Northern Ireland  
<https://members.elmhurstenergy.co.uk/DownloadDocumentHandler.ashx?id=292>

NDEA QA Minimum Evidence Requirements: Scotland  
<https://members.elmhurstenergy.co.uk/DownloadDocumentHandler.ashx?id=307>

When sending your evidence over, please ensure the files are under **30MB**; this reduces the risk of missing files as it ensures all the information gets through to the auditor.

### How long does it take to submit evidence for an Audit?

When your records are well-organised and easily accessible, submitting evidence for audit can take as little as 5 minutes.

### What if I don't understand my failure feedback?

If you have any questions or are unsure about your feedback, contact the Elmhurst support team. A team member will be happy to help and will talk through the feedback to ensure you have a clear understanding.



## NDEA Auditing Guide

## Helpful Resources

[A Guide to Collecting  
and Storing Evidence for  
Non-domestic](#)

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