

DEA Quality Assurance Evidence Requirements

Northern Ireland only
Effective Date 1st December 2014

Core Requirement

Members must provide sufficient evidence such that the EPC can be recreated by an independent Quality Assurance (QA) Auditor without the need for access to the Member's RdSAP input data file.

Evidence provided by Members shall be such that an independent assessor can be reasonably certain it relates to a particular EPC.

Evidence Requirements

Floor Plan- A clear sketch plan covering all levels of the property and including:

- a) Measurements and area calculations
- b) Heat-loss perimeters
- c) Location of adjoining properties/party walls
- d) Internal room layout
- e) Identification of all heated and unheated habitable rooms
- f) Sheltered and alternative walls
- g) All extensions, conservatories and roof-rooms
- h) Any excluded/thermally separated areas

Site Notes- Site notes must record any mandatory data not covered by floor plans and photographic evidence. Members must also include any information used in support of decision making, reflective thought, or amendments to recommendations (e.g. identification of property age, construction, assessing primary heating system etc).

Photographic Evidence- Where present, good quality photographs of the following **must** be provided by Members:

- **Front, rear and side elevations**
- **Wall thickness**
- **Evidence of solid or cavity wall insulation**
- **External roof construction** – including Roof-room, if present
- **Loft insulation** - depth, extent of insulation and presence of boarding

- **Openings** - windows, external doors, chimneys
- **Conservatory/sun-room** - showing whether or not it is thermally separate
- **Main heating system and heat emitters** - e.g. radiators and boiler showing associated key features such as a condensate pipe or label indicating the boiler make/model
- **Main heating system controls** – e.g. programmer, room-stat, TRVs etc
- **Secondary heating system**
- **Hot water system** – if separate from main heating system
- **Hot water cylinder** - including cylinder stat and immersion heater, if present
- **Electricity and gas meter**
- **LPG cylinder**
- **Fixed low-energy light fittings**
- **Evidence of any access issues** - e.g. locked/sealed loft hatch, furniture obstructions, locked cupboard etc
- **Any other feature of the building or limitation whose presence or absence may be reasonably considered likely to affect the SAP rating** – e.g. photovoltaics, solar water heating, wind turbine etc
- **Any other feature which supports a claim in the EPC which that could be queried or be the subject of a complaint**

Important Note: ALL photographs shall be dated within the image to provide some reassurance that they relate to the property being assessed and the date of assessment. Electronic files shall be acceptable if there is a reasonably secure means of dating the file.

It is possible that a number of the elements listed above may be shown in a single photograph. However, should a Member choose to adopt this approach, they must ensure that the photograph is of sufficient quality to allow the auditor to clearly identify all mandatory details.

Photographs embedded in documents (e.g. Microsoft Word or PDF documents) or otherwise altered to reduce file size for transmission purposes shall be dated within the image. The master images shall be retained in the Member's archive for possible inspection by Elmhurst or the relevant Government department, if requested.

Where the Member believes that photographs are not practically achievable, but a particular element/energy using device is present, site notes shall explain why the photographic evidence is not available. The QA Auditor will assess, and record, their views as to whether the reason given is credible. In such instances Elmhurst shall investigate whether there has been a trend in non-provision of information, and undertake further investigations if such trends are identified.

Additional Evidence – Must be provided to justify the suppression or inclusion of additional recommendations (e.g. a guarantee or Building Control notice for improvements).

Further Guidance in Respect of Photographic Evidence - It is important that all photographs taken for the purposes of survey evidence are in focus and clearly show the details of the subject. Members should also ensure that all photographs are in context. For example:

- a) A photograph showing a radiator may also show a bay window which provides some contextual evidence around the description of the property being a 1930's semi-detached house;

- b) For a wood-burning stove, context would include a log basket next to the stove;
- c) For lighting, general views of rooms including the fixed lighting as well as detailed photographs of individual luminaires;
- d) For heating controls, general views of rooms showing the thermostat(s) and controllers as well as detailed photographs of the equipment;
- e) For solid walls, a photograph of an external door opening showing the overall masonry thickness;
- f) For an inaccessible loft, a photograph of the landing or other room showing why the loft hatch is out of reasonable reach.

IMPORTANT NOTE FOR RdSAP GO USERS

Please be aware that Elmhurst's RdSAP GO software is not a direct substitute for site notes therefore users must ensure that the level of evidence collected on site meets the above mandatory minimum evidence requirements. Users are still required to produce hand written site notes and floor plan to authenticate RdSAP GO data inputs. Where RdSAP GO users choose to record less information on their written site notes, additional photographic evidence must be obtained to allow the auditor to verify all RdSAP GO data inputs.

Sampling and Multiple Certification

England, Wales and Northern Ireland regions only

Where a number of similar properties are being surveyed and a sampling approach is adopted, the following evidence is expected:

- Photographs, floor plans and site notes for the median property
- The schedule of properties from which the groups have been selected
- Records confirming external visual inspections of properties in each group
- A calculation to show how the number of properties to sample was determined
- How the median property was selected
- EPC results for each of the surveyed dwellings
- A comparison of the results to show that they are within acceptable tolerances.

Please refer to the table over the page.

| Parameter | Tolerance |
|------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SAP rating | 90% of the sample properties should have a SAP rating within + 4 SAP points of the SAP rating of the median record; and 95% of the sample properties should have a SAP rating within + 6 SAP points of the SAP rating of the |

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| | median record |
| El rating | 90% of the sample properties should have an El rating within + 4 El points of the El rating of the median record; and 95% of the sample properties should have an El rating within + 7 El points of the El rating of the median record. |
| Floor area | 90% of the sample properties should have a floor area within + 5% of the floor area of the median record; and 95% of the sample properties should have a floor area within + 7.5% of the floor area of the median record. |
| Recommendations | 95% of reports should contain identical recommendations; and No reports should contain recommendations that would be fundamentally inappropriate for other properties in the sample. |

Common Values Approach

England, Wales and Northern Ireland regions only

For dwellings that share some similar characteristics, but are not suitable for the multiple certification approach, the minimum requirements for the monitoring of surveys lodged in this way will be:

- The schedule of properties from which the groups have been selected
- A calculation to show how the number of properties to sample was determined
- Records of inspection and photographs for the assessed properties
- EPC results for each of the surveyed dwellings