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		Revision No:	2.0
<b>BREEAM-NOR Operations Manual</b>		Date:	31 August 2016
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		<b>BREEAM<sup>®</sup> NOR</b>	

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## 1 SCOPE

This document formalises the operating procedures between NGBC, assessors and licensed organisations for conducting BREEAM-NOR assessments.

### 1.1 Audience

This document is intended for licensed BREEAM-NOR assessors.

### 1.2 Issues / Concerns / Complaints

If there are unresolved issues with the services provided by NGBC and/or BRE Global Limited, in the first instance please email either:

- NGBC by email to: [post@ngbc.no](mailto:post@ngbc.no) or
- BREEAM by email to: [breeam@bre.co.uk](mailto:breeam@bre.co.uk)

so that NGBC/BRE Global may address your issues or concerns as effectively as possible.

NGBC operates a formal complaint procedure (IS 403), please use the NGBC assessor's extranet (<http://ngbc.no/ekstranett>) or email address provided above to request a copy if there is cause to complain.

BRE Global operates a formal complaint procedure (PN100), please use the email address provided above to request a copy if there is cause to complain.

### 1.3 Associated documents

This operations manual references a number of additional and supporting documents. A list of additional documents and the BREEAM-NOR documents can be downloaded from <http://ngbc.no/ekstranett>.

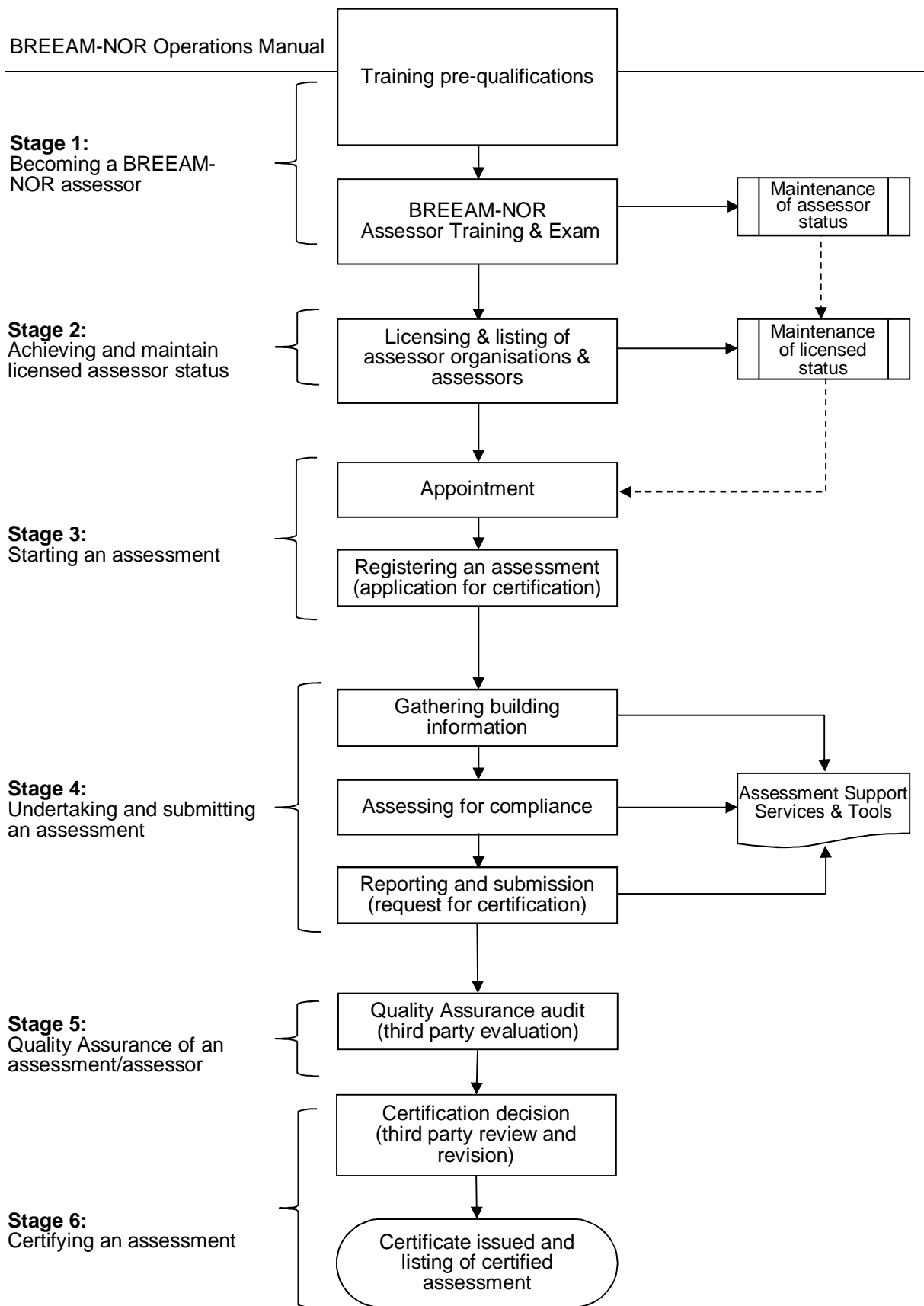
The documents are available for licensed assessors.

## 2 INTRODUCTION

If you are reading this document then you are either in the process of becoming a BREEAM-NOR licensed assessor or you are already a practising assessor. Either way, your commitment and professionalism through the adoption and use of BREEAM-NOR scheme is providing you with a unique business opportunity whilst enabling you and your organisation to contribute in a meaningful way toward building a better world.

This document is intended as both an aide memoir and a learning tool to support your knowledge and understanding of the assessment process and foster efficient and competent application of the scheme. It does this by outlining and then defining the key stages in becoming a licensed assessor, maintaining your licensed assessor status and undertaking and applying for certification of your projects assessments.

Figure 1 *The BREEAM-NOR assessor and assessment process* outlines the main steps in the BREEAM-NOR assessor and assessment process and each section in this document is dedicated to one of these key stages, with additional sections describing the documents, tools and services provided by NGBC to support and facilitate the process.



**FIGURE 1:** The BREEAM-NOR assessor and assessment process

### 3 THE BASICS OF ASSESSMENTS AND CERTIFICATION

BRE Global provides independent, third party certification of the assessment process undertaken by licensed assessors to ensure that their assessment of the built environment has been conducted in accordance with the technical scheme BREEAM-NOR.

#### 3.1 Assessors

BRE Global and NGBC train and assess the competency of individuals who want to use the technical scheme BREEAM-NOR to carry out assessments. This training and on-going competence is subdivided into two stages.

The **first stage** involves an assessment of an individual's knowledge and understanding of the BREEAM-NOR scheme.

NGBC provide training courses and material on the technical aspects for the BREEAM-NOR scheme. NGBC then assesses candidates on their understanding in relation to the application of the BREEAM-NOR scheme. Typically, this assessment is undertaken via multiple choice examinations. Once a candidate passes the relevant exams they are qualified and deemed "competent" to undertake assessments. The qualified assessor can then apply for a licence to join the BREEAM-NOR scheme i.e. become a licensed BREEAM-NOR assessor (see section 6.1).

The licence enables a company or sole trader to offer assessment services to clients in accordance with the scope and terms and conditions of the licence. Being listed as a licensed assessor provides users of the BREEAM-NOR scheme (clients) with confidence in knowledge that they will receive a professional service and quality assured outcome.

The **second stage** involves the on-going maintenance of quality of assessments undertaken by a licensed assessor. BRE Global assures this through a risk-based auditing process (see section 10).

The quality assurance process checks assessments according to a sample programme, prior to certification. If the quality assurance process finds non-conformities the assessor shall respond appropriately in order to correct these. If significant and/or regular non-conformities regarding the competence of an assessor are found, or professional misconduct has occurred, the NGBC/BRE Global may suspend or withdraw an assessor's licence.

#### 3.2 Assessment certification

An assessment is undertaken by the assessor on behalf of their licensed organisation (a contract will exist between their client and the licensed assessor organisation, not directly with the assessor).

In undertaking an assessment, an assessor collects evidence in order to demonstrate (through reporting) the degree of compliance of a client's project, with the performance criteria defined in the BREEAM-NOR technical manual. Once the process is complete the assessment is submitted to BRE Global/NGBC for quality assurance and a certification decision.

Following successful completion of the quality assurance process, the assessment can be certified. The certificates are produced by BRE Global and issued from NGBC to the Assessor who can then pass the certificate on to the client. The certificate confirms to any and all interested parties that the assessment has been completed in accordance with the requirements of the BREEAM-NOR scheme. The issuing of the certificate marks the end of the certification process involving BRE Global/NGBC.

For BREEAM-NOR building assessments there are two stages: Design Stage (Interim) and Post Construction Stage (Final).

In BREEAM-NOR the performance levels are rated as Unclassified, Pass, Good, Very Good, Excellent or Outstanding.

The remainder of this document outlines the operating procedures to be followed by candidates wishing to become licensed BREEAM-NOR assessors and for existing licensed assessors that undertake and submit BREEAM-NOR assessments to NGBC. The document is separated into sections, each one covering the stages shown in Figure 1 *The BREEAM-NOR assessor and assessment process*.

## **4 STAKEHOLDER RESPONSIBILITIES**

The following is a summary of the main responsibilities of each stakeholder involved in the BREEAM-NOR assessment process. Licensed organisations and assessors should ensure these responsibilities are covered appropriately in contracts between them and their clients.

Licensed assessors must also refer to the relevant roles and responsibilities section in IS 401 BREEAM-NOR Licence Agreement and PN 101 Terms and Conditions Listing and Certification.

### **4.1 Licensed Assessor (and assessor organisation) responsibilities**

- Payment of the relevant fees due to NGBC, on request, in accordance with the licensing terms and conditions (IS 401).  
See Fee Sheet PL 201 for the current services and associated fees and at what point in the assessment process they apply.
- Applying for certification by registering BREEAM-NOR projects for assessment with NGBC at <http://ngbc.no>.  
Please note that registered and certified data can be used by NGBC in publicity, marketing and technical development if the data has not been specified as confidential by the assessor.
- Advising clients on the criteria specified within the relevant BREEAM-NOR scheme technical manual.
- Co-ordinating the gathering of project/building information necessary to undertake an assessment and determine compliance (or otherwise) with BREEAM-NOR scheme criteria. To include where relevant, undertaking site-visits to verify compliance.
- Assessing, verifying and reporting on the performance of a project, ensuring correctness and completeness of all information and evidence referenced and submitted.
- Submitting assessments and supporting evidence to NGBC for quality assurance and certification decision (using the relevant reporting and calculation tools).
- Taking action to correct any non-conformances identified by NGBC/BRE Global during the quality assurance process,
- Implementing and maintaining internal quality management procedures for record keeping.
- Maintaining records of all evidence for a period of at least 10 years,
- Issuing the certificate to the client,
- Completing any continued professional development (CPD) as requested by NGBC.
- Keeping abreast of any technical and operational updates and amendments to the BREEAM-NOR scheme by regularly reviewing communications issued by NGBC.
- Ensuring there is a clear and enforceable commercial arrangement with their clients.
- Declaring (to NGBC) and managing any conflicts of interest that may arise (see section 9.1).
- Taking steps to ensure that any complaints are dealt with fairly and promptly.

### **4.2 NGBC responsibilities**

- Developing and updating BREEAM-NOR technical manuals and operations manual, bespoke assessment criteria and the supporting documentation.
- Developing and updating BREEAM-NOR scheme, reporting and calculation tools.
- Providing competent persons training for the BREEAM-NOR Assessor training course (necessary to achieve and hold BREEAM-NOR licensed assessor status).
- Providing examinations as a means of demonstrating competency as an assessor (necessary to achieve and hold BREEAM-NOR licensed assessor status).
- Issuing BREEAM-NOR licences to assessor organisations.

- Responding to licensed assessor queries in relation to a registered assessment in a timely manner.
- Supporting BRE Global in the delivery of QA of assessments.
- Liaison between BRE Global and BREEAM-NOR licensed assessors for issuing registrations, QA assessment feedback and assessment certificates.
- Issuing relevant Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), relevant guidance and information on the extranet for assessors and other updates and amendments to support the BREEAM-NOR assessors.
- Maintaining and publishing a database of licensed assessors, organisations and certified assessments for BREEAM-NOR at <http://ngbc.no>.

#### **4.3 BRE Global responsibilities**

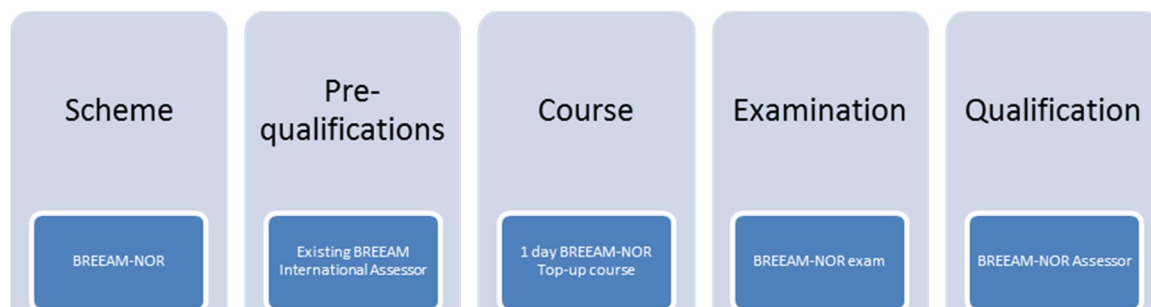
- Providing competent persons training and examinations for the BREEAM International New Construction assessor training course.
- Issuing certification agreements to NGBC that demonstrate BRE Global is certifying the BREEAM-NOR assessor.
- Maintaining and publishing a database of licensed assessors, organisations and certified assessments for BREEAM-NOR.
- Undertaking quality assurance audits of assessments submitted by licensed assessors for a certification decision in a timely manner in co-operation with NGBC.
- Issuing of certificates to NGBC for assessments that pass the quality assurance audit and achieve a positive certification decision

## 5 BREEAM-NOR SCHEME ASSESSOR TRAINING AND EXAM (STAGE 1)

### 5.1 BREEAM-NOR scheme training courses

Candidates wishing to become licensed assessors must complete the relevant training and pass the BREEAM-NOR scheme specific examinations. The training provides the candidate with the necessary knowledge and information needed to carry out and complete assessments competently and consistently.

The training options and pre-qualifications for attending BREEAM-NOR assessor training is set out below.



**FIGURE 2:** The BREEAM-NOR assessor training and qualification route

A list of current training dates and costs for BREEAM International New Construction Assessor training are available on the BREEAM website [www.breeam.com/training](http://www.breeam.com/training).

A list of the current training courses provided by NGBC is available on the NGBC website <http://ngbc.no>

### 5.2 BREEAM-NOR scheme examination

To become a BREEAM-NOR Assessor, the candidate is first required to complete the BREEAM International New Construction Assessor Training Course, pass the exam and become a qualified BREEAM International Assessor with BRE Global.

When the candidate has passed the BREEAM International Assessor Training course the candidate can attend the BREEAM-NOR Top Up course and the exam.

The BREEAM-NOR Top Up exam tests a candidate's knowledge and comprehension of the BREEAM-NOR scheme (technically and operationally). Passing the exam is therefore a demonstration of competency and confirmation of understanding.

The BREEAM-NOR examination papers are developed, fully tested and moderated by NGBC and checked by BRE Global. Delegate results and the questions are routinely analysed and reviewed to ensure the exam reflects the learning objectives of the BREEAM-NOR scheme and content of the training course and remains a fair and robust means of demonstrating competency.

At the start of the BREEAM-NOR examination, the invigilator will explain the examination process and procedures. At the end of the BREEAM-NOR examination the invigilator will collect all the examinations materials including answer sheets for marking. Competent BREEAM-NOR Academy staff will mark the exam papers and candidates will receive their result (pass or fail) within 15 working days of the examination.

Unsuccessful candidates are invited to re-sit the exam at additional cost (PL 201), using different set of the exam questions. Candidates who are unsuccessful on their third attempt will be invited to re-take the training course in full if they want to continue their application as a licensed BREEAM-NOR assessor.

Candidates have the option to appeal against an examination result ([post@ngbc.no](mailto:post@ngbc.no)).



### **5.3 Achieving assessor status**

Once a candidate has completed the training and passed the BREEAM-NOR exam, they are deemed competent in the BREEAM-NOR scheme for a period of 12 months. Candidates wishing to become BREEAM-NOR assessors must then apply for and have been granted a licence for the BREEAM-NOR scheme within the 12 month period. The licence and certification agreement application form (SK 101) must be completed and returned to NGBC. This will then be taken forward through Licensing with NGBC/BRE Global.

If an individual's BREEAM-NOR licence is terminated or the assessor's name is removed from an organisation's list of licensed assessors (but the licence agreement remains valid), the individual assessors are deemed competent for a period of 12 months. The 12 months period is measured from the date of licence termination or removal of their name from an organisation list of licensed assessors. If the individual wishes to re-licence with the same or a different assessor organisation after the 12 month period has expired, retraining will be required to regain competency. The cost and type of retraining required will depend on the assessor's previous qualifications, licences and time since the qualification expired. This may include regaining qualification in BREEAM International New Construction if qualification has not been maintained with BRE Global.

To confirm the cost and type of retraining required please contact NGBC.

### **5.4 Maintaining assessor status**

It is a requirement that each assessor maintains their competence in the BREEAM-NOR scheme. This is done via one or a combination of the following (as a minimum):

- Each assessor has submitted at least one assessment and achieved certificate release every five years for the BREEAM-NOR scheme (where the five years is measured from the date of the licence issue) or
- Each assessor has qualified (i.e. for the first time), re-qualified (i.e. re-sat and passed the current BREEAM-NOR scheme exam) or completed competency based top-up training for the BREEAM-NOR scheme.

Furthermore, it is a requirement of maintaining licensed status that the listed assessors keep up to date with changes to the BREEAM-NOR scheme and supporting documentation and participate in the assessor yearly update provided by NGBC. All the information required for this is maintained and supplied by NGBC via <http://ngbc.no/ekstranett>.

Where a listed assessor does not meet the above they will be deemed "inactive" and their status as a competent licensed assessor will be suspended and/or withdrawn.

### **5.5 Monitoring assessor performance**

BRE Global/NGBC monitors and records the performance of licensed assessors and organisations. Assessments are quality assured and a record kept for each assessor of the number of non-conformances identified, in this way the quality assurance process is a risk based programme.

Assessors with a high number of non-conformances or that have non-conformance of a serious nature will be subject to an increased level of monitoring. Additional levels of monitoring may result in additional charges being made to the licensed organisation that employs the assessor (refer to the fee sheet PL 201).

Where BRE Global/NGBC identifies that serious or systematic non-conformances have been made by an individual assessor, further investigations will be conducted that may result in one or all of the following being applied:

- The assessor may be required to undertake further training and examination at their own expense to demonstrate their competency
- The assessor's licence and their listing may be suspended or withdrawn
- The licensed organisation that employs the assessor may have its licence suspended or withdrawn.

## **6 ACHIEVING AND MAINTAINING LICENSED ASSESSOR ORGANISATION STATUS (STAGE 2)**

A BREEAM-NOR licence entitles the individual listed to offer and undertake assessment services in accordance with the terms and conditions of their licence. Organisations that employ assessors can apply for a licence or, where they have an existing licence, apply to extend or amend it to add or remove scopes and assessors.

Only qualified assessor can register, undertake and complete assessments and only where the organisation they work for includes their name and scope in the licence agreement.

A licence is held for a period of one year and renews on an automatic basis unless the appropriate period of notice is given to NGBC prior to the renewal date – see IS 401 BREEAM-NOR Licence Agreement for termination notice period.

### **6.1 Licence application**

Organisations or sole traders wishing to apply for a licence, or extend or amend the scope of their existing licence agreement, must do so by completing a licence application (SK 101) and agreeing to the associated terms and conditions. New assessors will be forwarded instruction on how to apply for a licence following successful completion of the training and examination process.

Licence application form, supporting guidance and relevant terms and conditions are available to download from <http://ngbc.no/ekstranett>.

Organisations wishing to become licensed assessors must carefully review the terms and conditions before signing the licence agreement. The assessor organisation will need to declare its acceptance of the application form, the licence agreement and other associated documentation referenced in the licence and certification application form. The qualified BREEAM-NOR assessor will confirm their acceptance of the certification agreement with BRE Global Ltd.

### **6.2 Licence confirmation**

Upon successful submission and processing of a licence application, the organisation will be notified of their status (or change in status) as a licensed organisation via a licence letter and separate certification letter. This notification will confirm the following information:

- The name and address of the licensed organisation,
- A unique licensed organisation reference number,
- An issue number and date,
- A list of assessors who are licensed by NGBC and certified by BRE Global as competent, i.e. they have met the scheme requirements by successfully completing the training and examination,
- Terms and conditions applicable under the licence,
- Useful information required to support the licensed organisation

### **6.3 Badge of recognition for licensed assessors and licensed assessor companies**

Once an individual and organisation's licensed assessor status is confirmed, both will be able to use the relevant badge of recognition and the BREEAM-NOR logo as directed in the publication IS 402 BREEAM-NOR Logo and Marks.

### **6.4 Public listing of licensed assessors and organisations**

The details of the licensed organisation and the assessors they employ will be listed on the NGBC website <http://ngbc.no>. BRE Global will also list licensed and certified BREEAM-NOR assessors on [www.greenbooklive.com](http://www.greenbooklive.com). Only BREEAM-NOR licensed assessors and assessor organisations, as listed on NGBC' website, can market and sell their services as BREEAM-NOR assessors and register and submit BREEAM-NOR assessments for certification.

## **6.5 Access to licensed BREEAM-NOR assessor resources and services**

Once licensed status is confirmed each assessor is provided with username and password to access online content and tools at <http://ngbc.no/ekstranett>.

Online username and passwords are unique to each assessor and must not be used by or forwarded on to other parties and licensed assessors.

## **6.6 Maintenance of licensed status**

The licence, and therefore the status of assessors listed on the licence agreement, is maintained through annual renewal, and the following:

- The payment of fees
- Participation in the NGBC' annual update for assessors
- Meeting the terms and conditions of the licence agreement
- Demonstrating that each assessor listed on the licence letter maintain their competence covered by the scope of the licence (see 5.4 for a description of how this is done).

NGBC issues renewal reminders prior to the renewal date informing the licensed organisation of annual licence fees due.

The BREEAM-NOR licence automatically renews and an invoice is raised unless NGBC receives a termination notice (see IS 401 BREEAM-NOR Licence Agreement for termination notice period).

Assessor organisations that cannot demonstrate they meet the terms of the licence shall be contacted by NGBC and, depending on the severity of non-compliance may have their licence suspended or withdrawn.

NGBC may also immediately suspend or terminate any licence granted due to unsatisfactory performance, unsatisfactory results in meeting requirements of re-examination, or breach or nonconformity with any part of the licence agreement or the terms and conditions for licensing (see IS 401).

# **7 STARTING AN ASSESSMENT (STAGE 3)**

## **7.1 Appointment of an assessor**

Clients wishing to have a BREEAM-NOR assessment carried out on a project must appoint a BREEAM-NOR licensed assessor. A complete list of BREEAM-NOR licensed assessors, is available on <http://ngbc.no>. Clients can also use Green Book Live to verify that an individual is a BREEAM-NOR licensed assessor.

It is recommended that a licensed assessor is engaged early in the process. Experience and customer testimonial highlights that late assessor engagement and ineffective management of the assessment process raises the likelihood of additional expense on a project to achieve the required level of benefit.

Appointing the assessor at the right time helps to ensure cost effective delivery of the project to the required or maximum rating/level.

## **7.2 Selecting the right BREEAM-NOR scheme and version**

NGBC operates the scheme BREEAM-NOR New Construction which also includes major refurbishments and covers the following building types:

- Office buildings
- Retail
- Industry
- Education
- Residential

When the BREEAM-NOR scheme is updated, it will be issued as a new scheme version and will have a new technical manual. The scheme version (and its technical manual) is identified by the year in which

it was launched. Each version has its own technical manual and therefore a scheme may have a number of different technical manuals, but only one current version.

At the date of registration with NGBC, i.e. the formal start of the assessment and certification process, it is the current version of the scheme at that time that a project is aligned to and assessed against.

Please refer to the scope within the scheme technical manual (for the current version) to determine whether the building type or life cycle stage can be assessed against that version. For details on the BREEAM-NOR versions see <http://ngbc.no> or contact [post@ngbc.no](mailto:post@ngbc.no).

### **7.3 Bespoke assessments of buildings outside the scope of the BREEAM-NOR scheme**

The BREEAM-NOR scheme covers a range of building types. However if a type of building is not covered by the scope of BREEAM-NOR, then the first step is to complete a Bespoke application.

A Bespoke application requires the licensed assessor, client or design team to submit plans showing the layout of the building(s) and the intended functional use of areas within that building. NGBC will then confirm the appropriate means of assessing the building(s), either by using the BREEAM-NOR scheme or by developing project-specific bespoke criteria based on BREEAM-NOR.

The licensed assessor, client or design team should contact NGBC at [bespoke@ngbc.no](mailto:bespoke@ngbc.no) for further advice, information and subsequent proposals and fees to cover the cost of producing BREEAM-NOR Bespoke assessment criteria.

## **8 REGISTERING PROJECT FOR ASSESSMENT (STAGE 3 CONT.)**

Registering an assessment with NGBC is the first step in the process of applying for BREEAM-NOR certification. Registration secures the project to the version of the BREEAM-NOR scheme current on the date of registration and the certification fees applicable at that time.

An assessment must be registered by a licensed assessor prior to submission for quality assurance and a certification decision. NGBC/BRE Global will only evaluate (quality assure) and make a certification decision on a registered assessment that is submitted by a licensed assessor on behalf of the organisation to which the assessment was registered.

### **8.1 How to register a new BREEAM-NOR assessment**

A licensed assessor can register a project for assessment by using login to the extranet at <http://ngbc.no/ekstranett>.

Assessors are advised to check carefully to ensure they enter the correct details on the registration form. Registration determines the fees chargeable for registration and certification, and the BREEAM-NOR scheme version which must be used to conduct the assessment. Selecting the wrong version, type of assessment, or entering invalid project details can lead to additional costs and delays in certification resulting in a need to re-register and update an assessment.

Assessors are also advised to review and be aware of the potential for conflict of interests to arise prior to registration. See section 9.1 for guidance on impartiality and managing conflicts of interest.

Following successful completion of the registration the licensed assessor will be sent confirmation of registration and a unique registration number. The registration number must be used in all correspondence with NGBC/BRE Global that relates to the project.

A project's assessment registration details will be included in the confirmation from NGBC. If any of the details are incorrect i.e. the project has been incorrectly registered, the assessor must inform NGBC of the changes as soon as possible. Assessors and their clients should note that further registration fees may apply in such instances.

Note:

- Assessors can only register projects for assessment against the categories in the BREEAM-NOR scheme that they are licensed under.
- The assessor must complete the online registration form supplying all the requested information about the project. Following the successful completion of the online registration an invoice for the registration fee will be sent to the assessor organisation.

- For projects where BREEAM-NOR Bespoke criteria development is required the licensed assessor organisation (or the client) must complete and submit the relevant application forms to NGBC prior to assessment registration.
- A non-refundable fee (PL 201) will be charged by NGBC for the registration of each BREEAM-NOR assessment project.

## **8.2 How to change an existing assessment registration**

A project's assessment registration is linked to a specific licensed assessor, licensed assessor organisation and BREEAM-NOR scheme version. If the licensed assessor or assessor organisation changes or the client wish to change a registration to a different BREEAM-NOR scheme version, then the assessment registration must either be transferred or re-registered.

Please contact NGBC to transfer existing registrations.

Note:

- Transferring a registration applies only to project's registered under a previous BREEAM-NOR scheme version. For assessments requiring transfer to a different assessor organisation under a current BREEAM-NOR scheme version the assessor can simply register the project as a new assessment with relevant details.
- The registration fee will be charged for the transfer of an assessment registration and a re-registration of an assessment. This fee will be invoiced to the licensed assessor organisation that submitted the request.
- Transferring an assessment will require evidence to support and verify the transfer from one licensed assessor organisation to another. This includes the reference number of the assessment registration being transferred and authorisation from the original licensed assessor organisation or client to make the transfer.
- Once the transfer has been verified NGBC will send a confirmation email containing a new registration number to the licensed assessor.
- Assessors will be notified by email if NGBC are not able to verify the transfer to the licensed organisation to whom the registration has transferred.
- Should a client decide they want to assess a project under an older version of the BREEAM-NOR scheme to the current version, NGBC must be notified prior to registering the project. This is necessary to prevent duplication of data and invoicing. Once a registration is updated to a more recent version of a BREEAM-NOR scheme it is not possible to change the registration back to the original version at a later date.

## **8.3 Registering an assessment to a previous BREEAM-NOR scheme version**

Registration secures a project to the version of the BREEAM-NOR scheme current on the date of registration. In some instances however it may be necessary to register an assessment to a previous, superseded version of a BREEAM-NOR scheme. For example, if there is a contractual obligation to use a particular version of BREEAM-NOR and that obligation is linked to satisfying a funding or planning condition.

Contact NGBC to register an assessment to a previous version.

## **8.4 Timing the registration of an assessment**

To maximise performance and do so in the most cost effective manner it is imperative that client engagement with the BREEAM-NOR scheme occurs before key design and procurement decisions are made. It is strongly recommended therefore that clients wishing to undertake assessments register their project for assessments, via a licensed assessor, at the earliest possible stage. Likewise, licensed assessors are advised to register the assessment immediately after their appointment by the client.

Assessment registration marks the formal start of the process of applying for certification. Whilst registration can be carried out at any time, by delaying it until a later stage in the project the assessor and the client run the risk of changes to NGBC' certification fees, assessment criteria and certification processes and rules. All of which can result in additional work and cost for a project, particularly in the case where a new BREEAM-NOR scheme version has been launched in the intervening period.

Note: By registering early, the option to re-register under a later BREEAM-NOR scheme version is still available, however if registration has not occurred when recommended, the choice to register, assess and apply for certification under a “previous version”, i.e. the BREEAM-NOR scheme version current at the start of the project, is limited.

## **8.5 Validity and expiry of an assessment registration**

An assessment registration remains valid from the date of registration up until 5 years after the expiry date of the BREEAM-NOR scheme version (or launch date of the updated BREEAM-NOR scheme version).

The BREEAM-NOR scheme version expiry date is used rather than the project's assessment registration date to set a fixed point in time that is the same for all projects/assessments registered under that version. This enables NGBC and licensed assessors to manage and communicate BREEAM-NOR scheme expiry in a clear and co-ordinated manner.

### **8.5.1 Certification and fees for assessment submitted after registration expiry**

The NGBC certification fee current on the date of assessment registration applies unless registered assessment is submitted for a certification decision after the registration expiry date. In this instance the certification fee current on the date of assessment submission to NGBC will be applied and a BREEAM-NOR scheme expired disclaimer will be added to the certificate.

In some circumstances it is possible to register an assessment to a version of the BREEAM-NOR scheme that has expired (refer to section 8.3). In this instance additional administration fees (refer to the fee sheet PL 201) apply on registration and a letter of compliance will be issued instead of a certificate.

Please contact NGBC for further information.

## **9 UNDERTAKING AN ASSESSMENT (STAGE 4)**

Fundamentally, undertaking a formal assessment involves the appointed licensed assessor collating and reviewing the relevant project, asset, company information (i.e. evidence), and using it along with the approved assessments tools to calculate and report the performance (credits and section/category scores) and rating achieved. The assessment submitted to BRE Global/NGBC for a certification decision is the formal record of this process of assessment and verification.

The remainder of this section provides guidance on ensuring impartiality in the assessment process, information on the tools for undertaking an assessment, collating evidence and record keeping, and submitting an assessment for certification.

### **9.1 Impartiality and managing conflicts of interest**

Impartiality within the assessment and certification process is paramount for ensuring the credibility of the outcome. The scheme and its licensed assessors must take reasonable steps to maintain their impartiality and an appropriate degree of objectivity in the assessment process.

If the assessor believes there is or may be potential for a conflict of interest then the first step to managing it is to declare it to NGBC, along with any measures proposed or taken to manage the potential conflict. NGBC can then confirm or advise steps that need to be taken by the relevant parties (including ourselves) to maintain the objectivity of the assessment and its outcome.

The assessor should inform NGBC of any potential conflict at the registration stage of assessment; or at the appropriate time thereafter when the potential conflict becomes apparent and before the assessment is submitted for a certification decision.

The most likely potential for a conflict of interest is where an individual licensed assessor combines their role as the assessor with one or more other roles within the project team for the building they are assessing (for example they are the architect or suitably qualified ecologist on the project). Dual roles present a challenge to maintaining impartiality as the assessor could be putting themselves in a position where they are assessing and verifying their own work (or verifying solutions/performance which they advised clients on). In such circumstances it is advisable to eliminate the conflict by not undertaking or stopping the dual role.

Another example of a potential threat to impartiality is where a client or other third party is putting pressure on the licensed assessor to determine a favourable outcome by falsely claiming compliance; or where a client, licensed assessor or other third party is aware of a licensed assessor who is falsely claiming compliance. In such circumstances it is advisable to contact NGBC so that appropriate steps can be taken to maintain the objectivity of the assessment.

Where a conflict of interest exists, or there is potential for one, the assessment and evidence submitted is likely to be subject to closer scrutiny during the Quality Assurance audit. Where NGBC/BRE Global has unresolved concerns additional measures may be imposed to verify the integrity of the submitted assessment. These measures may include escalation of the audit level and/or a site visit conducted by BRE Global. Reasonable costs of implementing these measures will be charged to the assessor company. Where such measures fail to satisfy those concerns, BRE Global will not certify the assessment or, where certification has taken place and a conflict has subsequently come to light, BRE Global may withdraw the certificate. Furthermore, if a licensed assessor has been found to be in breach of the licence agreement, their licensed status can be suspended and eventually withdrawn (in accordance with the relevant terms and conditions of licensing).

Licensed assessors can and often will need to advise clients, project teams and asset owners/managers on whether one or more proposed solutions comply and how to interpret assessment criteria for the purpose of determining, designing or proposing compliant solutions. This type of advice does not necessarily constitute a conflict of interest, but assessors should be mindful in doing so that it does not lead to one.

## **9.2 Assessment Tools**

Licensed assessors must undertake, complete and submit their assessments using tools provided or approved by NGBC available at <http://ngbc.no/ekstranett>.

## **9.3 Assessment Evidence**

The licensed assessor is responsible for determining compliance or otherwise with the assessment criteria or question defined within a scheme's technical manual, for the credits sought. The assessor determines compliance, the level of performance and ultimately the rating using the evidence sourced by or supplied to them by the relevant parties.

The client is responsible for ensuring that the relevant parties, e.g. consultants, design team, contractor, facilities manager, building owner, etc. supply the information to the assessor at the appropriate time. Typically upon appointing a licensed assessor the client will ask them to co-ordinate the gathering of evidence from the various parties.

Assessors rely on information and evidence provided to them by third parties and the assessor is responsible for maintaining a record of this information and ensuring that it is correctly interpreted against the assessment criteria. The assessor is therefore responsible for the correctness and completeness of all information relied upon and referenced in an assessment for the purpose of demonstrating compliance.

In the absence of appropriate coordination by the assessor and the timely provision of adequate information from the relevant parties, the assessment will take longer to complete. NGBC strongly advises that assessors, their clients and the project team work closely together to ensure all evidence required is in place prior to submitting the assessment for any quality assurance audit and certification decision.

BRE Global will not be able to make a positive certification decision where evidence is missing or lacking clarity of compliance for the credits and rating claimed. In the majority of cases insufficient and inaccurate referencing of evidence is the main reason for delays in certification.

Scheme specific guidance on evidence and evidence types required to demonstrate compliance is provided in each scheme's technical manual.

### **9.3.1 Assessor site visits:**

In addition to formal documentation supplied by the client and other relevant parties, assessors will need to conduct site visits (if relevant to the stage of assessment). Site visits can provide an efficient and robust means of verifying that the commitments made in the planning and design stages manifest during the construction/refurbishment phase; and/or that the project is constructed/refurbished in accordance with the assessment criteria for the credits sought and rating targeted.

NGBC does not set a requirement on the minimum number of site visits, the assessor should determine what is appropriate for the purpose of efficient and robust verification of compliance given the size and complexity of the project. However, good practice suggest that between 2 and 3 site visits is appropriate as a minimum. One of these can occur near the start of works on-site to ensure all parties are aware of their responsibilities in terms of maintaining/delivering the design stage performance in the final build. Further follow-up site visits during key stages in the programme enable the assessor to witness and photograph compliance with criteria, particularly for elements which become more difficult to check as the build progresses towards completion. A final site visit at or just prior to completion and handover allows the assessor to check and verify any outstanding items prior to completing and submitting their final, post construction assessment for certification.

Making regular site visits not only aids compliance checking, it allows the assessor to spot potential problems and advise the contractor or client accordingly (saving time and cost for both). Whilst a number of items can be verified in a single site visit toward the end of the project, relying on this as the sole site visit runs the risk of discovering non-compliant or un-verifiable items and not being able to maintain or achieve the required rating. This in turn can potentially leave some assessors open to the risk of pressure to confirm compliance for items they have not been able to credibly witness or verify, particularly where a rating is a condition of planning or contract.

A lack of credible or falsified evidence of compliance will result in non-conformances during the quality assurance audit, a delay in certification and potentially suspension of an assessor licence.

### **Assessor site visit/inspection report**

Where an assessor uses their site visit as evidence of compliance they will need to record the information outlined below as a minimum in a site inspection report.

- Date of visit
- Assessor name and contact details
- Project details
- Unique reference number
- Issues/criteria inspected
- Details of state of compliance (written notes and/or photographic evidence)
- Recommendations made and shared with the client / relevant parties, where appropriate.

### **9.4 Referencing assessment evidence**

Recording and referencing the collated evidence is a critical element for the purpose of quality assurance and certification. A correct and complete record of evidence in an assessment is essential because:

- It provides protection to the assessor in the event of an assessment outcome being challenged – allowing evidence to be quickly identified;
- Is the primary route for a third party to determine whether the assessment meets the requirements of the scheme, i.e. the BRE Global QA auditor;
- Without it, BRE Global have less certainty that the appropriate evidence has been examined and verified by the assessor and, therefore, that the rating is accurate.

### **9.5 Keeping records of assessments and evidence**

The licensed organisation is responsible for implementing and maintaining internal quality management procedures for record keeping. Licensed organisations are required to keep all documentation, materials and data (i.e. evidence) associated with all assessments conducted by them for a period of ten years following the submission of the report to NGBC. NGBC/BRE Global reserve the right to contact licensed organisations at any point during this ten year period to verify the information/assessment.



## 9.6 Submission of assessment and evidence

### 9.6.1 BREEAM-NOR assessment submission

Once a registered assessment is completed and verified by a licensed assessor the assessment report can be submitted electronically to [sertifisering@ngbc.no](mailto:sertifisering@ngbc.no). The assessment report must be written in English. The report and the email must include the following information:

1. The subject line of the QA submission should start with 'QA - BREEAM-NOR' – scheme classification type and project name (as registered), e.g. QA - BREEAM-NOR – retail – “project name”
2. The email must include:
  - a. Licensed assessors name, the BREEAM-NOR assessor reference number and the BREEAM International assessor reference number
  - b. Licensed organisation name
  - c. Project registration number/registration name
  - d. Attachment of the registration confirmation e-mail
  - e. Attachment of the whole assessment report
  - f. Attachment of the completed spreadsheet tool (preanalyse)
3. The assessment report should be supplied in electronic format clearly indicating the:
  - a. Assessment unique registration number/registration name,
  - b. BREEAM-NOR Assessor name

Assessment reports should be sent via email to NGBC without supporting evidence.

After submission of the assessments report, NGBC will advise the assessor to submit application for certification to BRE Global for evaluation (QA) and certification decision. Application for certification i.e. assessments and associated evidence can be submitted via the BREEAM assessor online system (if available) or by using a third party FTP (file transfer protocol) upload websites.

Assessors are responsible for submitting supporting evidence with their assessment to BRE Global upon request. The evidence must arrive within ten working days of a request and must be in a coherent, structured format. Failure to do so will result a QA failure and failed audit charge. To avoid delay it is recommended that assessors submit the supporting evidence with their assessment in all cases.

When submitting evidence to BRE Global via the BREEAM assessor online system, the files and folders should be zipped to retain the structure, and sorted into individual folders per category and issue. The file and folder names should not contain the letters “æ”, “ø” or “å”.

If assessors wish to make use of third party FTP (file transfer protocol) please contact NGBC for further information and requirements.

### 9.6.2 Translation

It is a requirement that all assessment reports are submitted in English.

There are three options available to the BREEAM-NOR assessor and their client with respect to the supporting information and evidence:

- **Option 1** – the assessor organisation and their client produce supporting information and evidence in Norwegian only. The translation cost to assist in the quality assurance audit is included in the submission cost (see PL 201).
- **Option 2** – the assessor organisation and their client produce supporting information and evidence in the local language and English.
- **Option 3** - the assessor organisation and their client ensure that the supporting information and evidence are produced in English.

## 10 QUALITY ASSURANCE OF ASSESSMENTS (STAGE 5)

NGBC does not conduct quality assurance of assessment but acts as a liaison between BRE Global and the BREEAM-NOR assessor during the QA and certification process. All licensed assessors and the assessment they undertake are subject to Quality Assurance evaluation (QA Audits) by BRE Global.

The QA process adopted is a 'risk-based' approach. This means that each QA audit does not necessarily check and verify the assessment of every individual issue and criteria assessed. The purpose of the QA audit is, through a process of random checking and a minimum frequency of audit types, to provide a reasonable degree of confidence that the assessor has produced an assessment and rating in accordance with the procedures and processes defined within the scheme document.

This makes it possible to deliver a given level of confidence that appropriate quality standards are being maintained in an effective way.

### 10.1 The Quality Assurance audit process

The QA process considers the key risk factors likely to affect the quality of the certification, these include:

- Level of experience of the individual licensed assessor
- Professional competence in assessing compliance with the technical criteria of the scheme
- Professional behaviour in dealings with other parties
- Potential for fraud by an assessor or their employers

These risks are essentially tied to the behaviours of licensed assessors and their employers and are therefore not likely to occur on a random basis (although an element of random selection does exist within the QA audit process). A competent, diligent and honest individual will provide a service of an acceptable quality standard in the vast majority of cases.

Upon application for certification of an assessment the audit level for the assessor is identified and the assessment assigned to a QA auditor. Once an assessor has passed the QA audit, their assessment can be certified by BRE Global. Following a positive certification decision, the certificate will be issued to NGBC who will then distribute it to the BREEAM-NOR assessor who will then pass on to their client. Certified projects will then be listed on <http://ngbc.no> and [www.greenbooklive.com](http://www.greenbooklive.com).

Assessors should note, and inform their clients where relevant, that timescales for completion of a QA audit may vary according to the audit level required (see also section 10.3 *Quality Assurance timescales*).

### 10.2 Quality Assurance audit levels

Depending on the scheme type, there are three quality assurance audit levels that can be assigned to an assessor when they submit an assessment for certification:

- **Administrative audits**  
These are carried out on **ALL** assessment reports to confirm the provision of essential details required for accurate certification.
- **Partial audits**  
These are carried out on a **SELECTION** of assessments determined by the audit status of the licensed assessor submitting the assessment. This involves the QA auditor checking a number of the issues assessed (including supporting evidence) to verify that the assessment and any calculations have been completed correctly; the evidence requirements are properly understood and credits correctly awarded for each issue checked.
- **Full audits**  
These are carried out on a **SELECTION** of assessments determined by the audit status of the licensed assessor submitting the assessment. This involves the QA auditor checking a significant percentage of the issues assessed (including the supporting evidence) to verify that the assessment and any calculations have been completed correctly, the evidence requirements are properly understood and credits correctly awarded for issue checked.

All licensed assessors are subjected to a full audit on submission of their first BREEAM-NOR assessment and a partial audit on submission of their second assessment (unless the severity of the outcome of the first audit justifies a second full audit). Thereafter, an assessor's audit level is determined by their performance in the previous audit, subject to a minimum frequency of partial audits/credit checks and full audits necessary to maintain the required level of confidence.

Assessors must note that a full audit does not check every issue/criterion assessed, and passing QA does not imply that BRE Global is verifying the accuracy or compliance of all the assessment issues within a single assessment (this is the assessor's responsibility). The purpose of the QA audit is to check

and have confidence in the assessment undertaken by the licensed assessor, it is not to confirm or verify compliance of the building/asset. This point is important to appreciate not only for the assessment in question, but also for future assessments. An assumption should not be made that the assessment of a particular issue or criterion will pass a future QA audit, on the basis that it is identical or similar to the issue assessed in a previous assessment that passed the QA audit.

### **10.3 Quality Assurance timescales**

If one of your assessments is selected for a partial or full audit BRE Global aims to inform you of this within one working day of your report submission (see also 9.6 *Submission of assessment and evidence*). At this point BRE Global will also indicate the latest date by which you can expect QA feedback, including the outcome of the audit i.e. whether a resubmission is required (or not as the case may be).

It should be noted that published or confirmed timescales are for QA feedback and not certification. Certification is dependent on passing the QA audit, timescales will therefore vary depending on QA outcome and, if relevant, subsequent time taken to address any identified non-conformances and resubmit and re-audit an assessment (see following section). Furthermore, the stated feedback date is subject to change.

### **10.4 Quality Assurance feedback and non-conformant assessments**

During the quality assurance audit the QA auditor will review a number of issues, criteria and supporting evidence to check for completeness and accuracy of assessment. Where the assessment of a particular issue is found to be lacking in this respect, a non-conformance will be identified. Depending on its severity a non-conformance will be classified as either a minor or major non-conformance.

In the event that any non-conformances are raised during the audit, the assessment will not pass the QA audit. Where an assessor does not pass the audit, feedback will be provided in a standard format. In this instance the assessment cannot proceed to certification until the non-conformances identified have been addressed and the assessment re-submitted for further checks.

A non-conformance is typically issued where there is:

- an error/omission resulting in incorrect/invalid assessment,
- no or incorrect documentation/evidence provided,
- Inappropriate/inaccurate referencing of documentation/evidence.

Essentially, where scheme credits are sought, if it is not clear that the project has been assessed in accordance with the scheme criteria, i.e. there are ambiguities in compliance or errors in assessment, then it is very likely a non-conformance will be identified and the assessment will not pass the audit without corrective action by the assessor.

BRE Global is also not able to identify in the QA audit feedback assessment issues that have been audited, unless a non-conformance exists (or an observation is made – see below). The assessors should not interpret the absence of a non-conformance as confirmation that an assessment issue has passed the QA audit, as not all assessment issues are audited. BRE Global do endeavour to provide the assessor with feedback on the general quality of their assessment through the feedback form, any observations made against particular assessment issues should be noted for future assessments.

### **10.5 Assessment observations**

In addition to non-conformances QA auditors may issue observations. Observations differ from a non-conformance in that the assessor is required to take corrective action to address a non-conformance to pass the QA audit, but they do not need to take action within that same assessment to address observations. Observations are made to assist and guide the assessor in future assessments and minimise the risk of future non-conformances occurring.

### **10.6 Assessment failure**

In certain circumstances NGBC will charge a fee for assessment failure (see PL 201). This is to encourage the submission of assessments to the required quality, avoid misuse of the QA process and ensure efficient use of QA auditors' time.

The assessment failure charge applies to the following circumstances:

- Where a significant number of non-conformances are identified,
- the non-conformances indicate a fundamental misunderstanding by the assessor in how to apply and comply with the scheme – BRE Global reserve the right to conduct an audit of additional parts of the assessment where non-conformances are indicative of systematic misinterpretation of the scheme by the assessor;
- the assessor submits supporting evidence beyond the ten working day deadline.

Where an assessment failure has been identified, a report is issued to the assessor identifying the relevant corrective actions he/she needs to take before re-submitting the assessment. The assessment failure fee will be charged to the licensed organisation by NGBC.

## 11 CERTIFICATION OF ASSESSMENTS (STAGE 6)

Once an assessment has passed the appropriate level of Quality Assurance it can be certified. BRE Global is conducting certification of assessments on behalf of NGBC. The mechanics of certification involve a review of the QA auditor's evaluation and following this review, a certification decision. Once a positive certification decision has been made by BRE Global, NGBC releases the certificate to the licensed assessor, as an electronic secured file (.pdf). The assessor is responsible for sending the certificate to the client. The certificate will only be produced once, however at the licensed assessor's request certificates can be amended and re-issued after their final issue (see section 11.4 for further details).

The following information is included on the certificate:

- Project Name (or part thereof that is covered by the scope of the assessment)
- Project Location/Address
- The overall assessment score (%) and rating achieved
- A breakdown of the category performance scores
- The stage of assessment
- The BREEAM-NOR scheme and version number
- The name of the licensed assessor and organisation that has undertaken the assessment
- The names of other relevant project stakeholders
- BREEAM-NOR scheme logo, certification mark and signature on behalf of NGBC and BRE Global
- Date the certificate was issued
- Certificate reference and issue number

Please note that if an assessment rating of "unclassified" is achieved a certificate will not be issued. In such instances a statement from BRE Global may be issued in-lieu of the certificate to confirm that an assessment has taken place and undergone the quality assurance process. The statement will also provide the reason for absence of formal certification, e.g. the assessment has not met the minimum benchmark for a Pass rating or it was assessed using an 'expired' BREEAM-NOR scheme.

### 11.1 Validity of certificates

A valid BREEAM-NOR certificate displays the BREEAM-NOR logo, the NGBC logo, the National Scheme Operator logo and the BREEAM-NOR certification mark.

Following certification, the assessed building, its rating and stage of assessment is listed on <http://ngbc.no> and [www.GreenBookLive.com](http://www.GreenBookLive.com). Anyone can use these websites to verify the certified status of an assessment and building rating. Where appropriate, assessors and their clients can choose not to list the project publicly on <http://ngbc.no> or Green Book Live.

The certificate is based on the assessment of evidence at a particular point in time and the certificate does not have an expiry date. As such the buildings assessed are not subject to any future reassessment requirement under those versions of the BREEAM-NOR scheme. This means that effectively the certificate is only valid on the day it is issued.

Note: Registered buildings are not listed on the NGBC/Green Book Live website. Clients and assessors can only promote the performance of their assessed building if it is certified and listed on the NGBC/Green Book Live website.

### **11.2 Publicising the certified status of a building**

It is in everyone's interest that the integrity and value of the assessment and certification process, and certified rating, is maintained and that precise wording is used when claims are made about a building's status in this respect.

It is acceptable to publicise a rating only after the certificate has been issued by BRE Global - never before. NGBC/BRE Global require that any publicity associated with the rating clearly indicates whether the rating is interim or final and/or confirms the 'parts' of the assessment to which the certified status relates (as applicable to the scheme under which the building has been assessed).

When publishing information relating to an interim rating an indication should also be supplied when the final 'post construction' assessment is scheduled to be delivered. Any rating published prior to certification from BRE Global must be referred to as a predicted rating.

### **11.3 Use of BREEAM-NOR logos, certification marks and badges of recognition**

All BREEAM-NOR logos, marks and badges of recognition must be used in line with the guidance and rules for use, which are set out in IS 402 BREEAM-NOR Logo and Marks - Guidance and rules for use.

Email [post@ngbc.no](mailto:post@ngbc.no) to receive BREEAM-NOR logos and relevant badges. They are available in multiple formats.

### **11.4 Changing details on the certificate**

At the licensed assessor's request, certificates can be amended and re-issued after their initial issue. For example, where changes to the certificate content are required such as names or titles. There is an additional fee charged for amendments and certificate re-issue (see PL 201). Email [post@ngbc.no](mailto:post@ngbc.no) for further details.

### **11.5 Suspensions and withdrawals of certification**

It is a responsibility of the scheme and BRE Global as the certification body to ensure that certification documentation is accurate and not misleading.

Typically BRE Global will suspend certification when there is evidence that there is nonconformity with the certification requirements, the organisation that is the 'holder' of certification enters insolvency, there is a breach of contract or there are overriding matters of public interest.

There are a number of potential causes of a certification withdrawal, including but not limited to those mentioned above and a failure to take sufficient corrective actions in a timely manner following certification suspension.

Once a certification suspension has been authorised by BRE Global, a notification letter is issued to the client informing them of this action. The letter also includes any corrective actions they can take for the suspension to be lifted, along with any others requirements relating to certification status, e.g. ceasing any certification claims and use of certification marks. Notification of a suspension is posted under the relevant listing on the Green Book Live website and other stakeholders will also be notified where appropriate, e.g. the licensed assessor. If corrective actions satisfactorily resolve the nonconformities within the required timescales the suspension is lifted.

The process for certification withdrawals and notification is similar to that described above for certification suspensions. In addition, any certification documents requested must be returned to NGBC/BRE Global, e.g. certificates. Clients have the right to appeal certification suspensions and withdrawals, in accordance with the NGBC appeals procedure IS 403.

## **12 ASSESSMENT SUPPORT SERVICES, TOOLS AND GUIDANCE**

NGBC offers services, tools and guidance to support assessors. Please see <http://ngbc.no/ekstranett> for further information.

Licensed assessors can contact NGBC as follows:

- Technical queries and questions related to the BREEAM-NOR technical manual: [tech@ngbc.no](mailto:tech@ngbc.no)
- Registration, QA, certification or question about the certification process: [sertifisering@ngbc.no](mailto:sertifisering@ngbc.no)
- Other questions: [post@ngbc.no](mailto:post@ngbc.no)

### 12.1 How to contact NGBC with a technical enquiry

Prior to contacting NGBC with a technical enquiry licensed assessors are expected to check the following resources for an answer to their enquiry:

- The relevant version of the BREEAM-NOR manual and, if relevant, the bespoke criteria appendix for the project
- The operations manual (this document)
- The FAQ at <http://ngbc.no/faq>
- “Ny viktig informasjon til revisor” and “Tidligere viktig informasjon til revisor” at <http://ngbc.no/ekstranett>
- The Licence Agreement

When contacting NGBC by email in relation to a registered assessment please include the information described in “Tekniske avklaringer og spørsmål til BREEAM-NOR-manualen” at <http://ngbc.no/ekstranett>

Upon receipt an enquiry is allocated a reference name and the assessor is advised of the expected response time. The reference number enables NGBC to monitor the progress of an enquiry and provides assessors with a reference they can quote in any correspondence or in their records/evidence for a specific registered assessment.

If there are unresolved issues with responses provided by NGBC, in the first instance please contact NGBC by email to [tech@ngbc.no](mailto:tech@ngbc.no).

NGBC and BRE Global must remain impartial and cannot provide advice or consultancy services to licensed assessors or any enquirer in matters that could act as barriers to the certification process i.e. NGBC and BRE Global cannot propose/advise solutions.

### 12.2 Important updates and information about BREEAM-NOR

NGBC publishes information, clarification in technical criteria, updates and news about BREEAM-NOR on the extranet (<http://ngbc.no/ekstranett> – “Ny viktig informasjon til revisor”). This site is the formal means of communication between NGBC and the licensed assessor. Assessors can expect all scheme-related operational and technical notices and news to be published at this site. All assessors should therefore check and read the notices and news at the site at a regularly basis, at least each month and action accordingly for their assessments.

Older information can be found at “Tidligere viktig informasjon til revisor” at the same site.

### 12.3 Innovation credit application

In addition to the standard categories in BREEAM-NOR there is an “innovation” section. The innovation section aims to provide additional recognition for a procurement strategy. Design feature, management process or technological development that innovates in the field of sustainability, above and beyond the level that is currently recognised and rewarded standard criteria.

One way of achieving credits for innovation is via an independent “expert” peer-review of a proposed innovation. This review is carried out by NGBC, on receipt of a completed Innovation Application form. Applications for the approval of innovations can only be made by licensed assessors with reference to a specific assessment.

Note:

- Applications will only be accepted when submitted by a licensed assessor on the Innovation Application form.

- A separate application is required for each proposed innovation credit sought and a flat rate charge will be levied to cover the costs of administering and reviewing each application.
- NGBC will publish basic information on all approved innovations on <http://ngbc.no/ekstranett>. Publication is done in a way that is sensitive to applicant's intellectual property, commercial rights and personal details.
- Licensed assessors have a right to appeal against a NGBC decision relating to an application for an innovation credit. Appeals are subject to a flat rate charge (PL 201). In the instance of a successful appeal, the appeal fee will be refunded. Please contact NGBC for further information.
- A credit for a successful innovation application is approved for a single use on the project to which it relates. Previously approved innovations cannot be awarded by default on other registered projects. However, if it can be demonstrated that the previously approved technology/process is still innovative, the potential exists to award an Innovation credit for subsequent re-use of the same or similar application on other registered assessments. In order to demonstrate and confirm additional or renewed innovation status in a robust manner a new application must be submitted and approved.