



The Scottish
Government

Building Standards Division

Improving Energy Performance and Emissions in our Non- Domestic Buildings

Section 63 Practitioner Handbook

The Assessment of Energy
Performance of Non-domestic
Buildings (Scotland)
Regulations 2016

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This document is also available on our website at www.gov.scot/section63. If you have enquiries regarding this document, these should be directed to Building Standards Division at the above address.

Produced by the Buildings Standards Division

First published: July 2016

Version 1.1

Document Version Control

Title: S63-006 Improving Energy Performance and Emissions in our Non-Domestic Buildings – Section 63 Practitioner Handbook

Purpose: To provide information defining the role of Approved Organisations, Section 63 Advisors and DEC Assessors in the delivery of processes introduced under The Assessment of Energy Performance of Non-domestic Buildings (Scotland) Regulations 2016 from 1 September 2016.

Version	Date	Notes
1.0	July 2016	Initial issue in support of The Assessment of Energy Performance of Non-domestic Buildings (Scotland) Regulations 2016.
1.1	June 2017	Fee referenced in paragraph 24 amended from 1/10/2017
1.2	November 2020	Guidance on Recording of information - signing off duty to improve where building status changes to 'exempt'

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1. Background

1. Buildings account for over 40% of the carbon emissions in the UK but, less than 1% of the existing building stock is replaced by new buildings each year. Therefore achieving significant reductions in energy use and associated emissions within our existing building stock requires action driven by regulation.
2. From 1 September 2016, [The Assessment of Energy Performance of Non-domestic Buildings \(Scotland\) Regulations 2016](#) ('the regulations') require the assessment and, ultimately, improvement of larger non-domestic buildings.
3. In support of these regulations, two new assessment/advice roles are introduced in Scotland:
 - The Section 63 Advisor, discussed in this document.
 - The Display Energy Certificate (DEC) Assessor, discussed separately.
4. These two roles enable building owners to obtain targeted advice on how to improve their buildings and also offer the option of recording operational energy use using the current UK assessment methodology, a facility not previously available in Scotland.
5. As is the case with the production of Energy Performance Certificates and of air conditioning system Advice Reports, the registration of individuals undertaking these assessments will be managed through Scottish Approved Organisations.
6. This document provides guidance on the Section 63 Advisor role and its implementation by Approved Organisations. In doing so, it will reference separate but complimentary action where the response to a lodged Action Plan is the production of an annual Display Energy Certificate (DEC). Implementation of this role follows provisions already in place elsewhere in the UK and is described in S63-008 - Operating Framework for Approved Organisations – production of Display Energy Certificates and Advisory Reports for existing non-domestic buildings, published at www.gov.scot/section63.
7. Note: in this document, reference to the building owner may be taken to refer to the person instructing the assessment and Action Plan, be they the building owner, building occupier or a third part appointed to act on behalf of either party.

2. Who should become a Section 63 Advisor?

8. It is expected that the majority of Section 63 Advisors will be individuals who, beyond their existing role as a Non-domestic EPC Assessor (NDEA), are also existing construction professionals. Such persons should already be engaged in the provision of advice to building owners on the implementation of energy efficiency measures and in coordinating, managing, supervising or inspecting the installation of such works on the basis of that advice.
9. Such subsequent coordination, management, supervisory or inspection services lie outside the defined Section 63 Advisor role and the responsibility of the registering Approved Organisation.
10. However, the facility for a registered Advisor to provide such services with competence is important to enable continuity of the professional services offered to building owners who, due to plans to sell or lease a building, are subject to the regulations. This is discussed further in section 3.5.
11. Over and above existing competence as a NDEA, Section 63 Advisors should demonstrate:
 - competence in the application of the new assessment methodology for the production of Action Plans; and
 - an understanding of building construction and building services and the practical and successful implementation of physical improvement measures which will reduce energy use in buildings.
12. It is expected that the process of registration as a Section 63 Advisor will require demonstration of existing skills and knowledge, with a need for upskilling/training limited to the legislative context of the new assessment and the role and responsibilities of a Section 63 Advisor. This is discussed in more detail in section 4.
13. In setting criteria for membership, as noted in S63-007, the Operating Framework this role, AOs must ensure that those producing Action Plans have sufficient skills and knowledge to:
 - certify in accordance with the requirements of [The Assessment of Energy Performance of Non-domestic Buildings \(Scotland\) Regulations 2016](#);
 - carry out assessment and calculation in a consistent and accurate manner and in accordance with the prescribed Calculation Methodology, iSBEM v5.2g and S63GEN (available at the [UK NCM website](#));
 - use calculation software approved for use in Scotland and to understand and be able to explain the correct application of such tools;

- in discussion with the party requesting the Action Plan, identify and agree energy efficiency measures which are appropriate to the property being assessed, are practical to implement and are in accordance with the Building (Scotland) Regulations 2004 and their supporting Technical Handbooks (as published at www.gov.scot/BSD).
- carry out their role in a manner which accords with the provisions set out in the UK National Occupation Standard (NOS) cited in relation to the Section 63 Assessor role (referenced in Appendix A).

3. The role of the Approved Organisation

14. This section provides further commentary on some of the functions identified in the Operating Framework that must be implemented by an Approved Organisation when undertaking the registration and management of Section 63 Advisors.

3.1 Overview

15. The functional requirements of a body appointed as an Approved Organisation registering individuals as Section 63 Advisors is set out in the BSD document 'S63-007 – Operating Framework for Approved Organisations – Production of Action Plans for Existing Non-domestic Buildings', published at www.gov.scot/section63.
16. A required criterion for appointment of an individual as a Section 63 Advisor is current and ongoing registration as a non-domestic EPC Assessor (NDEA). Registration of Section 63 Advisors will therefore be undertaken only by Approved Organisations that have successfully entered into a protocol for the registration of NDEAs.
17. Where an existing Approved Organisation seeks to extend their protocol to cover this new role, many of the requirements set out in the Operating Framework will already be established practice within the Organisation. However, these must still be evidenced in an application to extend current protocols to include the new Section 63 Advisor function.
18. A summary of the key areas in which provisions for the registration and management of Section 63 Advisors vary from the underpinning NDEA protocol are summarised below.
- 1. Integrity and operational resilience
Processes implemented for the registration of NDEAs are considered robust and complete. No additional or variant provisions are introduced for the new Advisor role. Any future enhancements to the Operating Framework will be developed in line with review of the same documents for other registered roles.
 - 2. Registration of individuals as Section 63 Advisors -
2.1 Entry criteria for initial membership - In addition to prequalification as a NDEA, criteria specific to registration as a Section 63 Advisor role are defined. These are discussed in more detail in section 3.4
 - 3. Administer the operation of Section 63 Advisors

3.1 Resourcing and indemnity – level of indemnity cover required when undertaking the new Advisor role.

3.2 Publish and enforce a code of conduct for Advisors – reference to adherence to relevant UK NOS and provisions within other published documents are defined.

3.5 Continued professional development of membership – additional topics relevant to Section 63 Advisor role defined.

3.6 Quality assurance of Advisor output and process - criteria specific to interrogation of the output of a Section 63 Advisor are defined. Reporting criteria are defined. These are discussed further in section 3.7

- 4. Maintain records to facilitate effective operation of the scheme and periodic audit by the Scottish Government

Processes currently implemented for the management of NDEAs are considered robust and complete. No additional or variant provisions are introduced for the new Advisor role. Enhancements to the Operating Framework will be developed in line with review of the same documents for other registered roles.

19. Further detail on aspects of the Operating Framework, where considered necessary to support consistency in application of provisions, is set out in the following sections.

3.2 The regulations

20. The duty on building owners to assess and improved qualifying non-domestic buildings is set out within [The Assessment of Energy Performance of Non-domestic Buildings \(Scotland\) Regulations 2016](#) (the regulations), with this duty further explained within two companion guidance documents, both published at www.gov.scot/section63:
- S63-001 Improving Energy Performance and Emissions in existing Non-Domestic Buildings – A Guide for Building Owners
 - S63-009 Improving Energy Performance and Emissions in existing Non-Domestic Buildings – Frequently Asked Questions
21. A summary of the provisions within the regulations is set out in section 2 of ‘A Guide for Building Owners’. Beyond this summary introduction to the regulations, there are further administrative provisions needed to support effective delivery of operations in support of the regulations. These are set out below.
22. **Lodgement Fees.** There are no powers under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act to apply a statutory lodgement fee to the submission of Action Plan (or DEC/AR) data to the SEPCR. Accordingly, a condition of extension of protocol will be agreement by the Approved Organisation to levy, collect and pass such

fees to the Keeper of the Register based upon a published statement on this requirement.

23. Failure on the part of a registered member to pay this register lodgement fee should be identified as a breach of the AO Code of Conduct. It is intended that the process already in place for lodgement of EPCs will be followed and the same total charge applied for lodgement of a non-domestic EPC.
24. AOs should however, be aware that, as this fee is not a statutory fee, it is subject to VAT at the standard rate. Accordingly, the charge (based upon current tariff) will be levied at £12.10 including VAT (£10.08 plus VAT)¹. Exactly the same provision will apply to the protocol for an Approved Organisation registering DEC Assessors, for lodgement of a DEC or Advisory Report.

3.3 Function and Resourcing as an Organisation

25. In application to extend a current appointment to include the protocol for Section 63 Advisors, it is deemed that organisations already operating registration for other assessor/Advisor strands will already meet requirements set out within Section 1 - 'Integrity and Operational Resilience' of the Operating Framework for this new role.

3.4 Registration of members - demonstrating initial competence

26. It is intended that registration as a Section 63 Advisor role be on the basis of demonstrated competence in the assessment methodology and in the provision of advice on energy efficiency improvements to buildings. In respect of the latter, individuals seeking registration should be in a position to demonstrate both how knowledge in such matters has been gained and how they have applied it.
27. Accordingly, as the focus of registration is on existing competence, training requirements should be primarily achieved via distribution of published material on the new regulations and advice on use of the new assessment elements within the iSBEM tool, to enable Advisors to understand and operate within a specific framework required by the regulations. The following is expected of a Section 63 Advisor.
28. **They must already be a registered, active non-domestic EPC assessor.** To support effective management of function, registration as a Section 63 Advisor must be with the Approved Organisation with whom the individual is registered for EPC purposes. Operation as a Section 63 Advisor is contingent

¹ Fee amended to reflect changes to statutory fees in [The Energy Performance of Buildings \(Scotland\) Amendment Regulations 2017](#), applicable from 1 October 2017.

on maintaining registration as a NDEA. It is expected that further registration be available only to NDEA who are active and whose output has been subject to audit with positive result.

29. To enable effective response to issues relating the quality of output or behaviour of registered members, any action taken by an Approved Organisation against a NDEA member in arising from audit, complaint or other breach of code of conduct which leads to suspension or termination, should be considered material to ongoing registration as a Section 63 Advisor.
30. In relation to In relation to item 2.2 of the Operating Framework ('Advisors are 'fit and proper' persons') it will be deemed that current registration as a NDEA is sufficient initially to demonstrate this criterion is met.
31. **They must be an existing construction professional who is able to demonstrate competence in the provision of energy advice.** In assessing suitability for membership as a Section 63 assessor, Approved Organisations are requested to assess the existing competence of applicants in the provision of tailored advice (considering the form, construction and condition of the building) on physical improvement to buildings that will reduce energy demand and to represent those savings correctly via the SBEM methodology.
32. The Scottish Government recognises that not all individuals currently registered as NDEAs may possess the knowledge and skills to offer detailed advice on building improvements or have the capacity to take such advice further in coordinating improvement work.
33. Applicants should hold qualification at **SVQ/NVQ level 4** in a relevant building, engineering or scientific discipline (e.g. a part time or full time course comprising at least 120 credits, leading to HNC/HND or above). Where applicants do not possess such a qualification, an Approved Organisation may consider applications from experienced practitioners, where this can be established via APEL. In this context, experienced practitioners are those with at least three years full-time experience of working on construction projects and providing advice on and implementing energy efficiency measures.
34. It is preferred, but not essential, that a Section 63 Advisor should hold membership of a professional organisation which operates principally in the construction sector. This includes, but is not limited to, professional institutes/institutions operating under charter.
35. In relation to the 'advice' element of the role, demonstration of existing competence in the provision of advice on energy efficiency improvements to buildings may be provided in a number of ways, including but not limited to:
 - i. Pre-existing registration under a scheme or programme which has already assessed and recognised such competence; or

- ii. Submission of evidence, in the form of case studies, of projects where the individual has prepared and issued advice on energy efficiency improvements, where such advice has subsequently been implemented.

3.5 Action beyond the Section 63 Advisor role.

36. It is important to note that the responsibility of a Section 63 Advisor is limited to the service they provide and the information they present in that role – the lodged Action Plan and information issued to the building owner in support of that Action Plan.
37. Similarly, the responsibility of an Approved Organisation extends to the quality and completeness of that information and the service provided by the Section 63 Advisor within the defined role for which they are registered.
38. It is intended that the skills of a Section 63 Advisor will enable them to continue their involvement with the building owner outwith their defined role. To this end, whilst it is not required that an individual registered as a Section 63 Advisor should offer separate professional services to manage the implementation of the recommendations for improvement listed in an Action Plan, it is important that they are competent to undertake such work where they choose to do so.
39. It is the responsibility of the individual to ensure such separate activity is adequately resourced and indemnified and that they will act in a manner in keeping with the professionalism and integrity expected of a Section 63 Advisor. It is also a requirement of registration that, in agreeing to the Approved Organisation's code of conduct, a registered member also makes a statement confirming the above in respect of such separate services.
40. **Limit of responsibility.** The responsibility of an Approved Organisation towards a member registered as a Section 63 Advisor is limited to the behaviour, processes and output arising from the execution of that role - the assessment and advice process, including the expectation in relation to the provision, format and completeness of information is discussed in Section 4.
41. Beyond that remit, an Approved Organisation need take no action unless in receipt of evidence that, outwith their role as a Section 63 Advisor, the registered member has acted in a manner that is not compatible with that of a 'fit and proper' person. Such evidence would usually relate to the outcome of an investigation of a member by a third party.

3.6 Management of member activity

42. It is not anticipated that management of the Section 63 Advisor role should attract provisions that depart in a significant way to those already in place for

NDEA members. Subject to there being clarity on manner in which the role and responsibilities are defined within the Approved Organisation's Code of Conduct and through reference to the Operating Framework and additional material either published in or referenced by this document.

43. **Suspension and termination.** It is expected that a member of an Approved Organisation shall take appropriate steps to discharge the responsibilities of membership and also respond appropriately to any issues that arise due to any notified breach of their Approved Organisation's Code of Conduct. Accordingly, any action taken by an Approved Organisation to suspend or terminate membership in response to a breach in the Code of Conduct for any other function for which a member is registered should be a material consideration in respect of continued registration as a Section 63 Advisor.

3.7 Quality Assurance

44. Quality Assurance of Advisor Output is identified in summary within item 3.6 of the Operating Framework. It is intended that QA of Action Plan process and output will build upon that already established and implemented for a NDEA. The statements in the Operating Framework will be supported by a concise audit manual prepared in discussion with Approved Organisations.
45. Audit of an Action Plan should encompass the audit of the underpinning EPC assessment where that assessment has not already been subject to audit. Information on QA for EPCs is provided separately in the Operating Framework for EPC assessors.
46. Where an EPC used as the basis of an Action Plan is audited separately under the NDEA protocol and is found to fail and must be replaced, the Section 63 Advisor should be notified of this and be required to review and replace the lodged Action Plan in response to the EPC Audit findings.
47. Beyond the assessment elements for target setting and demonstrating that measures proposed will achieve the targets identified for the building (quantitative check on calculation), it is recognised that QA of the advice provided by a Section 63 Advisor will be primarily qualitative. This must necessarily focus on an established minimum level of evidence offered to justify all decisions made, on the basis of information gathered by the Advisor.
48. This includes the following elements where evidence should be checked:
- **Record of initial discussion with client.** To assess any discussion over the application of the regulations (see paragraph 51) and, if assessment is progressed, assess adequacy of investigation on how current or intended use of the building may influence the measures recommended.
 - **Suitability of data used in the production of the Action Plan.** Record of the Advisor's assessment of the suitability of existing data sources, where

used (e.g. where reuse of previous EPC assessment data not produced by the Advisor occurs).

Completeness of site inspection record to enable calculation of targets to be rerun, where required (including evidence needed to support Advisor input for Section 63 prescriptive scenario). It is anticipated that this element will be covered to a great extent by provisions already in place for audit of ND EPC assessments.

- **Rationale behind initial set of alternative improvement measures and final set of measures recorded on the Action Plan.** Including any sources of information used by Advisor in arriving at recommendations. Record of discussions and decisions taken in agreeing final set of measures with client to provide audit trail setting out process of analysis of options and justification for final recommendations, including consideration of both the form and condition of the building and relevant operational considerations that may affect practicality and efficacy of measures.
- **Specific recording of evidence to support application of prescriptive measures.** The prescriptive measures used to set the energy performance and emissions targets are not likely to be the most appropriate or cost effective solutions to improve the building. In some cases, they act as a proxy for improvement of a certain type (see advice on situations where prescribed measures are retained in section 5.6). The Advisor should record sufficient evidence to satisfy an auditor that a prescribed measure was retained for good reason.

Where this relates to a request from the building owner to apply prescribed measures rather than develop alternative solutions, this must be clearly evidenced and together with any necessary caveat issued to the building owner on the relative efficacy of this approach compared to an alternative. Note that retention of prescriptive measures should be rare as an Advisor is duty bound to produce at least one alternative set of measures for discussion with the building owner (e.g. there is no saving in Advisor fee or time in a client instructing adoption of prescribed measures).

- **Supporting information for each recommended measure on the final Action Plan.** Qualitative assessment of supporting material to determine if sufficient information was provided to enable building owner to take package of measures and individual improvements forward (see section 5.5)

3.8 Support and Development

49. It is expected that Approved organisations registering Section 63 Advisors will support members in the following areas:

- Provide initial **technical and procedural support** to Advisor members, to assist in front line resolution of common questions on implementation of the assessment methodology;
- Provide **constructive feedback** and recommendations for action/training in response to failures identified by the Action Plan QA process;
- Provide access to **sources of further information** that may assist building owners in implementing building improvement measures. In this Approved Organisations will be supported by the Scottish Government via the provision of information updates on sources of information - relevant to owners of affected buildings – on current sources of further information, advice and (where available) support initiatives and funding.
- All Approved Organisations will participate in **correspondence and periodic meetings** to establish and develop conventions which should be applied in undertaking the Section 63 role. The purpose of such conventions is, as for those produced in support of the EPC Assessor function, to assist Advisors in implementation of the assessment and advice process correctly and consistently. Accordingly, they will enable involvement of Advisor members in such a forum to ensure that, where relevant, issues arising from the Action Plan process are raised, discussed and resolved.

3.9 Reporting

50. Each Approved Organisation registering Section 63 Advisors shall provide a quarterly statistical report to the Scottish Government, detailing the following aspects of operations:
- New registrations – successful and unsuccessful applications; appeals against unsuccessful applications and outcome.
 - Existing members – complaints received and outcome; suspensions and terminations, categorised by nature of breach of code of conduct.
 - Number of lodgments undertaken; number of QA audits, nature of audits (trigger); number of successful audits; number of unsuccessful audits, recommendations and subsequent action.

4. The role of the Section 63 Advisor

51. This section sets out the role of the Section 63 Advisor in more detail, covering the main activities undertaken. Additional information on key stages in the assessment and advice process are provided in section 5.

4.1 The components of the Role

52. Building upon the skill set of the non-domestic EPC assessor, the Section 63 Advisor role is a further assessor/Advisor role.
53. Action by the Section 63 Advisor is based upon an existing EPC and accompanying data being available for a non-domestic building, either produced by the Advisor or produced by a third party and checked as suitable by the Advisor.
54. In relation to the latter, the Advisor, as an EPC Assessor will be aware of the limitations associated with access to EPC data in the absence of supporting information such as clear indication of how zones in an assessed building are categorised and identified.
55. In discussion with a building owner, a Section 63 Advisor will:
- explain the purpose of further assessment and improvement under the regulations; explain the requirements under regulations (noting that it is not the role of the Section 63 Advisor to determine whether a building is subject to the regulations, that being the responsibility of the building owner).
 - familiarise themselves with the building in question (if they have not already done so through EPC production); discuss and record the current operation and use of the building to enable assessment of how current energy use may affect recommendations for improvement.
 - calculate the carbon and energy improvement targets for that building;
 - via an alternative measures package, offer advice to the building owner on the ways in which the targets can be met, talking specific regard of both the appropriateness of any improvement measures to the building, the current building specification and condition (including issues such as near end-of life systems) and what may be most beneficial to the owner in relation to how the building is used.
 - record this advice and the decision of the owner via a standard reporting format (Action Plan) on the Scottish EPC register; and
 - Provide the building owners with additional information in support of the improvement measures identified on the Action Plan, to enable measures to be taken forward.

56. There are three components relevant to this new role:
- prequalification as a Non-domestic Energy Assessor (NDEA);
 - implementing the new assessment process that creates improvement targets for qualifying non-domestic buildings; and
 - the subsequent provision of advice on improvement measures and the recording of this information on an Action Plan and supporting documentation.

4.2 Registration as a Non-domestic EPC Assessor.

57. This is required to address:
- understanding of the calculation methodology (ND NCM) used to determine asset-based building performance and quantify the benefit of improvement measures;
 - the application of that methodology in practice, via approved software tools, to assess the carbon and energy performance of an existing building and provision of general advice on measures which if implemented would improve that performance; and
 - operation in accordance with the provision set out in both the Scottish Government's Operating Framework and the UK National Occupational Standards for NDEAs.

4.3 Section 63 – additional assessment role

58. The Section 63 Advisor will initially be able to explain the background to and the application of the relevant legislation, set out in [The Assessment of Energy Performance of Non-domestic Buildings \(Scotland\) Regulations 2016](#) and the supporting policy guidance document.
59. To assist a building owner in determining if the building in question is subject to the need for assessment under the new regulations, the Advisor will explain the provisions set out in regulations, including the listed exemptions and explain the evidence needed to demonstrate and record that a building which meets any exemption is exempt.
- *Note: It is not the role of the Section 63 Advisor to determine if a building is subject to the regulations, that being the responsibility of the owner or their legal representatives. For the majority of cases, it is intended that this will be addressed via information on a recent ND EPC and Recommendations Report, which will not require further investigation by the Building owner – see Section 5.1 for more details.*
60. Once data from an EPC assessment is available and verified by the Section 63 Advisor as usable for further assessment (discussed in section 5.2), the Section

63 Advisor undertakes a further simple assessment, providing additional building data, to determine the energy and emissions improvement targets for the building.

61. This is undertaken via approved software, which, based upon information input by the Advisor, will apply all the measures from a list of seven prescribed improvements which are relevant to the existing building. The resultant improvement targets, together with the applicable prescribed measures, are reported on a draft Action Plan. Where none of the measures are applicable, the improvement targets will be reported as zero. See section 5.3 for more information.

4.4 Section 63 – additional advice role

62. The prescriptive measures used to calculate the improvement target are available as a default package of measures but application of these in practice will be unlikely to offer the best solution for an individual building. There is therefore a need to provide building owners with advice on more appropriate and cost effective measures which will also meet the improvement targets.
63. Once data from both an EPC (listing generic recommended measures) and the improvement targets are identified via the two assessment elements (above), the Section 63 Advisor and the building owner discuss what improvement measures are likely to be most relevant and appropriate to the particular circumstances of that building.
64. Prior to such discussion, and based upon information gathered from inspection and earlier discussion with the building owner on how the building is used, the Section 63 Advisor must prepare **at least one set of alternative measures** which meet the improvement targets. This set of measures should be tailored to the actual building and be offered as a practical and relevant improvement strategy, for further discussion.
65. Whilst this process is not intended to include a detailed discussion on cost of improvement, it will involve a degree of comparison between the relative cost of options.
 - Note: to provide such advice it is essential that a Section 63 Advisor is familiar with building construction and the practical application of energy efficiency improvement measures to buildings. The knowledge and experience of the assessor should be appropriate for the type of buildings which are assessed and for which advice is given – this should consider both the complexity of the building (per categorisation of ND EPC assessor role), whether the building under assessment is an older or traditional building²

² As discussed in ASTSOTV1-3, published at <http://nos.ukces.org.uk/>

(which will generally require specialist knowledge and a more in-depth investigation of the suitability of fabric improvement measures) and more general issues such as the condition of the building.

66. The Section 63 Advisor will also make the building owner aware of any further sources of advice, incentives or funding that could be considered in taking forward improvement measures. This would be intended to cover current Scottish and UK sources, as available on an ongoing basis. In addition to government schemes, include awareness of broader commercial incentives, such as contract energy management, that may offer incentives that could subsidise improvement, reducing capital cost to owner. Resources to assist in this discussion will be provided by the Approved Organisation and the Scottish Government.
67. This process enables the Advisor, with the agreement of the building owner, to then record a final set of improvement measures on the Action Plan which, if implemented, will meet both the improvement targets.
68. All improvement measures listed on a lodged Action Plan must be supported with supplementary information, issued directly to the building owner, setting out sufficient information to enable the measure to be undertaken (see section 5.5).

4.5 Recording of information - initial assessment of building

69. Following agreement on the measures to be recorded, the Section 63 Advisor will record whether the building owner intends to implement the measures within the required timescale (3.5 years from the date of issue of the first Action Plan for the building) or to defer implementation by the reporting of annual operational ratings via lodgement of a Display Energy Certificate (DEC).
70. The Section 63 Advisor must explain the implications of each choice to the building owner, including that the option to report annual operational ratings, once started, may only stop once the improvement measures identified on the current Action Plan are completed and signed off. See section 5.6.
71. They must make the owner aware that the option to defer improvement by reporting operational ratings must only be exercised within 12 months of the date of issue of the first Action Plan for a building. After that period, the Advisor may not produce a new Action Plan for the building that records a change from 'implement measures' to 'report operational ratings' and the owner cannot therefore choose to defer improvement by reporting operational ratings.
72. If the operational ratings route is chosen, the Section 63 Advisor must seek written confirmation from the building owner that this further assessment will be undertaken, and data lodged to the SEPCR, without undue delay. The client should be advised that failure to lodge a DEC within 28 days may result in the Action Plan being marked 'not for issue' and require lodgement of a new Action Plan.

73. Additionally, where a new lease is the trigger for assessment, the Advisor can also record whether the building owner has agreed with the tenant to delegate responsibility for action (reporting or improvement) to the tenant. The Advisor has no involvement in this arrangement beyond recording the owner's choice as part of data lodged to the SEPCR. The Advisor should also make the building owner aware that, regardless of any delegation, responsibility under regulations to improve the building remains with the owner.
- *Note that a Section 63 Advisor can also, separately, be registered as a DEC Assessor to provide this subsequent service. The further optional role of DEC Assessor would come into play where a building owner chooses to defer improvement by reporting annual operational ratings. A short note on the DEC Assessor role is provided in Appendix B.*

4.6 Recording of information - subsequent assessments

74. An Action Plan will usually be first produced in support of the sale or rental (to a new tenant) of a qualifying building. In the case of a sale, the responsibility to implement the decision (improve or report) recorded on the Action Plan is transferred to the new owner of the building. A building owner may choose, at any time, to commission a new Action Plan which may:
- record a change in the physical status of the building (e.g. if alterations or renovations have been undertaken which may affect the setting of improvement targets or the relevance of recommended measures;
 - apply a different set of improvement measures to meet the improvement targets;
 - record a change in the route recorded from 'implement improvement measures' to 'report operational ratings' (provided this is done within 12 months of the date of issue of the first Action Plan for the building);
 - amend the statement on any delegation to a tenant; or
 - record that improvement measures are complete and the duty under regulations is now discharged (see next item).
75. It is critical that, where the subject of assessment remains unchanged, any new Action Plan should retain exactly the same identifying data for the building as the first Action Plan produced.
76. The Advisor must also determine that the building under assessment has not changed materially since the last assessment and there are no changes implemented that would result in the current Action Plan and EPC data no longer being representative. Where the Advisor produced the previous Action Plan, this provision can be addressed by written confirmation from the building

owner. Where the Adviser has no previously carried out a site inspection, this would be required to validate the data used for the new Action Plan.

77. Similar, any subsequent Action Plan must retain the same planned completion date as that recorded in the first Action Plan (the period within which improvement must be completed is set by the date of the first Action Plan assessment).

4.7 Recording of information - signing off duty to improve

78. Where a building owner has chosen to implement improvement measures or where operational ratings measures are reported and the owner wishes to undertake and complete improvement measures to enable reporting of operational ratings to cease, the following action is required.
79. First, the improvement works scheduled on the Action Plan are undertaken and completed and a new EPC is produced that records the status of the improved building.
80. The Section 63 Advisor will then produce a new Action Plan that is identical to the previous Action Plan with the exception that:
 - The Report Reference Number for the EPC used for the assessment will be that of the new, post-improvement EPC; and
 - The actual date of completion of the improvement works is also recorded.
81. Where this new Action Plan (the 'document of confirmation of improvement') and the post-improvement EPC are recorded on the Scottish EPC register, this provides evidence that the owner has met the requirements of the regulations are met in full.

4.8 Recording of information - signing off duty to improve where building status changes to 'exempt'

82. Where a building has an existing EPC and a corresponding Section 63 Action Plan and the building owner has elected to implement improvements unrelated to those recommended in the Action Plan, the current EPC and Action Plan may no longer be representative and changes must be represented in any new assessment. If the new EPC assessment shows the building now meets 2002 standards, the process outlined below can be followed to create a final Action Plan to record the exemption.
83. This process references the new EPC assessment, which confirms the exemption, and provides a statement on the Action Plan to this effect using the 'alternative measures' section. The steps below assumes the Assessor has started a new Action Plan based upon the new EPC assessment and has run the prescribed measures to generate improvement targets.

- i. Go to General / General Information tab.
 - In 'Project details', choose 'Alternative Scenarios' as stage of analysis.
 - In 'Section 63 details', enter the date of certificate from the exempting EPC as the Actual completion date.
 - In 'Building details' enter the RRN of exempting EPC.
 - ii. Go to General / S63 Alternative Measures tab.
 - In 'General' tab, create new record name "Building now exempt as it meets 2002 standard.
 - In the Description box below, enter text to record actions "Building now exempt as it meets 2002 standards. RRN of exempting EPC now recorded on Action Plan. Actual Completion date recorded as date of certificate for exempting EPC."
 - In 'Alternative measures' tab, create a new measure titled "Building now exempt as it meets 2002 standard. Refer to cited EPC RRN."
 - In 'Prescribed measures' tab, untick all boxes in the 'select prescribed to include/exclude in your alternative scenario' column.
 - iii. Go to main 'Ratings' tab.
 - Run 'Section 63 Assessment for Alternative Measures'. This will report zero savings for both targets under 'Alternative Measures'.
 - View S63 Report. This will show the information input above is recorded.
 - iv. The xml from this amended assessment can now be lodged to the register as the final Action Plan.
84. A reference/copy of the Action Plan and the Referenced EPC should be provided to the building owner as confirmation that no further action is needed to meet a duty under the current S63 regulations

5. Additional guidance on the Action Plan Process

85. This section provides additional commentary on specific elements of the Action Plan process. This is intended to support effective and consistent reporting and response to the circumstances identified in the following paragraphs. This information may also be supported by separate, published conventions on the application of the Action Plan process – document ‘SG-005 Action Plan Methodology – Conventions’, published at www.gov.scot/section63.

5.1 Initial discussions with Client – pre-assessment

86. Explain context of assessment and regulatory requirement on building owners. Explain service that would be provided where assessment is needed, including that it would include at least one illustration of a tailored set of improvement measures where initial assessment identifies energy performance and emissions improvement targets.
- *Note: the Advisor is not expected to offer professional advice on whether the building in question is subject to regulations as this, ultimately, requires a legal opinion. The Advisor should refer the building owner to the published regulations and supporting guidance which is intended to assist in such decisions.*
87. Explain the limits of the service provided under the Section 63 Advisor role – that it is limited to the production of the Action Plan and issue of supporting information on identified improvements. That any subsequent services provided would be under separate agreement and outwith the Advisor role.
88. Where undertaking production of a new Action Plan, to replace a previous Action, plan, the provision in section 4.6 should be noted and confirmation be sought on any subsequent changes to the building that would affect the existing assessment data.

5.2 Collating information needed to produce an Action Plan

89. If confirmed that assessment is needed, discuss and record the owner’s intent – how building is used, current main areas of energy use and cost (where known, noting that this may also become clear from assessment during site visit), the condition of the building and any planned maintenance or refurbishment work which may make certain improvements more practical.
90. Identify relevant EPC data for use in Action Plan assessment. This will either be an EPC assessment undertaken by the Section 63 Advisor or existing EPC data, from a lodgement made to the SEPCR under v5.2g (or under 4.1e and converted) that is examined by the Advisor and deemed suitable.
91. Reuse of existing EPC data will require the Advisor to apply the information retrieved from the SEPCR to successfully recreate a correctly zoned and

described building model, with all elements of building specification validated as part of the site inspection.

92. This will effectively require the Advisor to duplicate the site evidence recorded for an EPC assessment where they were not also the original EPC assessor. Site inspection must also gather evidence to support input on the elements within the building specific to the prescriptive scenario of the Action Plan (accessible roof spaces, age of boilers) as noted in section 4.4 of the iSBEM Section 63 User Guide which notes:
- 'accessible roof space' should be assigned only where there is a roof space and that roof space is of a height or has a form of access that makes it accessible to enable the installation of additional insulation - a fixed (normally horizontal) division between an occupied area of the building and an unoccupied roof space, such as a fixed ceiling with hatch access to a space large enough for operatives to work within. The Advisor should retain documentary evidence to show the extent to which roof spaces present in the building are accessible and how this has informed this element of the assessment.
 - 'boiler replacement' where the boiler is older than 15 years (if the heat source is of type LT/MT/HTHW boiler). In determining age of boiler, check the boiler information obtained from inspection against sources such as manufacturing period on the Product Characteristics Database. Documentary information on the installation may also be available from the building owner.
93. Additionally, if the assigned air infiltration rate for any zone in the building is greater than 14 m³/h/m², iSBEM will assign improvement of 'Draught-stripping windows and doors' and report improvement arising from a reduction in the infiltration rate of 10% for each such zone. Advisors should follow published conventions (per 3.4 of the iSBEM EPC guide) in assigning the infiltration rate to the building.
- *Note that values identified for post-2002 buildings will not be relevant for the purpose of this assessment as such buildings are exempt from the need to produce an Action Plan.*

5.3 Generating Improvement targets

94. Following the guidance in iSBEM Section 63 User Guide, generate the improvement targets for the building.
95. If no prescriptive measures apply to the building, the improvement target will be zero. Where this occurs, the building will have no improvement targets and the Action Plan may be lodged to record this. This process is described within

section 4.6 of 'S63-004 - A User Guide to Section 63 Assessments for Scotland using iSBEM', published at www.gov.scot/section63.

96. If one or more prescriptive measures apply, improvement targets will be identified. Based upon information gathered, the Advisor will then prepare an illustration of alternative measures package that will deliver the level of savings identified in the targets before generating a draft Action Plan for discussion with the building owner.

Example of Draft Action Plan with zero improvement targets

Section 63 Action Plan				Scotland	
Date of sale/lease	16 Jun 2016	UPRN	1234567890		
Date of assessment	30 May 2016	Date of plan	07 Jun 2016		
Action Plan RRN	0750-1945-9936-8070-6024	EPC RRN	0000-0000-0000-0000-0000		
Address	Acorn Place, Oak Business Park, Treesville, EH54 6GA				
Parties Involved in Production of Action Plan					
Owner	Y	Tenant/Delegated person	N		
Assessor ID	EES/100000	Delegated protocol set up	-	Date	-
Improvement Type					
Building improvements	Y	Operational rating	N		
Prescriptive Improvement Measures					
Description					Valid
Central time heating control					N
Lighting controls					N
Draught-stripping windows and doors					N
Hot water storage insulation					N
Lamp replacement					N
Boiler replacement					N
Roof insulation					N
Target emission savings [kgCO ₂ /m ² .year]	0				
Target energy savings [kWh/m ² .year]	0				
Accept prescriptive improvements					Y
If No, go to alternative improvements					
Operational Rating System					
Display Energy Certificate and Advisory Report lodged in register and displayed in building					-
Refer to Display Energy Certificate to view operational rating and CO ₂ emissions over previous 3 years.					
Completion Of Improvements (Prescriptive or Alternative)					
Planned completion date	07 Jun 2016	Actual completion date	07 Jun 2016		
This page is the Action Plan which must be lodged in the national electronic register and must be updated when the improvements have been completed.					

97. Where the Advisor considers that, due to their suitability and general cost effectiveness, any of the applicable prescriptive measures should continue to be recommended, these may be cited within the package of alternative

measures. The software will identify these as prescribed measures. Advice on how to describe and represent these measures in supporting documentation is discussed in section 5.4.

5.4 Provisions when retaining prescribed measures in Action Plan

98. There are two situations where prescribed measures may be retained and presented on a final Action Plan, either in full or in part.
 - Where a building owner requests that the Section 63 Advisor record the prescriptive measures applicable to the building as the improvement measures listed on the final Action Plan.
 - Where the Advisor, after considering other alternative improvement measures, considers that there is merit in retaining one or more of the prescriptive measures as part of the recommendations for the building.
99. In the first scenario, the Section 63 Advisor should notify the building owner that adoption of the prescribed measures is not likely to offer the most appropriate and cost effective solution to meeting the two improvement targets. The alternative measures package identified in the draft action plan should be cited as an illustration of this point. Written confirmation that this is understood and accepted by the building owner should be obtained prior to finalising the Action Plan.
100. The logic of application of each of the seven prescribed measures is set out in Appendix A of 'S63-004 - A User Guide to Section 63 Assessments for Scotland using iSBEM'. In all cases, where a prescribed measure is retained on the final Action Plan, the following additional information on developing and presenting the measures to the building owner should be considered.
101. **Draught-stripping windows and doors** – advisors will note that, due to the challenges of achieving (and demonstrating) a particular improvement in infiltration rate, assigning this improvement as a prescribed improvement and detailing the necessary works will not be practical. Accordingly, the following approach should be adopted at the start of the 'Alternative scenarios' stage of analysis where this prescribed measure is retained :
102. To determine the savings associated with this prescribed measure alone:
 - If 'draught-stripping windows and doors' is the only applicable measure, then the calculated energy performance and emissions targets are the relevant savings.
 - If 'draught-stripping windows and doors' is not the only applicable measure, in General/S63 Alternative Measures, on the 'prescribed measures' tab, exclude all prescribed measures except 'draught-stripping windows and doors'. Go to the 'Ratings' Tab and click on the 'Section 63 Assessment for

Alternative Measures' button. Under 'Alternative Measures', this will report a value for the proportion of the overall energy and carbon savings targets associated with 'draught stripping'.

103. Once these figures are known and recorded within the Advisor's project notes, the Advisor may then develop one or more fabric-based improvement measures that result in savings that meet or improve upon these targets.
104. These measures need not be reported on the Action Plan where 'draught-proofing' is listed as a prescribed improvement. Instead, the actual fabric improvement proposed to deliver the same outcome should be scheduled in the supporting document for the prescriptive improvement measure, noting, in introduction, that *"The owner has chosen to implement the prescribed measure 'Draught stripping windows and doors'. As this measure is a proxy for a reduction in fabric heat loss, and would not usually be achieved via a targeted reduction in building infiltration, the following fabric improvements, which will deliver the same calculated benefit, should be undertaken instead"*.

5.5 Provisions specific to all alternative measures

105. As noted any recommendation recorded in the final Action Plan must first be discussed with the building owner (including in relation to relative cost compared to other options) and be practical to implement. It should be recognised that all measures must be in accordance with the provisions set out under the Building (Scotland) Regulations 2004
106. Any recommended measures that affect the external appearance or character of the building should be discussed with the building owner to flag the potential need to seek statutory approval under planning legislation to enable such measures to be undertaken. Such measures should only be included in the final action plan where the building owner has confirmed that they are content to progress such investigations separately on that basis
107. **Building fabric improvements** - any recommendation for improvement to elements of building fabric must include a moisture/condensation risk assessment. This is particularly important in buildings of traditional construction and reference is made to the specific provisions set out in the published Green Deal NOS in relation to recommendations in such areas.
108. Assessment is sought to mitigate the risk of adverse effect arising from inappropriate recommendations resulting in issues such as surface or interstitial condensation or exacerbation of pre-existing conditions. Where the condition of the building suggests the need for either further investigation or remedial action prior to implementing measures, this should also be noted.
109. **Lighting improvements (lamp replacement)** – any lighting or lamp replacement measure identified on an Action Plan must be specified or calculated on the basis of either a lighting design or specification of a known

efficacy and LOR for replacement lamps for each affected zone. The option to specify a generic lighting category under 'lighting parameters not available' must not be used to model improvement.

5.6 Action where reporting Operational Ratings route

110. As noted in section 4.5, an Advisor must make the owner aware that the option to defer improvement by reporting operational ratings must only be exercised within 12 months of the date of issue of the first Action Plan for a building. After that period, the Advisor may not produce a new Action Plan for the building that records a change from 'implement measures' to 'report operational ratings' and the owner cannot therefore choose to defer improvement by reporting operational ratings.
111. An advisor must also advise the owner of the implications of ceasing to report operational ratings. Building owners should be aware that failure to meet reporting requirements where the 'Operational Rating' route is chosen will result in a need for further or alternative action. Following production of the initial DEC, failure to lodge a DEC within the required annual reporting period:
- within 42 months of the date of the first Action Plan for the building will mean that the option to report operational ratings is no longer available to the building owner and improvement work must be completed within that 42 month period to avoid enforcement action.
 - more than 42 months after the date of the first Action Plan for the building will attract enforcement action unless improvement works are also complete and recorded via lodgment of a post-improvement EPC and new Action Plan recording the new EPC RRN and the date improvements were complete.

5.7 Information issued in support of lodged Action Plan

112. In addition to the lodged final Action Plan, a building owner must be provided with a summary statement on the planned package of measures and further information relevant to the implementation of each improvement measure identified.
113. Each of the measures identified on an Action Plan must be supported by a statement which provides the building owner with sufficient information to either:
- implement the measure (if simple and straight forward – e.g. any action associated with implementing the measure could reasonably be expected to be undertaken by the owner or by a contractor engaged to undertake the work) or

- gather further information needed to implement the measure (if the above is not the case, such as a need for further, invasive survey or inspection by a specialist prior to confirming action).
114. For each measure, an outline specification for the proposed improvement should be provided, together with information identifying which parts of the building are affected by the measure. An example template for reporting on both summary and individual measures (below) is provided in Annex C.
115. Where the final Action Plan records that operational ratings will be reported as means of deferring the completion of improvement measures, the Advisor should, within the information package issued, also notify the building owner of the obligations this imposes and the implications should reporting lapse.

5.7 Conventions for assessment

116. In line with the approach taken in the production of Non-domestic EPCs, a separate document containing information on any additional conventions to be applied in the preparation of assessment and advice will be published and maintained, with regular input from Approved Organisations registering Section 63 Advisors. This document, 'SG-005 Action Plan Methodology – Conventions', will be published at www.gov.scot/section63.

Annex A – Documents defining the Section 63 Advisor role

Prequalification

117. A Section 63 Advisor will already be a non-domestic EPC assessor registered via a Scottish Approved Organisation in accordance with S63-007 - Operating Framework for Approved Organisations – production of Action Plans for existing non-domestic buildings (published at www.gov.scot/section63). This framework includes a requirement to apply relevant current National Occupational Standards identified for this role (set out in the NOS ASTNDEA suite of documents).

Mapping Advisor role to existing published GD NOS

118. For the Section 63 Advisor role, definition of the role through NOS draws from elements already published in relation to the Green Deal Advisor role
- *Note: prior qualification as a non-domestic Green Deal Advisor would demonstrate initial competence of the principle functions required for the Section 63 process as they relate to the provision of advice in relation to measures in an Action Plan, subject also to reference to the provisions in this document S63-006 and conventions agreed and published as document S63-005.*
119. However, it is recognised that there was not significant implementation on non-domestic Green Deal in Scotland. Accordingly, an Approved Organisation who enters into a protocol with the Scottish Government to register and manage Section 63 Assessors should also refer to the relevant aspects of National Occupational Standards for the Green Deal Advisor role, as set out below.
120. All references to “Green Deal (or equivalent programme)” will refer to assessment and advice provided in relation to the production of an Action Plan under [The Assessment of Energy Performance of Non-domestic Buildings \(Scotland\) Regulations 2016](#), as further set out in the companion policy guide produced by the Scottish Government.
121. Comment on any elements of specific NOS are provided below:
- ASTGDA1** – ‘Provide information to customers on the principles, financing and operation of the Green Deal (or equivalent programme)’ - <http://nos.ukces.org.uk/PublishedNos/ASTGDA1.pdf>
- This NOS is heavily focussed toward the specifics of Green Deal process and, in particular, the Advisor/Provider relationship, conflict of interest, and funding of measures. It remains broadly relevant to the equivalent processes under Section 63 legislation which would also be set out at a functional level

within the Scottish Government Operating Framework for the Section 63 Advisor role.

- In relation to specific provisions of the NOS, P4-5, 8 & 11-14 and K6, 7, 9-13, 15, 17-19, 22 & 24-15 describe functions specific to Green Deal and need not be addressed under the Section 63 Advisor role.
- Reference under K3 should read as “non-domestic sector”.

ASTGDA5 – ‘*Carry out Non-domestic inspections to determine Operational Profile and give advice*’ - <http://nos.ukces.org.uk/PublishedNos/ASTGDA5.pdf>

- This NOS offers more prescription that is necessary for the purpose of a Section 63 assessment but describes the need for an Advisor to establish an understanding of how a building is used to enable the most appropriate advice on physical improvement measures to be given to a client. This includes understanding and communicating the potential difference between modelled and actual performance of the building.

ASTGDA6 – ‘*Prepare and issue Non-domestic Green Deal (or equivalent programme) Advice Reports*’ - <http://nos.ukces.org.uk/PublishedNos/ASTGDA6.pdf>

- Note that all references to “Non-domestic Green Deal (or equivalent programme) Advice Reports” should be considered to refer to “Action Plans” as the Section 63 ‘document of record’.
- In relation to specific provisions of the NOS, P20, 23-24 and K22-26 describe functions specific to Green Deal and need not be addressed under the Section 63 Advisor role.

ASTGDA7 – ‘*Explain the Green Deal (or equivalent programme) Advice report to the Non-domestic customer*’ - <http://nos.ukces.org.uk/PublishedNos/ASTGDA7.pdf>

- Note that all references to “Non-domestic Green Deal (or equivalent programme) Advice Reports” or “recommendations reports” should be considered to refer to “Action Plans” as the Section 63 document of record.
- In relation to specific provisions of the NOS, P11, 13, 17, 22-24 and K13 & 18 describe functions specific to Green Deal and need not be addressed under the Section 63 Advisor role. General provisions on explaining the separation of the Section 63 Advisor role with any other subsequent service the Advisor offers remain applicable.

ASTSOTV1 – ‘*Recognise the age, nature and characteristics of older and traditional buildings*’ - <http://nos.ukces.org.uk/PublishedNos/ASTSOTV1.pdf>

ASTSOTV2 – ‘Evaluate the appropriate options for the introduction of energy efficiency measures to older and traditional buildings’ - <http://nos.ukces.org.uk/PublishedNos/ASTSOTV2.pdf>

ASTSOTV3 – ‘Make recommendations and give advice on the introduction of energy efficiency measures in older and traditional buildings’ - <http://nos.ukces.org.uk/PublishedNos/ASTSOTV3.pdf>

- For ASTSOTV1-3 - Green Deal NOS on assessment of traditional buildings are intended to apply where the building under assessment is of traditional construction. However, we consider that the principles set out are equally applicable and should be reinforced in the assessment of any existing building for tailored advice on how to improve, with particular reference to fabric interventions.

Section 63 - specific sources of information

122. To register individuals as Section 63 Advisors, Approved Organisations must enter into a further protocol with The Scottish Government and implement ‘S63-007 - the Operating Framework for Approved Organisations - Production Of Action Plans For Existing Non-Domestic Buildings, published at www.gov.scot/section63.

123. Over and above the provisions described in the published NOS and demonstrating competence in the provision of advice on energy efficiency improvements, individuals registering as Section 63 Advisors are required to demonstrate they are able to:

- certify in accordance with the requirements of The Assessment of Energy Performance of Non-domestic Buildings (Scotland) Regulations 2016; explain both the context and application of the regulations (information delivered primarily through information contained in the Scottish Government policy document);
- carry out assessment and calculation required to produce Action Plans in a consistent and accurate manner and in accordance with the prescribed Calculation Methodology; use calculation software approved for use in Scotland and to understand and be able to explain the correct application of such tools;
- in discussion with the party requesting the Action Plan, identify and agree energy efficiency measures which are appropriate to the property being assessed, are practical to implement and are in accordance with the Building (Scotland) Regulations 2004.
- be aware of and be able to provide advice on sources of further assistance or funding (beyond the Green Deal framework) on an evolving basis.

124. This will be achieved by reference to Scottish Government publications and through ‘top up’ training provided by the registering Approved Organisation.

Referenced Scottish Government publications (see www.gov.scot/section63):

reference	Document title
S63-000	The Assessment of Energy Performance of Non-domestic Buildings (Scotland) Regulations 2016 and supporting policy note.
S63-001	Improving Energy Performance and Emissions in existing Non-Domestic Buildings - A guide for Building Owners (plus summary leaflet S63-001a)
S63-004	A user guide to Section 63 Assessments For Scotland using iSBEM
S63-005	Action Plan Methodology - Conventions
S63-006	Section 63 Practitioner Handbook
S63-007	Operating Framework for Approved Organisations – production of Action Plans for existing non-domestic buildings
S63-009	Improving Energy Performance and Emissions in existing Non-Domestic Buildings – Frequently Asked Questions
S63-015	Scottish Government information resource – advice and resources to assist in improving the energy efficiency of existing non-domestic buildings

Annex B – The DEC Assessor role for Scotland

125. Registration of individuals as DEC assessors is already well established in processes implemented elsewhere in the UK. In defining the Scottish Operating Framework (OF) for the role, it is intended that organisations presently implementing the DCLG Scheme Operating Requirements (SOR) for operational ratings assessments will already meet the provisions of the OF
126. Accordingly, beyond publication of the Operating Framework for this role, It is not intended that comprehensive documentation outlining the registration, management and function of the DEC Assessor be provided. The operating Framework is published at www.gov.scot/section63 as 'S63-008 Operating Framework for Approved Organisations – production of Display Energy Certificates and Advisory'.
127. The DEC Assessor role is a separate role and function but Section 63 Advisors may wish to also be trained and registered as a DEC assessor to enable them to provide a complete service to client who chooses to report operational ratings or, more generally, for the production of operational ratings assessments outwith application of the section 63 regulations.
128. It is proposed, as elsewhere in the UK, that the DEC assessor role will be a stand-alone registration and parties not seeking to be section 63 advisors can become DEC assessors.
129. A DEC assessor will gather information and record the operational energy use of a non-domestic building. The requirements for this role are the same as the current UK DEC assessor registration and the provisions set out within the relevant UK NOS (ASTOR2-5). For Scotland, additional guidance is published to provide information on the differences in regulatory context for DEC's in Scotland compared to the rest of the UK. This can be found in:
- [S63-002 - A Guide to Display Energy Certificates and Advisory Reports for Buildings](#)
 - [S63-003 - Methodology for the production of Operational Ratings, Display Energy Certificates and Advisory Reports in Scotland](#)
130. As in the rest of the UK, the DEC Assessor will gather data, produce a draft Display Energy Certificate (and optional Advisory Report) and, following discussion with the building owner, lodge that data to the EPC register to enable a DEC/AR to be produced.
131. In Scotland, there is no difference in the gathering of information or the assessment and calculation process, The principle areas of variation for DEC production in Scotland can be summarised as:

- Scottish CIP file (CIPs) is used to provide degree day data for Scottish postcodes;
- Production of an Advisory Report, whilst encouraged, is not mandatory for DEC's produced in response to Section 63 regulations. The DEC assessor will also advise the building owner on the need to lodge further information (e.g. an Advisory Report) if the DEC is to be used for purposes other than s.63 compliance (e.g. in support of an ESOS audit); and
- The criteria for production of a DEC in support of a Section 63 Action Plan where used to defer completion of improvement works is prescribed within regulation. This includes issue of an 'asset-only' DEC may be produced as the first DEC in support of an Action Plan where the operational ratings route is chosen and initial data on metered energy use is not available in the required form.

Section 1 - Summary of the package of improvement measures recommended in your Action Plan

Issued in support of your Action Plan for: [insert building address]
Report Reference Number: [insert AP RRN]
Date of Plan: [insert date of plan]
Section 63 Advisor: [insert name of section 63 advisor]
[insert section 63 advisor business address]
[insert section 63 advisor telephone number]
[insert section 63 advisor contact email]

About your Action Plan

Based upon inspection of your building and discussions with you on the way in which the building is currently occupied and operated, the following additional advice is recorded to assist you in undertaking the improvement works recorded on your Action Plan.

Your Plan contains [insert number of recommended measures] improvement measures:

- [List descriptions of all measures as they appear in the Action Plan, one per bullet point]

These measures, when implemented will meet the energy performance and emissions improvement targets applicable to your building. Your Action Plan identifies the date by which improvement works must be completed and recorded by the production of a new energy performance certificate for your building and the recording of the date of completion on a new Action Plan. Works must be completed and recorded by [insert planned date of completion] if you are to avoid enforcement action. Further information on your responsibility to improve your building is set out in ‘S63-001 - Improving Energy Performance and Emissions in existing Non-Domestic Buildings – a guide for owners’, published at www.gov.scot/section63.

[Optional paragraph if Operational Ratings = ‘YES’] Your Action Plan records that you have chosen to defer improvement by reporting annual operational energy. This requires a further assessment enabling the lodgement of a Display Energy Certificate for your

building every 12 months. Failure to maintain this reporting will mean that improvement works must be complete and recorded by the date noted in the previous paragraph.

Basis for recommendations

[Advisor to summarise the key aspects of the building, from inspection and discussion with client, that shaped the final set of improvement measures recorded on the Action Plan.

This summary should record information that the Advisor considers material to the final choice of measures - works that are practical, relatively cost effective and are tailored to the building under assessment and take cognisance of how it is used. This might therefore include issues noted from the visual inspection of the property, the condition of the building and services and advice received from the client on topics such as pre-existing problems, current maintenance regimes or operational costs/bills]

Priorities/dependencies

[If the advisor considers that a measure should be implemented in conjunction with, or prioritised before or left until after, other works, this information should be recorded here. Otherwise record 'None']

Further investigation recommended?

Building owners should be aware that the inspection undertaken in preparing your Action Plan is non-disruptive. Some information relevant to a recommended improvement measure may only be obtained through further, more detailed investigation. In agreeing a final package of measures with the building owner, a Section 63 Advisor is required to identify situations where further investigation may be needed before undertaking works.

[Advisor to summarise the extent to which listed improvement measures are dependent upon further inspection, using either Option 1 or Option 2]

[Option 1] The improvement works described above do not, in my assessment, require any further investigation or advice beyond that which would normally be discussed with a consultant/contractor as part of their typical installation.

[Option 2] Other than noted below, the improvement works described above do not, in my opinion, require any further investigation or advice beyond that which would normally be discussed with a consultant/contractor as part of their typical installation. Areas where further investigation is recommended are:

- [identify improvement element and summarise further action recommended, citing reason for each recommendation; repeat as necessary]

Additional Information

[Advisor to schedule and append any other material from assessment which would assist building owner to implement measure. If these are best recorded against individual improvement measures, simply refer to Section 2 here]

Admin - Assessor's further explanatory commentary.

[Delete before issue to client: To assist Advisors in recording information relevant to Approved Organisation QA of the qualitative (advice) element of the Action Plan, text boxes (light blue) are included in template to enable Advisors to record additional detail on the process of developing and assigning the final recommendations in support of audit]

[Opportunity for Advisor to record other material relevant to demonstrating the investigation and decision process undertaken, where such material is not relevant or useful to the client in taking forward works.

Retain master copy for audit, delete this section prior to issue of the document to a client]

Section 2 - Additional commentary and advice on your individual improvement measures [provide one entry for each measure listed on the Action Plan]

Issued in support of your Action Plan for: [insert building address]

Report Reference Number: [insert AP RRN]

Date of Plan: [insert date of plan]

Section 63 Advisor: [insert name of section 63 advisor]
[insert section 63 advisor business address]
[insert section 63 advisor telephone number]
[insert section 63 advisor contact email]

Improvement measure [insert number] of [insert total number of measures]

Description:

[Description of measure as recorded on Action Plan]

Details of measure:

[Advisor to provide further information on the nature and extent of the measure. Relate to any equivalent existing provision in the building, as relevant]

Basis for recommendation

[Explain the rationale for choosing this intervention. Advisor to summarise the key aspects of the building, from inspection and discussion with client, that shaped the final set of improvement measures recorded on the Action Plan.

This summary should record information that the Advisor considers material to the final choice of measures - works that are practical, relatively cost effective and are tailored to the building under assessment and take cognisance of how it is used. This might therefore include issues noted from the visual inspection of the property, the condition of the building and services and advice received from the client on topics

such as pre-existing problems, current maintenance regimes or operational costs/bills]

Priorities/dependencies

[If the advisor considers that a measure should be implemented in conjunction with, or prioritised before or left until after, other works, this information should be recorded here. Otherwise record 'None'. Note: if advice provided in summary in Section 1 is considered sufficient, reference may instead be made to Section 1]

Further investigation needed

[Advisor to summarise the extent to which listed improvement measures are dependent upon further inspection, using either Option 1 or Option 2 – note that information presented here should expand upon any statements made in Section 1 if considered necessary or may simply refer to information within Section 1 where the advisor considers that sufficient.]

[Option 1- no further investigation or recommendation covered in Section 1] Refer to Section 1.

[Option 2 – further measure-specific advice is best recorded under the individual measure] Areas where further investigation is recommended prior to instructing works are:

- [summarise further action recommended, citing reason for each recommendation]

Additional Information

[Advisor to schedule and append any other material from assessment proves which would assist building owner to implement measure – e.g. sketch plan detailing areas of building affected; detailed performance specification for elements of new works (where known) or example specification of element]

Admin - Assessor's further explanatory commentary.

[Delete before issue to client: To assist Advisors in recording information relevant to Approved Organisation QA of the qualitative (advice) element of the Action Plan, text boxes (light blue) are included in template to enable Advisors to record additional detail on the process of developing and assigning the final recommendations in support of audit]

[Opportunity for Advisor to record other material relevant to demonstrating the investigation and decision process undertaken, where such material is not relevant or useful to the client in taking forward works.

Retain master copy for audit, delete this section prior to issue of the document to a client]

[Repeat section 2 for each improvement measure listed on the Action Plan]