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To: Chief Executives - Scottish Local Authorities

(copy: Building Standards Managers – Scottish  
Local Authorities)

31 March 2020

Dear Chief Executive

**Certification Schemes under Section 7(2) of The Building (Scotland) Act 2003  
Special measures to enable the acceptance of unsigned certificates of design as a  
result of the COVID-19 outbreak**

As a result of the current stay at home advice, members of the Structural Engineers Registration Ltd (SER) certification scheme are working from home and are unable to facilitate the normal certificate signing process. This process includes the wet signing of the certificate by both the approved certifier and the certification coordinator of the approved body.

The purpose of this letter is to advise that an alternative temporary arrangement has been agreed to allow for unsigned certificates of design to continue to be submitted to verifiers in support of building warrant applications, either until wet signatures can again be provided or the current SER certification system adjusted to facilitate electronic signatures.

When an unsigned certificate is submitted in accordance with the guidance and confirmatory signature forms appended to this letter it shall be treated as a valid certificate.

Officials from Building Standards Division at Scottish Government will be available to respond to any queries that may arise, contact in the first instance should be via Stephen Garvin, Head of Building Standards Division (07836 504 781, [Stephen.garvin@gov.scot](mailto:Stephen.garvin@gov.scot)).

Yours sincerely

**KEVIN STEWART**

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See [www.lobbying.scot](http://www.lobbying.scot)



## Remote signing of Certificates – Guidance during COVID-19 pandemic

SER certificates are generated as protected pdfs and current SER procedures require “wet” signatures from both the Approved Certifier and the Certification Coordinator representing the Approved Body. As Approved Body offices are now closed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic with employees working from home, an alternative solution needs to be found for situations where the certificate cannot be printed, signed and scanned.

Following discussions with the Scottish Government Building Standards Division, it has been agreed that certificates can be accepted unsigned on a temporary basis due to COVID-19 provided they are accompanied by the attached Confirmation of Signature Forms from both the Approved Certifier and the Certification Coordinator for the Approved Body, which should be signed electronically.

When a certificate has been generated, the Approved Certifier should complete a copy of the Model Certificate Signature Form for Approved Certifiers and send both the unsigned Certificate and the Signature Form in pdf format to the Coordinator for the Approved Body via an email address attributable to the Approved Body. The Coordinator should then complete the Certificate Signature Form for the Approved Body in pdf format. The email can then be forwarded on as required with all three pdf documents attached, again using an email address attributable to the Approved Body.

The email should clearly identify the certificate it relates to in the subject line by means of the Certificate number and Project location.

If the certificate is being submitted via the [ebuildingstandards.scot](https://www.ebuildingstandards.scot) portal, the two Model Confirmation of Signature Forms completed by the Approved Certifier and the Certification Coordinator should be uploaded along with the certificate.

Certificate signatures dates for both the Approved Certifier and Certification Coordinator should be entered in the SER database as usual.

PDF versions of these Forms may be downloaded from [www.ser-ltd.com](http://www.ser-ltd.com). The forms allow the blank fields to be completed and signatures added. Microsoft Word versions are available if required on request to SER Admin.

### Form Qs

If it is not possible to print, sign and scan the Form Q generated via the SER database, a manual Form Q produced using the Model Form available for download from the Building Standards Division website at <https://www.gov.scot/publications/building-standards-forms/> may be submitted instead.

## Model Confirmation of Certificate Signature Form (Approved Certifier)

To be completed by the Approved Certifier of Design

### Project Information

Certificate number	
Project reference	
Project location	

### Schedules - tick those applicable to this certificate

Schedule 1 – Third party designed details	
Schedule 2 – Design features	
List of Information Used for the Purposes of Certification	
Items to be Certified in a Later Stage	

Because of restrictions imposed by the UK and Scottish Governments in respect of COVID-19, I am unable to sign the declaration on the accompanying unsigned certificate as detailed above, together with those Schedules as indicated. I therefore request that you accept this document as confirmation that I have made the declaration on the certificate.

I am registered by the Scottish Government Building Standards Division as an Approved Certifier of Design (Building Structures).

Name	
Certifier Registration Number	
Signature	
Date	

Model Confirmation of Certificate Signature Form (Approved Body)

To be completed by the Primary or Alternative Certification Coordinator for the Approved Body

Project Information

Certificate number	
Project reference	
Project location	
Building warrant number	

I confirm that the person who has provided the Confirmation of Certificate Signature Form (Approved Certifier) for the unsigned certificate as detailed above is an Approved Certifier of Design and is a principal in or is employed by this Approved Body.

This Approved Body is registered by the Scottish Government Building Standards Division to provide certification services for Design (Building Structures) and I am registered as a Certification Coordinator for this Body.

Approved Body Name	
Approved Body Registration Number	
Certification Coordinator Name	
Signature	
Date	