

BREEAM Pre-Approval Process

What is Pre-Approval?

Assessments carried out in accordance with BREEAM schemes rely on evidence to demonstrate compliance with the relevant assessment criteria. This evidence usually relates only to a specific development (e.g., an individual new building or refurbishment project) because key aspects of the design, materials specification, building services and construction processes are unique to that development. BRE Global evaluation of the assessment is conducted at the end of the process through the Quality Assurance audit. However, where multiple buildings share standard design elements or specifications, BRE Global can evaluate a partial assessment based upon a standard set of evidence. This evaluation is referred to as a 'Pre-Approval'.

Pre-Approval provides efficiencies in the assessment process and greater assurance of the final scores and ratings that are achievable across multiple developments using standard evidence. It is important to note that a Pre-Approval does not replace individual building-level assessments or the BRE Global Quality Assurance audit. Instead, it contributes to the design stage evidence requirements for individual assessments.

What is the process?

The following process must be followed to obtain a Pre-Approval against the BREEAM New Construction, BREEAM Refurbishment & Fit-out, or Home Quality Mark (HQM) schemes (see Figure 1).

1. Enquiry and application

The first step in the process is for the Licensed Assessor to complete and sign the Pre-Approval application form and scheme-specific credit list, sending it to breeam@bregroup.com. The application form requires general information on the Assessor, Client and relevant developments, as well as acceptance of our Terms and Conditions.

Note: The Pre-Approval process can be applied where evidence demonstrates compliance with whole credits or individual criteria within credits. The aim of this process is to save assessment time and resources.

Once reviewed, BRE Global will respond to the application in one of the following ways:

1. Confirm the proposed credit issues or criteria are acceptable for Pre-Approval
2. Ask for more detailed information or justification for particular credits or criteria
3. Confirm the application is not suitable for Pre-Approval (no fee is charged in this instance)

For applications that are accepted (in accordance with '1' above), BRE Global will invite the Assessor to submit the standard set of evidence and references which confirm compliance for the relevant credits. An invoice for the Pre-Approval process will also be issued at this time.

Evidence and references must be provided to BRE Global within six months of BRE Global's acceptance. All standard BREEAM procedures regarding timing and validity of assessment registrations remain applicable and will not be altered due to a Pre-Approval either undergoing evaluation or being accepted by BRE Global. The evidence and references can be provided to BRE Global as part of an assessment submitted for certification or provided separately. Separate feedback will be provided for the Pre-Approval and assessment. Details on this can be provided on request.

2. Pre-Approval evidence submission and BRE Global evaluation

Assessors must submit the Scoring & Reporting tool¹, completed with all relevant details for all credits targeted for Pre-Approval. Upon receipt of the tool and standard set of evidence and references, BRE Global will evaluate them i.e. conduct a Quality Assurance audit, in accordance with the same process used for standard assessments. However, all issues assessed and all evidence will be reviewed. Feedback will be provided with comments against any identified non-conformances. The Assessor can re-submit additional assessment evidence or justifications to address such non-conformances, clarifying when any documents are superseded. Credits remain tradeable and therefore the Assessor can choose to remove any credit from the Pre-Approval at any time. When all proposed credits have been audited and there are no outstanding non-conformances, BRE Global will provide a formal letter confirming the credits included in the Pre-Approval and document references for the standard set of evidence.

Note: For evidence that is provided in any language other than English, BRE Global will charge the standard BREEAM Quality Assurance audit translation fee applicable at that time. This will only cover the translation requirements of the standard set of evidence and any resubmissions for the Pre-Approval. Translation fees will be applied, where necessary, for assessments submitted using the Pre-Approval.

3. Use of the Pre-Approval

For each development using the Pre-Approval, the Assessor shall complete their assessment in the usual way, including the referencing of evidence. When an assessment is submitted for a certification decision, the Assessor must notify BRE Global that they are using the Pre-Approval process. Where the development achieves compliance for a particular credit or criteria using the Pre-Approval, the Assessor must state/reference that the Pre-Approval applies. In doing so, the Assessor confirms that no further or additional assessment is required, and the Pre-Approval confirms compliance for all criteria applicable to the individual development. All credits remain tradeable, so each development does not have to use all the Pre-Approved credits. This allows flexibility for unique elements of individual developments, where Pre-Approved credits may be withheld or achieved using alternative compliance and evidence.

It should be noted that the Pre-Approval process does not involve any changes to the Quality Assurance process, frequency or level of audit conducted on an individual Assessor's assessments.

4. Pre-Approval validity period

Once a Pre-Approval has been granted by BRE Global, it can be used on assessments submitted for certification within three years (for assessments of the appropriate client projects only). Each Pre-Approval can be used on a maximum of 100 BREEAM assessments.

The Pre-Approval will reference a specific scheme version to which it applies, e.g. BREEAM UK New Construction 2018, and cannot be used against subsequent versions of the scheme unless it has been updated. It will also reference the Scheme Document issue number valid at that time (e.g. '1.2'). However, the Pre-Approval can be used for any assessment under a subsequent re-issue of the same scheme version (e.g. 'BREEAM UK New Construction 2018 issue 2.0') at the Assessor's discretion. It is the Assessor's responsibility to ensure that the Pre-Approval evidence demonstrates compliance with any amended requirements in the subsequent version of the scheme. Non-conformances may be raised where the standard set of evidence does not show compliance with the criteria or methodology in a subsequent scheme issue.

¹Where an Excel version of the Scoring and Reporting Tool is not available for the scheme, submission of evidence and references should be made in a simple table format.

5. Amendments to the BREEAM scheme or the Pre-Approved evidence

Where Scheme Document changes or clarifications resulting from a scheme reissue affect Pre-Approved credits, or where a Client makes changes to the Pre-Approval evidence, the Assessor shall manage the resulting impact by either:

1. Not using the Pre-Approval for the affected credits. The credits can still be awarded where development-specific evidence shows compliance.
2. Contact BRE Global to request an amendment to the Pre-Approval. If accepted, the assessor shall assess the changes to the evidence and submit to BRE Global for audit. The fee for this work is detailed in the Fees section below.

Further information

Fees

Please refer to the BREEAM, HQM and Code for Sustainable Homes Schemes Fee Sheet (FS036).

Standard BRE Global translation fees will apply where evidence is not provided in English.

Fees for Pre-Approval against multiple schemes and travel expenses (where an in-person meeting is required) are determined on a case-by-case basis. Please contact us to discuss.

NSO territories

Please contact BRE Global in instances where some of the projects which will use a Pre-Approval are located in countries covered by any of the BREEAM National Scheme Operators.

Ownership of Pre-Approval

BRE Global will retain ownership of all Pre-Approval documents and grant the Client the right to use it (through a suitably licensed Assessor) on their projects. The Client is therefore entitled to share the Pre-Approval with any Licensed Assessor organisation they appoint for the purpose of carrying out assessments of the relevant projects.

BRE Global will keep copies of the Pre-Approved documents (as detailed in section 2 above). We will only provide this to a third party on the written request or agreement of the Client.

Figure 1: Pre-Approval process

