

BREEAM UK NEW CONSTRUCTION: RESIDENTIAL

BREEAM UK New Construction:
Residential V6.1 update - FAQs
(including HQM rebrand)

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Rebrand of Home Quality Mark (HQM) to BREEAM UK New Construction: Residential

1. Table of Contents

- Introduction
- FAQs
 - General Information
 - What does this rebrand mean for HQM?
 - Why are you rebranding?
 - What will the scheme be called?
 - When are you releasing BREEAM UK New Construction: Residential?
 - Will I still be able to obtain an HQM certificate?
 - Will BREEAM UK New Construction: Residential certificates look different to HQM?
 - Will the certificate ratings change to BREEAM Ratings?
 - Will indicator scores still exist?
 - Will you be notifying and supporting specifiers who currently require HQM?
 - Technical Updates
 - What technical updates are you making?
 - Does BREEAM UK New Construction: Residential V6.1 assess 'quality' aspects like HQM did?
 - Registrations
 - When can I register to BREEAM UK New Construction: Residential V6.1?
 - Will existing HQM registrations receive a BREEAM branded certificate?
 - When will HQM V6 registrations close?
 - Can I change my existing HQM registration to a BREEAM UK New Construction: Residential V6.1 registration?
 - Qualifications & Licenses
 - Does this affect my existing HQM qualification?
 - Will I need to update my existing HQM licence?
 - Fees
 - What will the fees be for BREEAM UK New Construction: Residential?
 - Operations Manual
 - Will there be any changes to the way the scheme is operated?
 - Will the operations manual be updated to reflect the rebrand?

The UK housing sector must address increasingly complex challenges - from climate resilience to changing regulations and rising costs. Since 2015, HQM has helped tackle these challenges, with over 50,000 homes currently registered demonstrating the industry's deep commitment to sustainability and continuous improvement through this proven scientific methodology.

After listening to our clients and the wider industry, we have made the decision to rebrand HQM, and on the **16 April 2025** we will be **releasing BREEAM UK New Construction: Residential V6.1**, bringing:

- Alignment of lifecycle assessment and embodied carbon measurement with industry standards and reporting requirements
- Stronger and simplified connection to BREEAM's global expertise and recognition
- Same trusted technical requirements and quality focus
- Enhanced agility across our product range

We have created the following FAQs to help address your questions. If you need any further information, please contact breeam@bregroup.com.

FAQs

General Information

What does this evolution mean for HQM?

This rebrand strengthens alignment across the BREEAM product range, making it easier for UK and international stakeholders to navigate residential sustainability certification.

Although BREEAM UK New Construction: Residential V6.1 will have a refreshed appearance, the scheme's content will continue to focus on addressing the holistic sustainability and associated quality challenges facing the UK housing market. The majority of the scheme's technical criteria will remain unchanged from HQM V6 (please refer to the FAQs below for details on specific technical updates).

BREEAM UK New Construction: Residential V6.1 will launch on the 16 April 2025, and will become the current BREEAM assessment scheme for new-build homes in the UK.

Projects registered to HQM (2015 beta, 2018 ONE or V6) will be eligible to continue their assessment to obtain HQM certification (subject to the SD5070 BREEAM Operations manual).

Please see the FAQs below for further details.

Why are you rebranding

We are responding to requests from the market.

By bringing HQM under the BREEAM brand, we make it simpler for developers, investors, and the broader construction industry to navigate the complex sustainability and quality challenges facing the UK housing sector, through our suite of built-environment sustainability solutions.

What will the scheme be called?

For all future scheme updates, HQM will be known as **BREEAM UK New Construction: Residential**.

When are you releasing BREEAM UK New Construction: Residential?

BREEAM UK New Construction: Residential V6.1 will launch on 16 April 2025.

This rebranding will coincide with a minor scheme update, addressing urgent technical feedback received from stakeholders.

Will I still be able to obtain a HQM certificate?

Yes. Projects currently registered to HQM beta (2015), HQM ONE (2018), or HQM V6 will still be able to achieve an HQM certificate.

Any new project registered under BREEAM UK New Construction: Residential V6.1 will receive a BREEAM UK New Construction: Residential certificate.

Will BREEAM UK New Construction: Residential certificates look different to HQM?

Yes.

The certificate's format and branding will align with other BREEAM New Construction certificates. However, the scoring system and thresholds required to achieve each rating level will remain unchanged from HQM V6.

Each home will continue to receive a certificate indicating:

- An overall BREEAM rating and corresponding star rating
- Individual indicator scores for: Cost, Wellbeing, and Environment

Will the certificate ratings change to BREEAM Ratings?

HQM has always provided both a star rating and a corresponding BREEAM rating for each home.

BREEAM UK New Construction: Residential V6.1 will continue this practice, displaying both a BREEAM rating and a star rating (including half-star increments).

The percentage scores required to achieve each rating level remain the same as in HQM V6. The following table outlines the scoring thresholds:

BREEAM Rating	Stars	% score
Outstanding	5	80
Excellent	4.5	60
Very Good	4	48
Good	3.5	38
	3	30
Pass	2.5	24
	2	20
	1.5	18
Minimum requirements only	1	N/A

Will indicator scores still exist?

Yes.

In addition to its overall BREEAM and star rating, each home will continue to receive a score (out of 5) against:

- Costs
- Wellbeing
- Footprint

Will you be notifying and supporting specifiers (local authorities, investors etc.) who currently require HQM?

Yes.

We will be proactively reaching out to all those we are aware currently specify or require HQM, to inform them of these changes.

If you or your clients require additional information or support regarding the specification of BREEAM UK New Construction: Residential, please contact us at: breeam@bregroup.c

Technical updates

What technical updates are you making?

We are addressing a couple of urgent items highlighted by our HQM stakeholders.

As well as having a new look, BREEAM UK New Construction: Residential V6.1 will also include a minor scheme update. This update will include:

- **Issue 4.2 Daylight will be updated** – this will reflect the latest industry standards and processes
- **Issue 6.2 Environmental Impact of Materials will be updated** – this will enable LCA to be completed at the building level, and will ensure alignment of lifecycle assessment and embodied carbon measurement with industry standards and reporting requirements
- **All schedule of evidence tables will be updated** – to provide greater clarity for assessors on evidence expectation at the quality assurance stage
- **General clarifications/amends** – as with all updates, we will be making general amends or clarifications that have come to light.

Does BREEAM UK New Construction: Residential V6.1 assess 'quality' aspects like HQM did?

Yes, it does.

Developed as part of the BREEAM product range, HQM - like BREEAM - addresses sustainability holistically, and we believe that a sustainable home (i.e. one that will stand the test of time) must be well designed AND well built.

All 'quality' related assessment criteria that was included in HQM V6 will be retained in BREEAM UK New Construction: Residential V6.1.

Registrations

When can I register to BREEAM UK New Construction: Residential V6.1?

Registrations to BREEAM UK New Construction: Residential V6.1 will open when the scheme is launched, on the 16 April 2025.

Will existing HQM registrations receive a BREEAM branded certificate?

No.

BREEAM branded certificates will only be applied to BREEAM UK New Construction: Residential V6.1, and future releases.

Any projects registered to HQM beta (2015), HQM ONE (2018) or HQM V6 can continue to assess against this scheme version, and will receive a HQM certificate.

When will HQM V6 registrations close?

HQM V6 registrations will remain open until the 28 May 2025.

After this date, it may still be possible to register assessments against HQM V6, but only where there is a contractual obligation to use HQM V6 to satisfy a funding or planning condition.

Can I change my existing HQM registration to a BREEAM UK New Construction: Residential V6.1 registration?

Yes. As with all new BREEAM scheme versions, you can update your existing registration to the latest version without incurring an additional registration fee.

However, please keep in mind:

- You **cannot revert** your registration to an earlier scheme version.
- Updating your registration requires moving your assessment to a new assessment tool. As a result, **all assessment data from the original registration will need to be re-entered**, and any data previously entered will be lost.

To update your registration to BREEAM UK New Construction: Residential V6.1, please contact us at breeam@bregroup.com or complete the relevant webform.

Qualifications & licenses

Does this effect my existing HQM qualification?

No. If you currently hold a valid HQM qualification, you will not need to complete any additional training or qualification requirements.

As BREEAM UK New Construction: Residential V6.1 supersedes HQM V6, anyone with a current HQM qualification will automatically be eligible to hold a licence to undertake BREEAM UK New Construction: Residential V6.1 assessments.

As with all minor BREEAM updates, we will issue a **'Summary of Changes'** document. Please familiarise yourself with this document before conducting BREEAM UK New Construction: Residential V6.1 assessments. If you have any questions, please contact us at breeam@bregroup.com.

Will I need to update my existing HQM licence?

No.

Licensed HQM assessors who currently hold a **UK New Construction (Domestic)** licence will automatically be eligible to carry out and submit assessments under both HQM and BREEAM UK New Construction: Residential.

Fees

What will the fees be for BREEAM UK New Construction: Residential?

Fees for BREEAM UK New Construction: Residential will remain the same as for HQM.

Please refer to the '**Home Quality Mark**' section of the current fee sheet for detailed licensing, registration, and certification costs.

Further clarification will be provided when the fee sheet is next updated.

Operations manual

Will there be any changes to the way the scheme is operated?

No.

BREEAM UK New Construction: Residential will follow the same operational processes as HQM.

Will the operations manual be updated to reflect the rebrand?

Yes. When the **SD5070 BREEAM Operations Manual** is next updated, it will reflect the rebrand.

Until then, please continue to apply the operational processes outlined in the current **SD5070 Operations Manual** for all BREEAM UK New Construction: Residential assessments.