


















OFFICE CERTIFICATION SCHEMES BRIEFING NOTE







February 2022

OVERVIEW













Accreditation		Focus				Application				Number of UK projects
		Environment	Wellbeing	Social	Digital	New Build	Refurb	Fit Out	In-Use	
	BREEAM NC / RFO	x	x			x	x	x		11,996
	BREEAM In-Use	x							x	N/A
	LEED BDC / IDC	x	x			x	x	x		146
	AirRated		x			x	x	x	x	29
	RESET	x			x				x	5
	WiredScore				x	x	x	x		N/A
	SKA rating	x						x	x	N/A
	WELL		x	x		x	x	x	x	1,515
	Fitwel		x	x		x	x	x	x	1,650 <small>(excluding confidential projects)</small>
	Passivhaus UK	x	x			x	x			275
	NABERS UK DfP	x				x	x		x	14 <small>Developments under construction</small>
	NABERS UK EfO	x							x	N/A

BREAKDOWN

	Accreditation	Focus	Metrics	Method	Rating
	BREEAM New Construction/ Refurbishment and Fit-Out Established 1990	Sustainability (Holistic) Theoretical performance based on building's as built performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management • Health & Wellbeing • Energy • Transport • Water • Materials • Waste • Land Use / Ecology • Pollution • Innovation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake early stage pre-assessment to identify strategy and maximise achievable rating. • Verify the proposed building's design and specifications through achieving the design stage (interim) certification. • Validate the As Built performance through assessor's site inspection, As Built drawings and manufacturer's details to achieve the Final (As Built) certificate. 	Pass (>30%) Good (≥45%) Very Good (≥55%) Excellent (≥70%) Outstanding (≥85%)
	BREEAM In-Use	Sustainability (Holistic) Actual In-use performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy and water efficiency • Health and wellbeing benefits to occupants • Management practices • Waste and materials used • Pollution management • Sustainable transport access • Support to local biodiversity • Resilience to risks (e.g. climate change) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Input building information online, which will output a rating • Licensed assessor will assess both the building and how it is managed / policies in place 	1-6 stars (Acceptable-Outstanding); plus a percentage score
	LEED Building Design and Construction / Interior Design and Construction Established 1998	Sustainability (Holistic) Theoretical performance based on building's as built performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy • Water • Transportation • Waste • Human Experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Similar to BREEAM New Construction, the new development/redevelopment/fit out ratings are based on submitting evidence of the process and materials used in construction, as well as projections of energy efficiency etc based on the completed specification. 	Certified, Silver, Gold, Platinum; plus a number of points
	AirRated Established 2020	Health & Wellbeing (Indoor Air Quality)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Humidity • Temperature • PM2.5 (fine particulate matter) • TVOCs (air-based pollutants) • CO2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three-week survey of office air quality in core working hours (10:00-16:00 Monday – Friday) • Each metric has various thresholds for each level, based on medical research and existing best practice • A score, detailed analysis and recommendation for remedial action are then submitted by AirRated 	Certified, Silver, Gold, Platinum; plus a score out of 10
	RESET Established 2013	Sustainability (Holistic) The aim is to prove that your space is being accurately monitored, thus vindicating your sustainability claims.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Materials (pilot) • Air (launched) • Water (under development) • Energy (under development) • Circularity (under development) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each module defines the requirements for continuous monitoring of an interior space or building, including monitor deployment, monitor specifications, installation requirements, data reporting and data platform requirements, and calibration requirements. • The survey requires three consecutive months of data • After certification, projects are assessed on a monthly basis based on data submitted to the RESET Cloud 	Certification (per module)
	WiredScore Established 2013	Digital Infrastructure Both for developments and occupied buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resilience/protection • Future readiness • Mobile coverage • Choice of providers • User experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For developments, WiredScore undertakes a design review and based on the specification offers a certification level and recommendations for improvement • Revised plans will then be analysed and a WiredScore certification submitted • For existing in-use buildings, the building is visited and audited, and certification / recommendations made. Once an improvements have been verified, the building will be certified 	Certified, Silver, Gold, Platinum

	Accreditation	Focus	Metrics	Method	Rating
	SKA rating (RICS) Established 2009	Environmental Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fitting out process In-use performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify which SKA-certified measures the project aims to achieve Gather proof that the performance and waste benchmarks have been achieved Review of how well a fit-out has performed in use against its original brief 	Gold, Silver or Bronze; plus a percentage score
	WELL Established 2014	Health & Wellbeing (Holistic) Design and operation of buildings to enhance occupants' wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Air Water Nutrition Light Physical activity Thermal comfort Sound Exposure to chemicals Mental health Community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each metric has Preconditions (mandatory for certification) and Optimisations (optional – projects can choose which to pursue) Attainment of these metrics contribute points to the project, which determines the level of WELL certification achieved Mixture of quantitative and qualitative standards depending on the metric 	Platinum, Gold, Silver, Bronze Also WELL Core, for shell and core / base build projects
	Fitwel Established 2016	Health & Wellbeing (Holistic)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact on wider community Morbidity and absenteeism Social equity Feelings of wellbeing Access to healthy food Occupant safety Facilitated physical activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scorecards are tailored to different building types, e.g. senior housing, multi-tenant offices, retail Proof that the building/portfolio is complying with the relevant Fitwel requirements is uploaded by the owner and reviewed Certification lasts 3 years As well as its core certification, Fitwel has launched a Viral Response Module which provides best practices for mitigating viral transmission 	1-3 stars; plus a numerical score
	Passivhaus UK Established 1991	Environmental Impact (Energy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Energy consumption Heating and cooling demand Airtightness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Passivhaus consultant will provide options and contribute to the building's design/retrofitting Insulation, high performance materials, efficient heat recovery systems and accurate design The building will go through a series of tests on completion 	Certification
	NABERS UK – Design for Performance Established 2020	Environmental Impact (Energy) Operational energy efficiency of new builds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Energy Consumption 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Model proposed building as it will operate and simulate energy efficiency 'Off-axis' (scenario) modelling to identify potential risks in achieving anticipated operational energy consumption, based on variables such as occupancy levels and weather patterns Commit to NABERS rating target Design independently reviewed Completed building assessed based on 12 months of real operational energy usage 	1-6 Stars
	NABERS UK – Energy for Offices (New product – first assessors to be accredited in mid-2021)	Environmental Impact (Energy) Operational energy efficiency rating for annual reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Energy Consumption Includes central services like heating and cooling systems, lifts and lobby lighting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The energy consumption of a building compared against a set of benchmarks that have been developed using data from other buildings. 	1-6 Stars (annual rating)

PROS AND CONS

	Accreditation	Pros	Cons
	BREEAM New Construction / Refurbishment and Fit-Out	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Widely recognised certification – over 26,000 certified buildings worldwide Comprehensive approach Based on European and UK legislation One of the first global environmental certifications Bespoke certification available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on theoretical rather than actual performance Social factors not considered No requirement for ongoing performance testing Does not account for / dictate how the building is used by its occupants Controversial weighting system for metrics Light on-site verification
	BREEAM In-Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Widely recognised certification Based on real building performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual confirmation that no changes have occurred is required and where significant changes have occurred, recertification is required. Recertification required every three years.
	LEED Building Design and Construction / Interior Design and Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensive approach Promotes some less common attributes such as solar reflectance and integrated project delivery In-depth assessment of materials used, including environmental performance, supply chain, data disclosure Strongest global presence - circa 140,000 projects worldwide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mostly US-based, with little UK market penetration: 150 LEED-rated UK projects vs nearly 12,000 BREEAM-rated projects Based on American ASHRAE standards Social factors not considered No ongoing performance testing No on-site verification
	AirRated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides focus to indoor air quality, which is particularly important in a post-Covid world 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single issue focus
	RESET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides focus to key concepts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not a holistic approach to sustainability Approach not fully established (e.g. Air is the only concept launched) Limited UK uptake – only 5 certified projects
	Wired Score	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides focus to digital infrastructure. Targeted to specification requirements, so simple to integrate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single issue focus
	SKA rating (RICS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeted to specification requirements, so simple to integrate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addresses environmental impacts only Rigid assessment criteria More aligned with fit-out projects Minimal UK market recognition
	WELL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exclusivity – only 11 certified projects in the UK Occupiers have an increasing interest in wellbeing, especially in a post-Covid world Promotes some less common attributes such as biophilic design Strong on-site verification process Ongoing performance verification required In-depth coverage of products and materials which other schemes do not cover, including furniture Scheme flexibility allows 'light' refurbishments to still gain certification, where other schemes might penalise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accreditation relatively expensive Social factors receive low attention Arguably less rigid criteria than other certifications, allowing for broader interpretation by assessors Not all certifications are third-party audited
	Fitwel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simplified assessment process Occupier have an increasing interest in wellbeing, especially in a post-Covid world 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accreditation is cheaper than WELL Social factors receive low attention
	Passivhaus UK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well-established in residential settings Focus on minimising energy demand which aligns with the first step of the energy hierarchy (Fabric First) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited number of large-scale projects have been certified
	NABERS UK – Design for Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proven track record in Australia of reducing energy intensity Focus on predicted operational energy use, rather than predicted regulated energy performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single issue focus More expensive than regulatory energy modelling
	NABERS UK – Energy for Offices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on predicted operational energy use, rather than predicted regulated energy performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single issue focus More expensive than regulatory energy modelling

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