

Heat and Energy Efficiency Technical Suitability Assessment (HEETSA)

Scottish Government Scoping Consultation

To: All Chief Executives, Main Contacts and APSE Contacts in Scotland. For information only England, Northern Ireland and Wales.

1 Executive Summary

The Scottish Government has launched a scoping consultation on proposals to introduce a Heat and Energy Efficiency Technical Suitability Assessment (HEETSA). This is a proposed government-backed framework to improve the quality, accuracy, and technical appropriateness of energy efficiency and clean heat retrofit advice.

HEETSA is intended to go beyond the limitations of current Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs), ensuring building owners can identify the most suitable measures for improving energy performance and decarbonising heating. The consultation explores how the government could approve assessment methodologies and professional standards, and whether HEETSA should become a requirement in specific regulatory or funding contexts.

Responses are due by Friday 29th August 2025. [Click here](#) for further information and to submit your response. [Click here](#) to read the full report.

2. Overview

Scottish Government Scoping Consultation on Retrofit Assessment Standards

The consultation sets out initial proposals for the design and implementation of HEETSA, a government authorised technical assessment process intended to help building owners identify appropriate energy efficiency and clean heat upgrades. It aims to enhance consumer protection, support regulatory frameworks, and align retrofit delivery with Scotland's net zero and fuel poverty goals.

This initiative complements broader policy reforms, including the ongoing review of Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs), the proposed Private Rented Sector Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard, and the forthcoming Heat in Buildings Bill.

Addressing the Limits of EPCs

EPCs currently provide standardised, modelled advice that does not consider:

- The condition of building fabric (e.g., walls, roofs, insulation);
- Occupant behaviour and usage patterns;
- Technical feasibility of recommended improvements.

The Scottish Government claims that HEETSA would offer a more tailored and technically robust assessment to address these gaps.

The Need for HEETSA

The report sets out a case for establishing HEETSA to:

- help building owners identify the right measures – those that are technically appropriate, cost-effective, and feasible;
- Avoid inappropriate retrofits driven by generic EPC recommendations;
- Support eligibility assessments for government funding or exemptions from regulatory standards;
- Ensure consistent quality assurance and consumer protection in a growing retrofit advice market.

The Scottish Government is seeking views on how to structure the above, particularly the approval of assessment methodologies and the skills framework for practitioners.

Proposed Delivery Model

The government proposes that HEETSA should include:

- Government approval of technical assessment methodologies;
- Accreditation of assessor organisations and practitioner qualifications;
- A standardised certificate or report format for communicating results;
- Possible use as a requirement for funding or compliance in specific regulatory contexts.

This model would mirror existing frameworks like MCS (Microgeneration Certification Scheme - for heat installers) and TrustMark (a quality scheme for energy efficiency installers), offering recognised consumer protections while allowing market innovation outside of the approved pathway.

When a HEETSA May Be Required

The consultation explores potential use cases, including:

- When owners voluntarily seek in-depth advice after receiving an EPC;
- When required for participation in a public funding scheme;
- When supporting exemptions or appeals under proposed regulatory standards;
- In communal buildings or tenements, where fabric upgrades or shared heating options may require a whole-building approach.

Introducing a government-backed scheme would not remove consumer choice in the market, but would provide additional safeguards of the assurance of government-backed methodologies and practitioners who were required to operate to government specified quality standards.

Methodologies and Scope

The proposed HEETSA framework would support multiple government-approved methodologies tailored to different property types. Key features under consideration include:

- Assessment of fabric and heating systems;
- Comparison of technically viable upgrade options;
- Consideration of occupant needs, including behavioural impacts;
- Risk and barrier identification for proposed retrofit paths;
- Modular design to allow flexibility depending on building characteristics.

The Scottish Government is also consulting on whether HEETSA should be a statutory or non-statutory process and how best to integrate with existing delivery programmes and future regulations under the forthcoming Heat in Buildings Bill.

Framework

The feedback gathered through this consultation will inform the development of a trusted, reliable assessment process that supports:

- Better retrofit outcomes;
- Informed consumer choices;
- Public confidence in low-carbon transition measures.

This scoping consultation represents a foundational step toward a more robust and effective heat and energy efficiency retrofit ecosystem in Scotland.

3. Consultation question

When you begin the consultation questions are multiple choice, this is just a brief overview:

1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it would be valuable for the Scottish Government to develop a HEETSA (a government-led approval and accreditation mechanism to provide oversight and standardisation of the retrofit assessment market)?
2. If the Scottish Government develops a HEETSA, which of the following should it cover: (select all that apply)
 - -Retrofit assessment (i.e. identifying whether measures are present or can be installed)
 - -Retrofit design (identifying the types of measures (e.g. loft insulation) that can be installed)
 - -Retrofit specification (identifying the products or materials (e.g. mineral wool) that can be installed)
 - -Installation (identifying the relevant installation standards)
 - -Evaluation (Planning an approach to evaluating the impact of measures)
 - -Occupancy (including factors related to the building's current occupancy in assessment of suitable measures)
 - Other (please specify)
3. Which delivery model do you think would be most appropriate for HEETSA?
 - -Direct Government accreditation of assessors
 - -Government accreditation of assessor organisation who In turn accredit assessors
 - -HEETSA as guidance only without Government accreditation of assessors
 - -Other (please specify)
4. What methodologies would be needed to meet the requirements of a HEETSA?
5. There are a range of ways that identified gaps could be filled – by the market, or by the Scottish Government procuring and developing methodologies to do this. What do you think is the best approach to filling identified gaps in the methodologies required for HEETSA?
6. What skills and qualifications should be required to undertake a HEETSA?
7. Which of the following statements comes closest to your view:
 - -It is feasible for an individual assessor to have sufficient skills and knowledge to complete a HEETSA
 - -A HEETSA would require input from multiple specialists and could not be completed by an individual
 - -Don't know
 - -Other (please specify)
8. To what extent do you agree or disagree that non-personal data gathered through a HEETSA should be stored to form part of a 'building logbook' or 'green building passport'?
9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the HEETSA assessor should be required to be independent of the outcome of the assessment? E.g. they could not financially gain from the outcome if a measure is stated as technically suitable.
10. Thinking about the relationship between the EPC and HEETSA, which of the following statements comes closest to your view:
 - -The results of a HEETSA should result in the production of a revised EPC as part of its output
 - -The results of a HEETSA should be made available to inform the production of a revised EPC and should be considered acceptable 'documentary evidence' to override default values.
 - -The results of a HEETSA should not have any influence on the EPC and its ratings

- -Don't know
 - -Other (please specify)
11. Thinking about presenting the results of a HEETSA, please give your view on:
 - (a) Whether the HEETSA should result in a standardised certificate or report?
 - (b) What information should be included when presenting the results?
 12. Please provide details of any circumstances in which you think a HEETSA should be required, and the reasons for your view.
 13. Do you think it is necessary to develop a legal basis for HEETSA? (i.e. should HEETSA be underpinned by regulations in a similar manner to EPCs)

4. APSE Comment

APSE encourages our members in Scotland to engage with this consultation on proposals to introduce a Heat and Energy Efficiency Technical Suitability Assessment (HEETSA). As outlined earlier in the briefing, the consultation outlines the reasons for establishing such an assessment including help building owners identify the right measures, which are those that are technically appropriate, cost-effective, and feasible; as well as support for eligibility assessments for government funding or exemptions from regulatory standards. APSE recently published a briefing regarding the [Draft Energy Efficiency \(Domestic private Rented Property\) \(Scotland\) Regulations](#). APSE also Scotland held its most recent Climate Change and Renewables Network meeting on Tuesday 10 June and we were delighted to have Annie Howden, Heat Strategy Team Leader for Scottish Government and Fergus Tickell, Regional Energy Strategic Planning Manager of NESO in attendance to speak. This meeting included a discussion around the consultations, to access the presentations from the day [click here](#)

The above network provides the opportunity for local authority managers, officers and councillors to share best practice on local authority climate change and renewables. As well as providing the opportunity to hear from a range of expert speakers in the field, such as Annie and Fergus. These meetings are free to attend for APSE members and all past presentations are available online [here](#), with upcoming meetings listed [here](#). This Network provides a space for local authorities to discuss and debate all areas related to these services and we would encourage all to engage and participate.

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Networks are a free service included as part of your authority's membership of APSE and all end with an informal lunch to facilitate networking with peers in other councils. If you do not currently receive details about APSE network meetings and would like to be added to our list of our contacts for your service area please email enquiries@apse.org.uk

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