



## BREEAM USA Operational Guidance

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## Glossary of Terms

**Advice** – Recommendation given by a BREEAM USA In-Use Assessor that is not product or client specific.

**Assessment** – Process of verifying, documenting and measuring the Client’s BREEAM In-Use preassessment by the BREEAM In-Use Assessor.

**Asset** – The part of, or the whole building for which certification against the BREEAM In-Use standard is sought.

**Assessor** – An individual who is trained and licensed by BRE Global, who will: independently verify the information contained within the BREEAM In-Use preassessment, check that there is evidence to support the answer options selected, and requests certification from BRE Global.

**Consultancy** – Specific targeted expert advice provided to an organization. Examples of consultancy include: writing procedures or quality plans or advising on specific product recommendations. Please note that consultancy cannot be provided by the BREEAM In-Use Assessor before the project is certified.

**Client** – A person, business or organization that will own or manage the asset for which BREEAM In-Use certification is sought. It is their responsibility to complete the BREEAM In-Use preassessment which they may do directly or using a designated Agent (such as a Consultant).

**Performance Measurement** - also referred to as a preassessment, this is completed to evaluate the asset’s performance against one or more Parts of the BREEAM In-Use standard.

**Quality Assurance** – A quality process conducted by BRE Global on assessments to ensure that these meet the requirements as outlined in the BREEAM In-Use standard.

**Rating** – The outcome of a certified BREEAM In-Use assessment. BREEAM In-Use rating benchmarks range from Acceptable (1 star) to Outstanding (6 stars). The classifications are achieved by the assessment score based on a credit system.

**Significant Changes** – Changes made to the asset that results in a change to the overall assessment score either positively or negatively. For v2016, this is defined as more than five (5) percentage point difference. For Version 6, this is defined as more than ten (10) percentage point difference.

**Unverified Data** – Data that has not been verified by a BREEAM In-Use Assessor.

**Verified Data** – Data that has been verified by a BREEAM In-Use Assessor and has passed BRE Global’s Quality Assurance process.

**Weightings** – Provides a means of defining, and therefore ranking, the relative impact of environmental issues. BREEAM uses an explicit weighting system derived from a combination of consensus-based weightings and ranking by a panel of experts.

## Introduction to BREEAM USA In-Use

BREEAM USA In-Use is a comprehensive and holistic environmental assessment method for assessing and rating the sustainability performance of existing commercial and residential assets located within the United States. BREEAM USA In-Use provides a framework to help owners, managers and occupiers of existing assets successfully adopt sustainable solutions in a cost-effective manner and provides market recognition for their achievements. The rating reflects the asset's performance across environmental categories, allowing the performance of the asset to be benchmarked and most importantly, allows the asset's performance to be optimized through informed management decisions.

The certification process is conducted by independent Assessors who are trained and licensed by BRE Global. The assessment is quality checked by BRE Global Ltd before certification is confirmed to ensure that the assessment and the asset meets the requirements as outlined in the BREEAM USA In-Use standard. Certification is provided by BRE Global Ltd.

## Purpose of this document

This document sets out the general operating procedures for the BREEAM USA In-Use certification program between BRE Global Ltd, BREEAM USA In-Use Clients and BREEAM USA In-Use Assessors. This document is intended for BREEAM USA In-Use Clients. Full details are set out in the **BREEAM USA Operations Manual (PD101)** which should be used by licensed Assessors. Supplementary documents are available: **BREEAM USA In-Use Technical Manual v2016 (PD130)**, **BREEAM USA In-Use: Commercial Technical Manual Version 6 (PD133)**, **BREEAM USA In-Use: Residential Technical Manual Version 6 (PD132)**, **BREEAM USA In-Use Fee Sheet (FS130)**.

## Scope of BREEAM USA In-Use

BREEAM USA In-Use is applicable to existing commercial and residential assets located within the fifty (50) United States and the District of Columbia that are not undergoing renovations or construction activity. BREEAM USA In-Use has been adapted from the BREEAM In-Use International core reference program to reflect differences in American standards and practices while still providing the global comparability and rigor that distinguishes the BREEAM standard. Assets outside the United States use BREEAM In-Use International or the country specific BREEAM rating system run by a National Scheme Operator (NSO). There are BREEAM programs in place internationally that cover other phases of the built environment lifecycle: strategic planning, design, construction, initial fit out, operations and maintenance and renovation/subsequent fit out. End of life (deconstruction) is not operated globally at this time. For more information, please visit [www.breeam.com](http://www.breeam.com).

## BREEAM USA In-Use

BREEAM USA In-Use has two operating versions: v2016 launched in 2016 and Version 6 launched in 2020.

### Scope and Eligibility Requirements

#### BREEAM USA In-Use v2016

The BREEAM USA In-Use v2016 assessment program is broken down into three Parts:

- **Part 1 – Asset Performance:** the performance of the asset’s built form, construction, fixtures, fittings and installed services.
- **Part 2 – Building Management:** the management of the asset
- **Part 3 – Occupier Management:** the management of the occupant’s policies and activities that are conducted within the building

The asset types that can be assessed under each Part of the BREEAM USA In-Use standard are as follows:

<b>Part 1: Asset Performance</b>	All commercial asset types that meet eligibility criteria requirements
<b>Part 2: Building Management</b>	
<b>Part 3: Occupier Management</b>	Offices only

Each BREEAM USA In-Use Part is aimed at a specific Client type. Part 1 is aimed at Building Owners. Part 2 is aimed at facility and/or building management. Part 3 is aimed at occupiers or tenants. A Part 1 or Part 2 assessment can be conducted in isolation. A Part 3 assessment is recommended to be undertaken in combination with a Part 2 assessment as the score achieved for Part 2 feeds into the score for Part 3. Clients are, however encouraged to assess against as many Parts as possible to assess the overall environmental impact of their asset.

In a multi-tenanted asset, where floor areas are shared by more than one organization, it must be assessed as one asset for Part 1 and Part 2. For a Part 3 assessment, each occupying organization would have to undertake an assessment.

## Asset Eligibility Requirements

For all asset types that can be assessed using BREEAM USA In-Use, the eligibility criteria listed below must also be met:

- The asset must be a complete and finished structure.
- The asset must contain occupied space(s). Occupied space is a room, rooms or space within the asset that is likely to or will be continuously occupied for 30 minutes or more per day by a building user.
- An asset cannot normally include more than one building. The only exception is where several buildings meet the following criteria:
  - Connected to and share common services to meet the comfort and sanitary demands of the occupants (e.g. heating, ventilation, cooling and hot water)
  - The buildings have the same building function, similar performance and are of the same design and age
  - Building management and maintenance policies are the same across the buildings
  - The same building envelope specification is shared (the physical separator between the interior and exterior of a building)
- The asset must comply with all relevant environment, health and safety legislation in its location.

Assessment under Part 2 or Part 3 must also meet the following criteria:

- The asset must have been occupied for at least one year before the start of the assessment in order to be assessed against Part 2 (Building Management) or Part 3 (Occupier Management).
- Consumption data related to all spaces included in the assessment must be available for at least at least one year before the start of the assessment for Part 2 (Building Management) or Part 3 (Occupier Management). This includes, but not limited to: energy, water, transport and waste data. For energy consumption, this must include both electrical and non-electrical data.
- For Part 3, the asset does not have to include the whole building; the scope of the assessment can be limited to a part of a building or a single floor (provided it meets all the other eligibility requirements). In such cases, the scope of the BREEAM USA In-Use Assessment must include all relevant amenity and service areas. This is accomplished by completed Part 2 in conjunction with Part 3.

## BREEAM USA In-Use Version 6

The BREEAM USA In-Use Version 6 assessment program is broken down into two Parts:

- **Part 1 – Asset Performance:** the performance of the asset's built form, construction, fixtures, fittings and installed services.

- **Part 2 – Management Performance:** the management of the asset

All commercial and residential asset types that meet the eligibility criteria requirements may undertake benchmarking and pursue certification.

As with v2016, Part 1 is aimed at Building Owners and Part 2 is aimed at facility and/or building management. While each Part is independently scored and certifiable, Clients are encouraged to assess against as many Parts as possible to understand the overall environmental impact of their asset. In a multi-tenanted asset, where floor areas are shared by more than one organization, it must be assessed as one asset for Part 1 and Part 2.

### Asset Eligibility Requirements – Commercial

For all commercial asset types that can be assessed using BREEAM USA In-Use, the eligibility criteria listed below must be met:

	<b>Asset Performance</b>	<b>Management Performance</b>
1) The asset must be a complete and finished structure.	No more than 20% of the Gross Internal Area (GIA, the assessed area) can be classified as Unfitted at the point of submission. The assessment information provided must be correct at the point of submission to BRE Global for certification.	No more than 20% of the Gross Internal Area (the assessed area) can be classified as Vacant, where Vacant = Unfitted plus Unoccupied over the reporting period (12 months).
	<i>See Table 3 in the Technical Manual for Vacancy type definitions.</i>	
2) The asset must contain occupiable or occupied space(s) which is designed to be and/or is continuously occupied for 30 minutes or more per day by a building user.	An asset not yet occupied can still be assessed.	The asset must have been occupied for at least 12 months prior to the start of the assessment. Any asset without compliant consumption data will not be able to achieve all of the credits within Management Performance (e.g. the Operational Energy Calculator and Water).

- 3) An asset does not have to include the whole building; it could include just part of a building or a single floor. In such cases, the scope of the BREEAM USA In-Use assessment must include all relevant amenity and service areas.
- 4) The asset must comply with all relevant environmental and health and safety legislation in its location
- 5) An asset cannot normally include more than one building. The only exception is where several buildings meet the following criteria:
  - a) All buildings must be located on the same site. The boundary of the site must be drawn where responsibility of management or ownership of the site changes.
  - b) All buildings must have the same building function, similar performance, and be of the similar design and age.
  - c) Building management and maintenance policies, procedures and approach must be the same across all the buildings that make up the asset to ensure consistent implementation.
  - d) Evidence must be collated from each building that is included in the asset and where performance against the BREEAM requirements varies, the final score will be determined by the space with the lowest level of performance.

### Asset Eligibility Requirements – Residential

For all residential asset types that can be assessed using BREEAM USA In-Use, the eligibility criteria listed below must be met:

- 1) The asset must be a complete and finished structure.
- 2) Assets are required to be stabilized and have maintained a minimum level of occupancy.
  - a) Stabilized assets are those Stabilized assets are those either at least 5 years old **OR** have achieved an 92% occupancy rate.

**AND**

  - b) The asset must have an average occupancy of at least 80% for one year prior to the start assessment. This threshold must be met for the year in which consumption data is supplied
  - c) The asset must be intended to be a Primary Residence of Occupants.
- 3) An assessment does not have to include the whole building; it could include just part of a building or a single floor. In such cases, the scope of the BREEAM USA In-Use assessment must include all relevant amenity and service areas. Buildings that are a mix of Residential and Commercial are required to complete separate assessments using the appropriate standard for these space types.
- 4) Assessments can range in size between a single home or a large block of apartments.
  - a) Each assessment may include a maximum of 500 homes or apartments.
  - b) Apartment buildings must also contain the common areas within the building

- c) Apartments can choose either a single certificate for the assessment, or a certificate for each apartment within the assessment
  - d) Each home will receive a separate certificate
  - e) Projects with more than 500 units should contact BRE, but are typically better assessed as a number of smaller assessments
- 5) Assessments cannot normally include more than one apartment building. The only exception is where several buildings meet the following criteria:
- a) All buildings must be located on the same site. The boundary of the site must be drawn where responsibility of management or ownership of the site changes.
  - b) All buildings must have similar performance and be of similar design and age.
  - c) Building management and maintenance policies, procedures and approach must be the same across all the buildings that make up the asset to ensure consistent implementation.
  - d) Evidence must be collated from each building that is included in the assessment and where performance against the BREEAM requirements varies, the final score will be determined by the apartment with the lowest level of performance.
- 6) The asset must comply with all relevant environmental and health and safety legislation in its location.

### Environmental categories

There are nine (9) environmental categories that are weighted in each Part differently, reflecting the relative impact of the issues addressed. BREEAM uses an explicit weighting system derived from a combination of consensus-based weightings and ranking by a panel of experts. The outputs from this exercise are then used to determine the relative value of the environmental sections used in BREEAM and their contribution to the overall BREEAM score per Part.

The categories and weightings for BREEAM USA In-Use v2016 are as follows:

Environmental Category	Weightings		
	Part 1	Part 2	Part 3
Management	-	15%	12%
Health & Wellbeing	17%	15%	15%
Energy	26.5%	31.5%	19.5%
Transport	11.5%	-	18.5%
Water	8%	5.5%	3.5%
Materials	8.5%	7.5%	4.5%
Waste	5%	-	11.5%
Land Use & Ecology	9.5%	12.5%	5%
Pollution	14%	13%	10.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

The categories and weightings for BREEAM USA In-Use Version 6 are as follows:

Environmental category	Asset Performance	Management Performance
Management	0%	11%
Health & Wellbeing	20%	17%
Energy	25%	27%
Transport	5%	0%
Water	11%	9%
Resources	13%	11%
Resilience	13%	11%
Land use and ecology	4%	7%
Pollution	9%	7%

## Ratings

Assets are awarded a rating based on their score in the assessment:

BREEAM USA In-Use Rating	% Score	Star Rating
Outstanding	≥85	★★★★★★
Excellent	≥70 to <85	★★★★★
Very Good	≥55 to <70	★★★★
Good	≥40 to <55	★★★
Pass	≥25 to <40	★★
Acceptable	≥10 to <25	★
Unclassified	<10	-

## Stakeholder Responsibilities

There are three key BREEAM USA In-Use stakeholders. Each is listed below along with a summary of their responsibilities. The full list of responsibilities for all three stakeholder groups is set out in **BREEAM USA Operations Manual (PD101)**.

- **BREEAM USA In-Use Client**

- Registering assets/projects with BRE Global and paying the relevant fees due to BRE Global (an asset can be registered by anyone who is appointed to conduct this on the Client's behalf (known henceforth as 'Agent');
- Coordinating the gathering of evidence for the asset/project seeking verification;
- Completing the BREEAM USA In-Use performance measurement (pre-assessment);
- Hiring a licensed BREEAM USA In-Use Assessor to verify the performance measurement for certification and undertake site visits, if certification is sought;
- Where certification has been achieved using BREEAM USA In-Use v2016: annual confirmation to state if there has been any significant changes made to the building performance for Part 1 and Part 2 where certificate renewal is being sought.

- **BREEAM USA In-Use Assessor**

- Undertaking the process of verifying Performance Measurements for Clients wishing to certify assets against BREEAM USA In-Use;
  - Undertaking a site visit to verify the Client's performance measurement;
  - Submitting assessments and supporting evidence to BRE Global for certification;
  - Keeping records of evidence collected and written details of verification decisions that are made;
  - Maintaining independence and impartiality.
- **BRE Global**
    - Updating program technical and operational manuals, criteria and supporting documentation specific to the US as part of the BREEAM In-Use update cycles;
    - Updating of program systems, reporting and calculation tools specific to the US following BREEAM In-Use update cycles;
    - Providing training and licensing of Assessors and Assessor Organizations;
    - Confirming certification of projects against BREEAM USA In-Use;
    - Providing Quality Assurance of assessments carried out using BREEAM USA In-Use;
    - Maintaining a database of registered assets, certified assets, licensed Assessors and Assessor Organizations;
    - Publishing a list of BREEAM USA In-Use Licensed Assessors and certified assets via GreenBookLive ([www.greenbooklive.com](http://www.greenbooklive.com)) and BREEAM Projects ([www.breeam.com/projects](http://www.breeam.com/projects)).

## Becoming a Licensed Assessor

### Minimum requirements to become an Assessor

Individuals seeking to become a licensed BREEAM USA In-Use Assessor must declare they have the appropriate knowledge and experience to maintain the standard, satisfactorily complete a training course provided by BRE Global and pass an examination. Once this has been done, the individual may apply for the BREEAM USA In-Use Assessor License within one year of the examination.

The key requirements for an Assessor are:

- **Appropriate knowledge and experience**  
To meet the requirements of BREEAM USA In-Use, Assessors must have sufficient knowledge and experience in relevant professions to uphold the BREEAM USA In-Use standard. To meet the requirements, the individual must:
  - Be a current qualified Assessor of another BREEAM programs certified by BRE Global OR
  - Have at least two years' full-time experience (within the last five years) in one or more of the following professions or equivalent:

- Building surveying
- Building Engineering or regulatory (control) services
- Building or Facilities Management
- Product or manufacturing auditing
- Certification experience in the built environment
- Environmental/energy services

These backgrounds should provide the knowledge needed to understand the technical criteria set out in the Technical Manual. It should be noted that these professions are not exhaustive but are meant to provide individuals seeking to become Assessors an opportunity to consider what knowledge and experience is needed to ensure the BREEAM USA In-Use standards for assessment are met. All Candidates should read through the BREEAM USA In-Use Technical Manual prior to booking the course to ensure they have a sufficient level of technical knowledge. Candidates will be asked to confirm they have appropriate experience in these professions or equivalent when booking the class.

If a candidate's professional experience does not appear to meet these criteria, the individual must submit a PDF of their current resume and an explanation of why they believe their experience to be sufficient to [breacademy@bregroup.com](mailto:breacademy@bregroup.com) for evaluation prior to booking the training.

- **Satisfactory completion of the BREEAM USA In-Use Training for Assessors**

Individuals seeking to become Assessors will then undertake a training course provided by BRE Global. The training consists of online preparation, completed in the individual's own time, and a two-day classroom training course. All components must be completed satisfactorily in order to take the examination.

- **Successfully passing the exam**

Following successful completion of the BREEAM USA In-Use training course for Assessors, there will be an examination. The exam tests a candidate's knowledge and comprehension of the program technically and operationally and their ability to correctly identify and apply the assessment criteria and procedures. Passing the exam is a demonstration of competency and confirmation of understanding. Should an individual fail to pass the exam, they will be allowed to retake the exam up to three times within nine (9) months of the first failed exam date. Any exam retake will incur a fee (see [BREEAM USA In-Use Fee Sheet \(FS130\)](#)), available for download on the BREEAM website, [www.breeam.com/usa](http://www.breeam.com/usa)). Failure to retake and pass the exam within that time period will mean the individual must complete the full training again and pass the exam if they wish to become licensed.

Once the training has been satisfactorily completed and the exam has been successfully passed, the individual is considered eligible to become a Licensed BREEAM USA In-Use Assessor. The applicant

must apply for the BREEAM USA In-Use Assessor license within one year of the examination and pay the relevant fees to BRE Global.

## Licensing

In order to apply for the certification of assets located in the United States using the BREEAM USA In-Use program, an Assessor must hold a valid license provided by BRE Global. The BREEAM USA In-Use Assessor license is required to access the Assessor side of the assessment tool in order to verify a BREEAM USA In-Use performance measurement, submit a BREEAM USA In-Use assessment for verification and to be kept up to date with changes to the BREEAM USA In-Use program. Only licensed Assessors will be listed on GreenBookLive, the global database for all BREEAM assets and assessors worldwide ([www.greenbooklive.com](http://www.greenbooklive.com)) and BREEAM Projects ([www.breeam.com/projects](http://www.breeam.com/projects)).



Figure 1: Example badge for use by a licensed Assessor



Figure 2: Example badge for use by a licensed Assessor Organization

The applicant will be sent or can request a licensing application and the Terms and Conditions they and their organization must take up with BRE Global in order to conduct audits and apply for asset certification under the BREEAM USA In-Use standard. The Assessor can only undertake verification of data and request certifications once they have signed a License Agreement with BRE Global.

Assessors are required to maintain Professional Indemnity insurance in an amount required by the Licensing Agreement. It is the responsibility of the Assessor to keep their insurance up to date. The status of the insurance will be periodically checked by BRE Global.

A license is valid for one (1) year and renewable annually. To maintain their license, Assessors must submit at least one assessment and achieved certificate release every three (3) years in the program or requalify through completing the training and examination again.

## Fees

All the fees associated with BREEAM USA are detailed in [BREEAM USA In-Use Fee Sheet \(FS130\)](#), available for download on the BREEAM website ([www.breeam.com/usa](http://www.breeam.com/usa)).

## Assessment process

The main steps to certifying an asset against BREEAM USA In-Use are as follows:

- 1. Asset registration and performance measurement payment**

Once a Client has created an account on <http://breeminuse.breeam.org> and has paid the relevant fees, the asset is then registered and the Performance Measurement can begin. The Performance Measurement is active for up to one year or until submission for certification, whichever is sooner.
- 2. Measure performance using the BREEAM In-Use questionnaire**

The Client or their agent measures the asset's performance against the BREEAM USA In-Use standard by providing answers about the asset's performance. This includes gathering relevant documentation to ensure the questions are answered accurately and providing Client comments within the online tool to provide supporting information.

Very few of the questions in BREEAM USA In-Use are mandatory so Clients choose which questions they wish to answer. As the questions are answered, the online system will provide an unverified BREEAM USA In-Use performance score. Clients can then determine if they wish to implement an action plan to improve, use the results for internal benchmarking purposes only and/or proceed with certification. As the credits awarded are clearly defined, the Client can determine what performance level is required to achieve more credits and consider whether taking action to achieve this is a cost-effective and practical solution for their asset.
- 3. Decide whether to proceed with certification**

Certification of the assessment is optional but strongly encouraged to verify the performance described. Only certified assets may share their BREEAM rating publicly.
- 4. Assessor conducts assessment and verifies results**

In order to achieve certification, the Client must have their Performance Measurement verified by an independent and licensed BREEAM USA In-Use Assessor. A list of licensed Assessors can be found on GreenBookLive ([www.greenbooklive.com](http://www.greenbooklive.com)) and BREEAM Projects ([www.breeam.com/projects](http://www.breeam.com/projects)). The fees charged by the Assessor for verification and certification are agreed between the Assessor and Client. BRE does not set these fees or assign an Assessor to a Client.
- 5. Assessor submits their assessment report and requests certificate**

Only once the Assessor has verified that all of the answer options selected by the Client within the BREEAM USA In-Use questionnaire are correct through an on-site visit and have gathered sufficient evidence to support this assessment, can they submit a certificate request to BRE Global. The Assessor is required to submit evidence and complete Assessor comments

to demonstrate how the performance was verified and what evidence is in place to support awarding the credits. The evidence requirements are provided in the relevant Technical Manual (all of which are available to download at no charge through the BREEAM website, [www.breeam.com/usa](http://www.breeam.com/usa)).

The Assessor pays the certification fees at the time of submission of the evidence and request for the certificate as per the **BREEAM USA In-Use Fee Sheet (FS130)**.

**6. Quality Assurance review of assessment and certificate request**

All assessments will undergo a robust quality assurance process by BRE Global prior to certification. Assessments will only be certified after successfully passing the quality assurance process. Detailed information about the Quality Assurance process can be found later in this document.

**Verification Process**

In order to achieve a full certification, the licensed BREEAM In-Use Assessor must undertake a site visit of the asset seeking certification. The site visit consists of three key aspects:

**Opening meeting**

The site visit begins with an opening meeting between the Assessor and the Client’s management representatives to explain the purpose of the visit, the scope of the audit, the reporting method, the outline program and the approximate time and purpose of the closing meeting. Assessors are required to provide evidence that the opening meeting was conducted as part of the assessment evidence.

**Review of Client’s answers and evidence**

During a site visit, the Assessor will:

- Independently conduct an audit to verify the data entered into the BREEAM USA In-Use questionnaire
- Ensure the accuracy of the data input into the pre-assessment
- Verify the evidence that support the answers provided in the BREEAM USA In-Use questionnaire

All Client company procedures and asset utility bills must be current at the time the verified score is submitted for certification to BRE Global.

**Closing meeting**

The site visit ends with a closing meeting with the Client to discuss the credits awarded in each of the issue areas and inform the Client of the unverified score. Assessors are required to provide evidence that the closing meeting was conducted as part of the assessment evidence.

Further guidance on these requirements is provided to licensed Assessors.

The Assessor must be able to undertake the site visit safely and without risk to health. Both the Assessor and the Client have responsibilities to protect the health and safety of the Assessor while they are conducting the assessment. At a minimum, the following must be adhered to:

- A representative of the Client's organization must accompany the Assessor at all times.
- The Client organization is responsible for pointing out any Health & Safety requirements including details of fire or evacuation procedures to the Assessor and supplying any necessary protective equipment
- The Assessor must at all times comply with Health and Safety legislation
- BREEAM Assessors are not permitted to operate any equipment or machinery to access information.

Assessors are expected to retain all documents and evidence gathered that relate to a BREEAM USA In-Use audit for a minimum of ten (10) years from the date of submission to BRE Global. All documents that relate to a BREEAM USA In-Use assessment must be backed up in hard or electronic copies.

### **Managing Conflict of Interest with the Assessor's Role**

BREEAM USA In-Use is a third-party, independently verified certification program. Maintaining impartiality is essential to ensuring the validity of the certification. In order to ensure impartiality of the assessment, the following applies to all Assessors:

- Assessors cannot assess assets owned by their company or organization.
- Assessors cannot provide consultancy or advisory services or be directly involved in achieving or implementing a solution on a project for which they are an Assessor.
- Assessors must declare any potential conflict of interest to BRE Global prior to undertaking the assessment.

Where there is a potential for a conflict of interest, the Assessor must email BRE Global ([breeaminuse@bregroup.com](mailto:breeaminuse@bregroup.com)) to describe the potential conflict of interest and how they intend to manage it before undertaking an assessment.

Where a potential conflict of interest has been declared, BRE Global will review the processes and/or systems that have been put in place in order to manage the potential conflict of interest and will inform the Assessor whether these processes are sufficient. When the request for certification has been submitted, the assessment report will be escalated to a more detailed level of quality assurance checking. This will be done to reduce the risk to Assessors and Clients in the event that a certification outcome is challenged. Additional levels of monitoring may result in additional charges being made to the licensed organization that employs the Assessor.

## Fees

The fees associated with this program are set out in the [BREEAM USA In-Use Fee Sheet \(FS130\)](#), available for download on the BREEAM USA website ([www.breeam.com/usa](http://www.breeam.com/usa)). The fees charged by Assessors for their services are not set by BRE Global so are not included in our documentation. Fees for the Assessor's work are agreed directly between the Assessor and the Client.

## Certification

### Applying for the certificate

The BREEAM USA In-Use online platform will calculate the asset's score and the Assessor will document their process of verification in an assessment report. The Assessor will then request the appropriate certificate(s) and reports for their assessment report via BRE Global. Certification is only granted where the minimum number of credits achieved meets the rating 'Acceptable' or higher, where the applicable Minimum Standards have been met and when the BRE quality assurance process is passed successfully.

The certificate provides a label for the building that enables owners or occupants to gain recognition for the asset's operational environmental performance. BREEAM USA In-Use certifications can be compared against other BREEAM In-Use certified assets inside or outside of the United States on GreenBookLive (<http://www.greenbooklive.com>) and BREEAM Projects ([www.breeam.com/projects](http://www.breeam.com/projects)). Clients can request that their assets are not listed publicly by contacting [breeam@bregroup.com](mailto:breeam@bregroup.com).

Organizations can seek certification for any one or more of the parts of BREEAM USA In-Use. Each Part is independently scored and assessed and will receive their own rating. If an assessment rating of 'Unclassified' is achieved, the Assessor will write to the Client confirming that a full or partial re-assessment is required and explaining the reasons for this.

Once the assessment report has passed the quality assurance process, BRE Global will release the certificate to the Assessor. The Assessor is responsible for sending the certificate to the Client. BRE Global may not release the certificate to the Client without the permission of the Assessor Organization.

The certificate includes the following information:

- Name and address of the asset assessed
- The name of the Client Organization
- The licensed Assessor's name, Assessor number and Organization
- Description of what parts of the asset are included within the assessment. If the assessment does not include an entire building, then the description of what parts of the building have been assessed will be included within the certificate text or if only public areas of an asset have been assessed.
- The overall BREEAM USA In-Use score for each Part assessed and achieved
- A breakdown of the BREEAM USA In-Use category score per Part
- Signature on behalf of BRE Global

- Certificate number and issue number
- BREEAM USA logo and mark
- Dates of certificate validity

Certificates can be displayed in the building and may be used as a part of an organization’s overall environmental statement for corporate social responsibility and sustainability, subject to terms and conditions explained at the time of certification. There is also an option to purchase a building plaque to display.

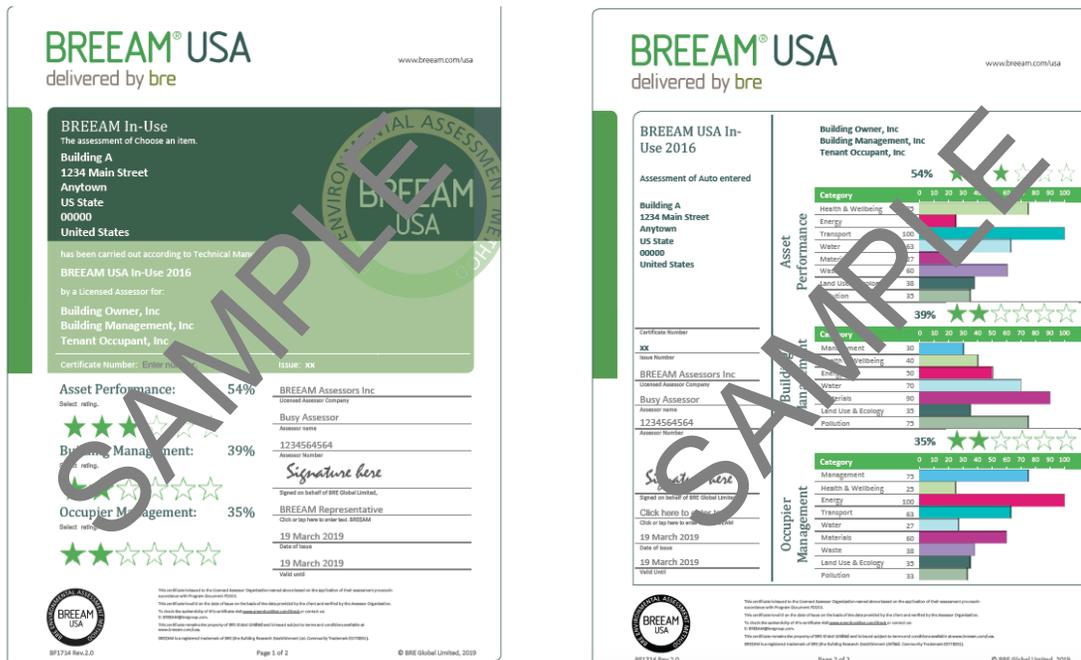


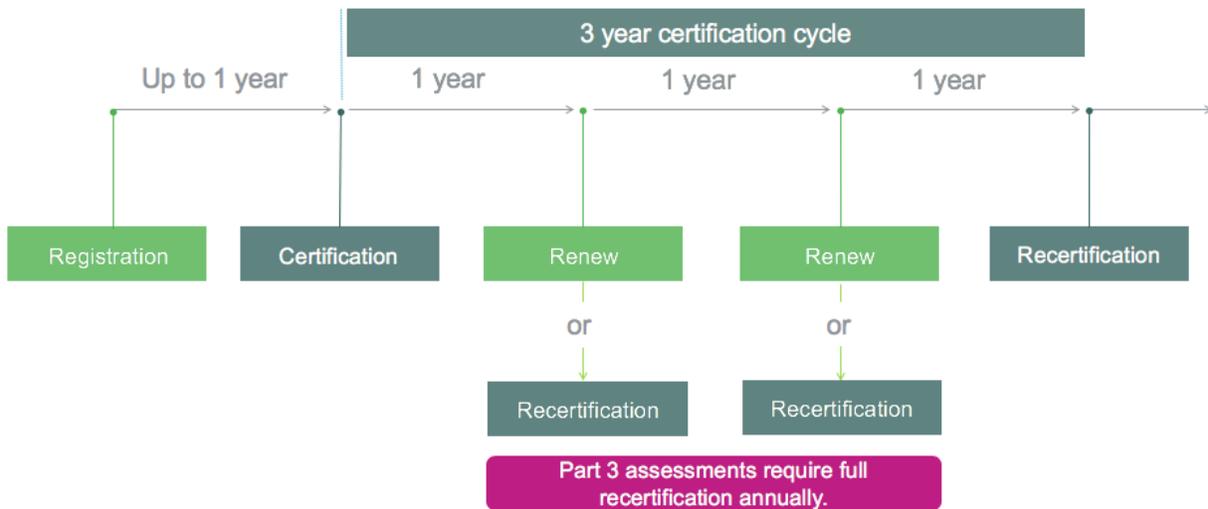
Figure 3: Example BREEAM USA In-Use v2016 Certificate

### Certificate validity

BREEAM USA In-Use certificates for v2016 are valid for one year and must be renewed or re-certified annually at a minimum to maintain certification. Certificates for Version 6 are valid for three years. Certificates can be recertified at any time.

### Certificate renewal – v2016 only

BREEAM USA In-Use certificates have an expiry date and need to be renewed and re-certified on an annual basis to remain valid. The certificate is maintained and held in force subject to satisfactory completion of the requirements for maintenance of certification. For Parts 1 and 2 only, no site visit is required where the conditions for renewal have been met. As an example:



Certificate renewal needs to be verified by a licensed BREEAM USA In-Use assessor. A reminder will be sent to the licensed Assessor who conducted the previous audit on the asset and the Client approximately 45 days before the certificate expiry date. BRE Global will request confirmation from the Client that no Significant Changes (see the Glossary of Terms) have been made to the Client’s asset or management practices.

- If significant changes have been made or the Client does not send confirmation that no significant changes have been made, the asset will be subject to a site visit and recertification.
- If no significant changes have been made to the asset, the certificate can be renewed.

Following a declaration from the Client that no significant changes have been made, the Assessor would pay the renewal fee and request the certificate renewal for the applicable Part(s).

If BRE Global does not receive notification from the Assessor that the Client wishes to renew their certification before the certificate expiry date, it will be assumed that they no longer wish to have their asset certified to the BREEAM USA In-Use program. The certificate will be formally withdrawn from the program and removed from the GreenBookLive and BREEAM Projects websites.

Part 3 certificates require an annual site visit for recertification regardless of changes that have been made.

## Quality Assurance

Auditing the quality of Assessor’s work is a key function and responsibility of this program. A high standard of quality assurance is needed to protect the interests of all parties that are entitled to rely on the Assessor’s work. Assessments will only be certified after successfully passing the quality assurance process.

## Quality audits and checks

The quality assurance audit process considers the key risk areas affecting the quality of the BREEAM USA In-Use certification:

- Level of experience of individual Assessor
- Professional behavior in dealings with other parties
- Professional competence in assessing energy and environmental performance compliance calculations
- Compliance with laid down standards
- Potential for fraud by an Assessor or their employers.

These risks are tied to the behaviors of Assessors and their employers and therefore not likely to occur on a random basis. A competent, diligent and honest individual will provide a service of an acceptable quality standard in the vast majority of cases. This program adopts a targeted, risk-based approach to the quality assurance auditing of its members. This makes it possible to deliver a level of confidence that appropriate quality standards are being maintained in the most cost-effective way.

The types of quality audits that are undertaken by BRE Global include:

- **Administrative audits of Assessments:** All assessments will undergo an administrative audit prior to certification, including confirming that Professional Indemnity insurance is in place. This audit confirms that all the basic information has been provided as part of the assessment and the Assessor is in good standing with BRE Global. Certification will follow if the assessment passes the audit and it has not been selected to undergo a Technical audit as well.
- **Technical audits of Assessments:** Technical audits will be carried out on each Assessor's first assessment and at least on 5% of all subsequent assessments from each Assessor. Selection will be linked to Assessor performance on previous assessments, ensuring that Assessors who consistently demonstrate competent and robust performance have fewer assessments selected (subject to a minimum level of selection for risk management purposes).
- **Periodic checks on the status of insurance:** Assessors may be requested to provide evidence that their Professional Indemnity insurance is current.

Assessors will be informed of the timescale in which they can expect audit feedback for a specific assessment upon acknowledgement of receipt of their submissions. Assessments that have not been selected for a technical audit will undergo administrative checks only, which BRE Global will work towards undertaking within seven (7) working days.

Where the assessment has been selected for a technical audit, BRE will work towards undertaking the technical audit within twenty (20) working days after submission for certification. BRE publishes a service level for quality assurance in the Assessor Portal so that Assessors and their Clients have a degree of certainty over when they can expect such feedback and, subject to passing the quality assurance process,

certification. The timeline towards certification is dependent upon the results of the initial certification decision which is in turn dependent on the quality of the Assessor's report. The Assessor may be required to provide follow up materials or responses to questions raised by the Quality Assurance process. Assessors are strongly encouraged to resubmit all their responses together.

### Actions taken by BRE Global for non-compliance

The results of the quality assurance audits will be reviewed by BRE Global. Audit reports are monitored, and a record is kept for each Assessor of the errors identified. Individuals with a high number of errors in reports are subject to increased monitoring. Fees payable as a result of actions taken under this clause are set out in (see [BREEAM USA In-Use Fee Sheet \(FS130\)](#)), available for download on the BREEAM USA webpage, [www.breeam.com/usa](http://www.breeam.com/usa)).

If BRE Global's quality assurance processes highlight regular inconsistencies within assessments, the following actions may be taken:

The Assessor may be required to undertake further training, at their own expense

**AND/OR**

The Assessor's registration and the license of the employing organization may be suspended

**OR**

The Assessor may choose to withdraw from the program.

If the review of the sample of reports or the nature of complaints indicates failure to carry out the work correctly, then additional audits or retraining may be required in order to achieve certification. This will typically be dealt with through suspension of asset certification which can lead to the withdrawal of certification and the corresponding listings in accordance with [Terms and Conditions for Listings & Certifications \(TC0201B\)](#).

If the Assessor is found to be incompetent by BRE Global, then the cost of any re-auditing activities is the responsibility of the Assessor.

Where registered Assessors within a licensed organization have not registered or submitted a BREEAM USA In-Use assessment within a 3-year period or the audit reports are consistently poor quality, the license status of the Assessor and/or the Organization will be reviewed and may be subject to satisfactory completion of re-training. Assessors and Assessor Organizations could have their license revoked if the Terms and Conditions for the License are breached.

### Fees

The fees associated with this program are set out in the [BREEAM USA In-Use Fee Sheet \(FS130\)](#), available for download on the BREEAM website ([www.breeam.com/usa](http://www.breeam.com/usa)).

### Complaints

BRE Global will review any complaints associated with this program and their resolution. BRE Global operates a formal [Complaints and Appeals Procedure \(PN100\)](#). A copy of the procedure can be

 delivered by bre	Operational Guidance	Doc No:	PN130
		Revision:	3.0
		Date:	11-May-2020

accessed on the BREEAM website ([www.breeam.com](http://www.breeam.com)) or requested from BRE Global via email ([breeam@bregroup.com](mailto:breeam@bregroup.com)).

## Marketing

### GreenBookLive listing

Once certification has been achieved, details of the asset(s) are added to GreenBookLive, the database for BREEAM Assessors and certified assets worldwide ([www.greenbooklive.com](http://www.greenbooklive.com)) and BREEAM Projects ([www.breeam.com/projects](http://www.breeam.com/projects)).

Clients using BREEAM USA In-Use can only externally promote their asset if it is certified. Assets that have been registered but not certified are not listed on the GreenBookLive website or otherwise published by BRE Global.

### Use of the BREEAM USA certification mark and logo

A licensed BREEAM USA In-Use Assessor will be allocated a unique Assessor license number and will be able to use the BRE Global mark or BREEAM logo subject as directed in **BREEAM USA Logos and Marks (PN101)**.

Asset assessments certified to the BREEAM USA In-Use program will be allocated a unique certificate number and will be able to use the BREEAM and BRE Global mark in a prescribed manner.

Any questions or concerns about the use of the certification marks or logo should be referred to the BRE Marketing team ([marketing@bregroup.com](mailto:marketing@bregroup.com)).

### BREEAM USA In-Use Building Plaque

Building plaques can be used to promote BREEAM USA In-Use certification for buildings that have achieved certification. BREEAM USA In-Use building plaques can be purchased and displayed on an asset as long as the BREEAM USA In-Use certification is current. Certificate plaques display the BREEAM USA In-Use assessment rating and the star rating for each part of BREEAM USA In-Use that has been certificated against. Plaque orders are placed through the BREEAM Store ([www.breeam.com/store](http://www.breeam.com/store)).

## Complaints and Appeals

BRE Global operates a formal **Complaints and Appeals Procedure (PN100)**. A copy of the procedure can be accessed on the BREEAM website ([www.breeam.com](http://www.breeam.com)) or requested from BRE Global via email ([breeam@bregroup.com](mailto:breeam@bregroup.com)).

If there are unresolved issues with the BREEAM services provided by BRE Global, please contact BRE Global via email [breeam@bregroup.com](mailto:breeam@bregroup.com) in the first instance so that we may address your issues or concerns as effectively as possible.

If any issues remain unresolved, or are of serious concern, Clients may contact BRE Global via [breeam@bregroup.com](mailto:breeam@bregroup.com), clearly indicating that they wish to elevate the issue to the status of formal complaint.

This complaint will then be acknowledged after receipt to confirm that the formal procedure has been initiated. BRE Global will then aim to resolve the issue within the timescale laid out in the Complaints and Appeals procedure.

The licensed Assessor Organization employing the registered Assessor will be expected to bear the costs of investigating complaints where appropriate.

## Inquiries

For any questions regarding BREEAM USA In-Use, please contact BRE Global via email ([breeam@bregroup.com](mailto:breeam@bregroup.com)). BRE Global will aim to respond to inquiries within five (5) working days from when the initial question was sent.