



Frequently Asked Questions - EPCs

What is an EPC?

An EPC is a certificate that gives information about the energy efficiency of a building.

Aren't EPCs just for houses and flats?

No, there is requirement for commercial properties to have EPCs too.

When are Commercial EPCs required?

Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) are needed whenever a property is:

- built
- sold
- rented

Owners will need to obtain an EPC which will be available to buyers and tenants before you market your property to sell or rent.

How long does an EPC last?

A commercial EPC lasts for 10 years from the date of lodgement.

Do all buildings require an EPC?

No. There are some buildings that don't need an EPC.

These include:

- places of worship
- temporary buildings that will be used for less than 2 years
- stand-alone buildings with total useful floor space of less than 50 square metres
- industrial sites, workshops and non-residential agricultural buildings that don't use a lot of energy
- some buildings that are due to be demolished
- holiday accommodation that's rented out for less than 4 months a year or is let under a licence to occupy
- listed buildings - you should get advice from your local authority conservation officer if the work would alter the building's character
- residential buildings intended to be used less than 4 months a year

Note that buildings that are occupied by public bodies which the public visit regularly (for example schools, hospitals, universities etc.) require a different form of certification; a Display Energy Certificate (DEC).

We can carry out DEC certification too. Contact us for a quote.

Who can carry out Commercial EPCs?

Commercial EPCs are carried out by suitably qualified assessors. The assessors must be accredited by an approved accrediting body.

Commercial EPCs are divided into three classes. Level 3 buildings are simple, small buildings. Level 4 are more complex, fully air-conditioned or mechanically ventilated. Level 5 buildings have features that make them unsuitable for modelling conventionally.

The Oakbrook Consultancy assessors are qualified to do Level 3 and Level 4 buildings that make up over 95% of the UK stock.

How can you tell whether an assessor is suitably qualified?

Log onto the EPC register maintained by Landmark <https://www.epcregister.com/>. This will enable you to check whether the assessor has the correct qualifications.

How much does a commercial EPC cost?

This depends upon the size and complexity of a building.

We like to be transparent about our pricing so we will provide a relatively comprehensive guide to what costs you can expect.

A very simple building such as a lock up shop or a small industrial building should not cost too much to assess. A surveyor will have costs to cover - travel for example but will also

have lodgement fees and insurance costs. Each commercial EPC that is lodged with Landmark incurs costs to the surveyor of around £40. The EPC requires a detailed survey, floor plans and photographs, plus the data has to be entered into a software modelling tool called iSBEM. As a result the minimum you can be expected to be charged is around £125-140 for this simplest type, assuming it is located within a reasonable travel time from where the surveyor is based.

Some properties will require multiple EPCs (for example a multi-let office building where each lettable area has its own heating or cooling systems) and each will incur a lodgement fee. A similar situation will occur where a site has multiple buildings.

The more complex a building is, the longer it will take to survey and the longer it will take to construct the model in iSBEM. Each zone of activity in a building has to be separately modeled and assessed. A complex, air-conditioned office building may require a week's work or more and, consequently, the fee required will be very much higher, possibly into the thousands of pounds.

Clients are encouraged to ask for a quote and to provide as much information about the building as possible.

Are there passes and fails in EPC assessments?

Not as such but relatively new legislation, The Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (MEES) which came into force in England and Wales on 1 April 2018, can affect commercial property.

MEES applies to private rented residential and non-domestic property and puts a restriction on the granting and continuation of existing tenancies where the property has an Energy Performance Certificate Rating of F and G.

Effectively this means there is a bar on letting properties with an F or G rating. The idea is that this will encourage owners or occupiers to improve these properties.

The Oakbrook Consultancy can offer you advice on energy efficiency improvement measures you can take to achieve an improvement in energy rating.