



NABERSNZ Accredited Assessor Process Outline

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1 About NABERSNZ

NABERSNZ is a voluntary performance-based rating system that provides an indication of a building's environmental performance relative to its peers within the New Zealand market. The Energy Efficiency Conservation Authority (EECA) as licensee¹ of NABERSNZ, has engaged the New Zealand Green Building Council (NZGBC) to act on their behalf as the Administrator of the programme.

The NABERSNZ ratings are based on measured operational impacts on the environment. The more stars, the better the performance.

Any reference to NABERSNZ within these documents refers to NABERSNZ Energy for Offices.

This document gives an overview of the Accredited Assessor² process that delivers Certified Ratings. It is a guide to the roles and responsibilities of all parties concerned.

2 Principles of Operation

NABERSNZ delivers Certified Ratings to customers through the use of contracted Accredited Assessors. These Accredited Assessors are free to market themselves and their services to the customers, in accordance with the NABERSNZ Brand Guidelines provided by the Administrator. The Accredited Assessors deal directly with their customers and are totally free to set their own prices and conditions of engagement. The overall principle is to allow the market to drive itself, while providing guidance to ensure consistency and integrity within the scheme itself.

The Accredited Assessors are trained and tested and agree to abide by a Code of Practice before being accredited. Only individuals, not companies, can be accredited and are responsible for the ratings they perform. However the companies whom the Accredited Assessors work for are also required to sign a contract with the Administrator outlining the rights and obligations of each party.

Accredited Assessors must conduct Certified Ratings in strict accordance with the NABERSNZ Rules, detailed procedures for collecting and analysing the required data for a NABERSNZ Certified Rating. This approach ensures consistency of results regardless of which Accredited Assessor conducts the Certified Rating. In addition to a general documentation check by Administrator staff at the time of submission, Certified Ratings are also audited at random by highly experienced individuals engaged by the Administrator to ensure that procedures are understood and followed.

¹ The New South Wales Government through the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH), has licensed EECA to modify and administer NABERSNZ energy and water for offices in New Zealand.

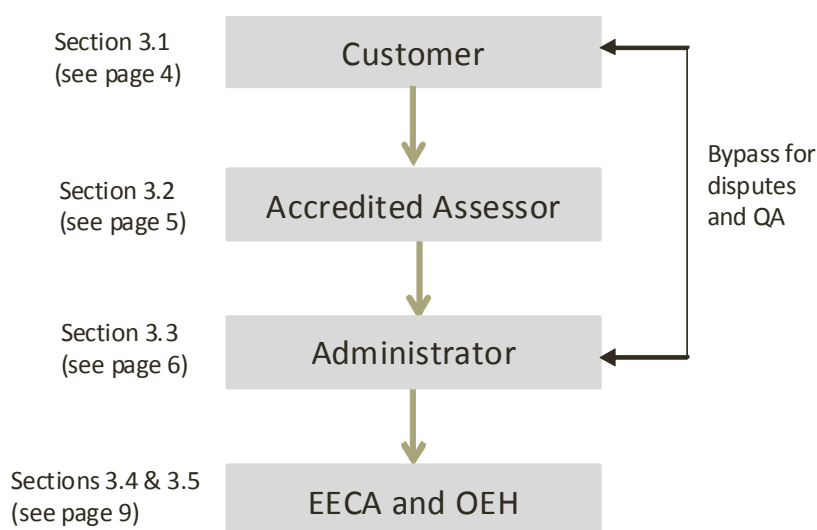
² Any references to Accredited Assessors also apply to Trainee Assessors unless otherwise noted

The Administrator, in conjunction with the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) and EECA, is responsible for provision of guidelines, documents, procedures, maintenance of databases, and ensures consistency.

This document should be seen as a guide to the elements of the scheme rather than a strict manual that must be followed to the letter. It defines the roles and responsibilities of relevant parties.

Roles and Responsibilities

The following flow chart illustrates the interaction between the Customer, Accredited Assessor, the Administrator the OEH and EECA. Their roles and responsibilities are outlined below, and the relationship between them is described in Section 4.



2.1 The Customer

Key elements of the customer's role in NABERSNZ include:

2.1.1 Understand and commit to annual renewal of certification

The customer must be informed of the fact that the Certified Rating certificate has a validity period and renewal is needed to maintain a Certified Rating. The Certified Rating certificate and logo cannot be used or displayed after the validity period expires.

2.1.2 Deliver complete and accurate information to the Accredited Assessor

The process relies on the building manager or owner supplying complete and accurate information to the Accredited Assessor. The customer needs to be aware of the required commitment of time and information before they agree to the Certified Rating. The role of the Accredited Assessor is to review the information provided and perform calculations to give a Certified Rating.

2.1.3 Pay the agreed fee for a Certified Rating

The customer needs to understand the payment amount and terms. This is subject to negotiation between the customer and Accredited Assessor as there are no set costs with the exception of the application fee set by the Administrator.

2.1.4 Market rating performance

After receiving a Certified Rating the customer is able to use the rating result and the trademark logos in their own advertising material in accordance with the NABERSNZ Brand Guidelines for the duration of the validity period. This needs to be understood by the customer and the benefits explained, preferably with ideas on the best ways to use the logo in their promotions.

2.2 Accredited Assessor

The Accredited Assessor is the only person able to perform a Certified Rating. Their role is to drive the uptake of ratings in the market place and encourage owners to take proactive steps to improve their building ratings when they are renewed. Key elements of the Accredited Assessor's role in NABERSNZ include:

2.2.1 Provide the first point of contact with the customer

The Accredited Assessor is normally the only customer contact.

2.2.2 Market for customers in accordance with NABERSNZ guidelines

Accredited Assessors are responsible for their own share of the market. They must find and maintain their own customers. In general, Accredited Assessors can freely market their own services and products, and can use the NABERSNZ Accredited Assessor approval mark in their own marketing materials if consistent with the NABERSNZ Brand Guidelines. However, they can only market the scheme itself with authorised documents supplied by the Administrator to ensure the consistency of the NABERSNZ image and message.

2.2.3 Audit of information provided by the customer in accordance with the Rules

The information provided by the customer is to be reviewed by the Accredited Assessor in strict accordance with the Rules. If there is any conflict of information or any uncertainty as to how to proceed, the relevant representative (as nominated in the scheme's procedures) will be contacted for advice. Regardless of this, the Administrator is to be informed if the Accredited Assessor believes there is the possibility of results being less than certain.

2.2.4 Only submit proven data for Certified Ratings

The Accredited Assessor is totally responsible for the information submitted for the granting of a Certified Rating. The information is not checked in detail, apart from random quality audits. If any information is found to be incorrect or not within the guidelines of the Rules, the Accredited Assessor may have their accreditation revoked. In order to maintain quality standards, a Trainee Assessor's first two ratings will be done under supervision.

2.2.5 Maintain own accreditation

Accreditation is granted for 12 months. The Accredited Assessors are responsible for their own accreditation and renewal. Any training courses that are a requirement of accreditation or renewal as stipulated by the Administrator must be attended as nominated. All accreditation and renewal fees must be paid to the Administrator as agreed or accreditation may be revoked.

2.2.6 Pay fees to the Administrator for each Certified Rating

Each Certified Rating requires the payment of a fee to cover administrative and other costs of the Administrator. The fee must be paid in advance of a Level 1 Audit being conducted on each Certified Rating submitted.

2.3 The Administrator

Key elements of the Administrator's role in NABERSNZ include:

2.3.1 Implementation of the NABERSNZ scheme and processes

The implementation of NABERSNZ should follow the specified processes and procedures approved by OEH and EECA to ensure consistency of results and prevent confusion in the marketplace.

2.3.2 National marketing

NABERSNZ needs to be marketed throughout New Zealand to educate potential customers and ensure long-term viability. This national marketing and associated cost is the responsibility of the Administrator and EECA.

2.3.3 Authorise Certified Rating certificates

Only the Administrator may authorise and issue Certified Rating Certificates.

2.3.4 Implement procedures including quality assurance

These procedures must be clear, concise and allow efficient operation of the scheme. This is to ensure that the maximum number of Certified Ratings and Certified Rating Certificates is provided in an accurate and efficient manner, without compromise to the integrity of the scheme. The processes and procedures are developed in consultation with the Administrator the OEH and EECA.

2.3.5 Quality assurance control

To ensure that high standards are being achieved the Administrator periodically reviews the work of the Accredited Assessors, including; customer relations; accuracy of Certified Ratings; and commitment to the scheme. This includes regular desktop audits conducted by Administrator staff and random complete audits of Certified Ratings performed by Auditors of the scheme. All audits are conducted in accordance with NABERSNZ processes and procedures.

2.3.6 Select and accredit Accredited Assessors

Accredited Assessors undergo formal theoretical and practical training and only those who achieve acceptable examination results and agree with the terms and conditions of the scheme are granted accreditation.

2.3.7 Develop and deliver training to Accredited Assessors

The Accredited Assessors must be trained to a high standard in both the overall objectives of the scheme and the technical requirements of obtaining a Certified Rating.

2.3.8 Assign unique assessor numbers to Accredited Assessors

Upon successful completion of training the Accredited Assessor is given a unique number that will identify them in future correspondence and analysis.

2.3.9 Maintain a national register of Accredited Assessors

Accredited Assessor details including their unique assessor number are stored on the NABERSNZ website which will also have the facility for customers to easily search for Accredited Assessors in their area.

2.3.10 Resolve disputes for customers and monitor delivery

A procedure is in place to enable any questions or complaints from customers to be handled promptly and efficiently. The customer must be made aware of this procedure on the NABERSNZ website prior to commencing their Certified Rating. Any complaints must be reviewed in terms of the procedures to assess whether revisions can be made to ensure similar complaints are not received in the future.

2.3.11 Provide point of contact for Accredited Assessors for technical questions

Accredited Assessors must have an efficient means of having their technical or procedural questions answered, and ensuring timely results for their customers.

2.3.12 Maintain technical resources

This includes technical assistance to Accredited Assessors and other resources as required for maintaining or developing the scheme.

2.3.13 Develop information packs

Information packs may be provided for Accredited Assessors to give to customers to explain the scheme and the rating process in a way that maintains consistency.

2.4 Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (EECA)

Key elements of EECA's role in NABERSNZ include:

2.4.1 The national database of rated buildings

All building information is stored in a single database for easy cross checking and auditing of Certified Ratings. The database is web based, managed by EECA, and easily searched and sorted.

2.4.2 Maintain the website

The NABERSNZ website is the main information source for Accredited Assessors and the market in general. This includes the web based tools and application process. Therefore it is critical that the information on the website is current and meets the needs of users.

2.5 The Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH)

The OEH is the owner of NABERS and licences the use of NABERSNZ to EECA.

Key elements of the OEH's role in NABERSNZ include:

2.5.1 Provide direction and guidance for the scheme

The OEH approves modifications and changes to NABERS for New Zealand conditions via monthly meetings with the Administrator and EECA, whilst ensuring that the NABERSNZ Rules, processes and procedures are consistent, clear and effective and maintain a high degree of comparability with NABERS.

3 Relationships between the Parties

3.1 Between Customer and Accredited Assessor

The Accredited Assessor is the first point of contact for the customer. The customer's only financial and contractual relationship is with the Accredited Assessor. The Accredited Assessor must ensure that the customer understands NABERSNZ and their obligations.

The customer must collect and submit the data required for the Certified Rating assessment.

Some elements of the communications and financial flow in this relationship, and documents that may be involved include:

3.1.1 Accredited Assessor to customer:

Marketing packages

Initial information and marketing package may contain:

- Contact letter,
- General information on the scheme in the form of a standard brochure, and
- Suggested marketing ideas for their customer's internal and external benefit such as case studies.

Final marketing pack (delivered by the Accredited Assessor at the same time as the Certified Rating certificate is emailed):

- Thank you letter, reminder of the need for annual renewal,
- Details of what each rating means with suggested improvement paths,
- Marketing ideas..

Technical requirements and customer agreements

- Data accuracy requirements for assessment information,
- Alert the customer to the sections of the NABERSNZ website they must complete.

Financial and contractual arrangements

- There is no set fee or contractual arrangement for a Certified Rating between the customer and the Accredited Assessor. Accredited Assessors are free to set their own prices and conditions.

3.1.2 Customer to Accredited Assessor:

Technical material

- Provision of building data to Accredited Assessor.

Financial and contractual arrangements

- Payment of fees as required by contractual arrangements with Accredited Assessor.

3.2 Between Customer and the Administrator

3.2.1 The Customer to the Administrator:

- The customer must agree to the Terms and Conditions on the NABERSNZ website and advise if the Certified Rating details can be published.

3.2.2 The Administrator to Customer:

- Provision of the Certified Rating Certificate.

3.3 Between Accredited Assessor and the Administrator

The Administrator is responsible for ensuring the consistency of the Certified Ratings and procedures and protecting the scheme's intellectual property.

The Administrator is responsible for the Accredited Assessors and the quality of their work. The Accredited Assessor reports to the Administrator. When the Accredited Assessor submits information directly to the NABERSNZ website for a Certified Rating, the Administrator is still responsible for ensuring accuracy.

Fees paid by Accredited Assessors to the Administrator are fixed but may change over time.

Some elements of the communications and financial flow in this relationship and documents that may be involved include:

3.3.1 From the Administrator to Accredited Assessor:

Contractual

- Standard contracts for Accredited Assessor and their employer (Company)

Administration and procedures

Scheme management

- Allocation of numbering systems for Accredited Assessors,
- Database management for automatic lodgement of Certified Ratings, and
- Provision of reports and information on scheme implementation.

Accreditation of Accredited Assessor

- Training pack including relevant documentation,
- Renewal notices for Accredited Assessor accreditation and Certified Ratings
- Audit of Certified Ratings.

Certified Ratings

- Provision of Certified Rating certificates.

Technical support

- Ongoing training documentation and technical information, and
- NABERSNZ Rules.

Marketing

- NABERSNZ Brand Guidelines
- Supply of marketing materials as required, and
- Notification of any NABERSNZ marketing initiatives.

Technical and procedural support

- Ongoing training and technical information in accordance with processes and procedures, and
- Notification of changes to guidelines, Rules, processes and procedures, including those posted to the website.

Technical and procedural queries

- Response to requests for technical advice or Rulings within the timeframes specified in the processes and procedures

3.3.2 Accredited Assessor to Administrator:

Accreditation of Accredited Assessor

- Payment of initial and ongoing training fees as required,
- Payment of annual accreditation fee,
- Application and request for renewal of accreditation.

Application for Certified Rating and Certified Rating Certificate

- Completed Certified Rating application and associated calculations on the rated building/tenancy in accordance with the Rules including assessor number
- Confirmation that they have conformed to the Rules and declared any conflicts of interest, and
- Payment of fixed administration fee for each rating application.

Marketing

- Payment for marketing material as required, and
- Requests for approval of marketing initiatives (other than direct marketing to potential customers).

Technical and procedural queries

- Database management for automatic lodgement of ratings
- Provision of reports and information on scheme implementation

3.4 Between the Administrator and the OEH and EECA

The OEH provides advice to the Administrator through EECA, on the Rules, processes and procedures and approves changes to these documents via monthly meetings.

Some elements of the communications flow in this relationship and documents that may be involved include:

- Current scheme procedures and implementation statistics
- Procedural improvements and future direction
- Technical advice
- Clarification and modifications to the Rules, and
- Reporting requirements.