



BREEAM Basics

What is BREEAM?

Launched in 1990 and developed by the Building Research Establishment (BRE- www.bre.co.uk/) BREEAM is an Environmental Assessment Method for new and existing buildings which awards a sustainability rating based on a series of credit points. The wider aim of BREEAM is to minimise the adverse effects of buildings on the global and local environment.

There is a tailored BREEAM rating tool to suit most types of buildings. For a building does not fit into a particular scheme, there is the BREEAM Other Buildings family which also includes a bespoke ratings where the details of the credit points and benchmarks are developed on a case by case basis to suit the specialised development.

The assessment criteria vary with building type. Currently the following assessment schemes are available:

BREEAM Ecohomes and EcohomesXB	
BREEAM Other Buildings	BREEAM In-Use
BREEAM Courts	BREEAM Multi-residential
BREEAM Education	BREEAM Prisons
BREEAM Healthcare	BREEAM Offices
BREEAM Industrial	BREEAM Retail
BREEAM International	BREEAM Communities

BREEAM rating benchmarks

BREEAM Ratings range from **Pass** to **Outstanding**. To obtain a particular rating a series of mandatory minimum standards must be achieved. Once the minimum prescribed standards are met, the development can pick and choose between additional credit points to achieve a desired code rating.

A summary of the required number of credit points for a rating is given below:

Rating	% Score
Outstanding	≥85
Excellent	≥70
Very good	≥55
Good	≥45
Pass	≥30

A BREEAM rating is determined based on the weighted score of credit points. Not all credit points are of equal value and the cost/design impact of each credit points varies. Mecserve can provide technical and strategic advice to achieve a desired BREEAM rating within the economic constraints of the project.

BREEAM Categories

A brief summary of the key principles for each BREEAM category is given below:

- Management** - Management policies, building commissioning and procedural issues
- Health and Wellbeing** - Indoor and external issues affecting health and wellbeing of building occupants e.g. thermal conditions, daylighting, glare etc.
- Energy** - Operational energy (and CO2 emissions) of the completed development. The energy category is heavily dependent on the expected carbon emissions (including Low Carbon and Renewable Technologies) however it also includes credit points relating to metering and sub-metering.
- Transport** - A series of transport and site access related credit points e.g. cyclist facilities, public transport links, deliveries etc.
- Water** - Credit points relating to efficient water use of base building and tenant services.
- Materials** - Environmental implications of building materials including responsible sourcing and lifecycle impacts.
- Waste** - Rewards recycling and management of waste products both during construction and once in operation.
- Land Use and Ecology** - Credit points to encourage the use of brownfield sites, rehabilitation of contaminated land as well as conservation and enhancement of the site ecology.
- Pollution** - Reduction and/or elimination of air, water and light pollution.
- Innovation** - Additional credits available by significantly exceeding particular BREEAM requirements, using BREEAM accredited professionals, or being genuinely innovative in approach.



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Innovation Credit Points

Under BREEAM 2008 up to two additional innovation credits can be awarded for employing a BREEAM Accredited Professional throughout the project. As one of the first companies to get Accredited Professional status, just involving us in your project and following our advice means you can earn these additional 2 credits. Innovation points can also be obtained by going above and beyond the credit point requirements as well as by demonstrating genuine innovation with respect to sustainability.

Mandatory Minimum Credit Points

To obtain a particular BREEAM rating there are mandatory minimum credits that have to be achieved. Particular credit points that are affected by mandatory minimum credits are water and energy. For example a BREEAM 'Excellent' rating requires a 44% improvement on the minimum Building Regulations Part L energy target, which depending on the development may be quite onerous to achieve and have significant design implications.

BREEAM and Planning:

Increasingly local councils are requiring minimum BREEAM ratings as planning conditions for new developments and refurbishments. Typically a minimum rating of 'Very Good' is required though some local councils require a more onerous 'Excellent' level.

Marketing Benefits:

BREEAM ratings are used by property agents, managers and tenants to promote environmental credentials and have a means to benchmark their buildings against others on the market. BREEAM certification is increasingly understood to a robust market of a development's quality.

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What is different about Mecserve's Service?

Mecserve only employ BREEAM assessors with a background in construction and engineering. This means that we can deliver strategic advice that is practical and effective. Our concise, balanced advice can be especially valuable at the planning and pre-planning stages of a project to establish Client requirements and to match these to practical solutions.

Mecserve can assist with all types of BREEAM schemes:

- Strategic Advice;
- Pre-Assessments;
- Design Stage Assessments; and
- Post Construction Assessments.

Mecserve has experience across a vast array of building types from education to offices to hotel developments, including listed and historical buildings. Current Clients for sustainability advice include:

- The Crown Estate
- Grosvenor
- Terrace Hill
- Barratt Developments
- St Mungos
- Western Ridge
- Village Homes

New for 2009...

From the Autumn of 2009 we will be offering BREEAM In-Use assessments to provide feedback on the on-going sustainable operation of your buildings. This service complements our existing energy efficiency review service to benchmark the performance and management of your buildings and provide practical advice on improving their operation.