



Assessor Performance Management Policy

NatHERS for existing homes

Version 1.0

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Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and culture. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

At a glance: Performance Management

When undergoing a performance management process, NatHERS for existing homes assessors can:

- Ask questions about any Performance Improvement Action or decisions made
- Request a review when issued a Performance Improvement Action, Suspension, or Cancellation notice
- Raise a complaint about the performance management process at any time
- Seek assistance from their assessor accreditation service provider to complete any Performance Improvement Action issued

Detecting and resolving performance issues

To ensure quality of assessments and the reputation of NatHERS for existing homes, regular audits and investigation of complaints about assessors are undertaken to catch performance issues early on.

If a breach of requirements is detected or a low audit score is received, after an assessment of the situation a Performance Improvement Action Notice may be issued to the assessor to address the issue. An assessor who receives a Performance Improvement Action Notice has the right to reply with any feedback, questions, or dispute, and this will be considered before making a final decision.

Completing Performance Improvement Action

Assessors are expected to complete Performance Improvement Action in the timeframe specified in the notice. Assistance will be provided to the assessor to complete the assigned Performance Improvement Action, such as linking an assessor with a Mentor or the appropriate training. Completion of the Performance Improvement Action will be monitored by the assessor accreditation service provider.

Suspension and cancellation

An assessor's accreditation may be suspended or cancelled if the continued completion of assessments by the assessor is considered to pose an unacceptable risk. Examples of when this may occur include when assessor does not satisfactorily complete Performance Improvement Action, has repeated performance issues, or has committed a serious breach of requirements.

Before issuing a suspension or cancellation notice, the assessor accreditation service provider or NatHERS Administrator will consider all information available and the context of the situation. Decision making will be proportionate to the level of risk and consider the assessor's behaviour. If it is decided that an assessor's accreditation should be suspended or cancelled, the assessor will be issued a notice. The assessor will be given time for response, and any response will be considered before making a final decision.

What if I believe a decision is incorrect or unreasonable?

If you believe a decision is incorrect or unreasonable, you may request an internal review. Internal reviews are conducted by staff who have not previously been involved in your matter. A request for internal review must be received within 30 business days of the date you were notified of the decision. Your request should explain why you believe the initial outcome is incorrect or unreasonable and provide any supporting information or evidence. The reviewer will consider all relevant information and may decide to confirm, vary, or revoke the decision. If revoked, a fresh decision will be made.

You will be advised of the outcome of any internal review process, and any external review options available to you. Where possible, internal reviews are completed within 30 business days of the request date (not including time in which the person managing your review is waiting on more information from you).

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1 Purpose of this Policy

The Nationwide House Energy Rating Scheme (NatHERS) provides a standardised approach to rating the energy performance of homes throughout Australia.

The success of NatHERS is contingent upon accurate, trusted, and reliable ratings. The NatHERS Administrator works to achieve this with its delivery partners, who support accreditation, monitoring and compliance activities.

This policy outlines how assessor performance issues are managed in NatHERS for existing homes, including:

- how breaches of the NatHERS for Existing Homes Assessor Code of Practice will be managed, including when identified through audits
- what performance improvement actions are available and what they involve
- when Suspension or Cancellation of accreditation may occur and what it involves.

2 Principles

Performance management is key to ensuring stakeholders have confidence that assessor issues are detected and effectively addressed.

Our approach to performance management focuses on:

Impartiality and fairness

Decision-making applies the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness. Decisions must be fully informed and based on the available information and evidence.

Performance issues must be assessed reasonably, fairly, respectfully and objectively, and without regard for cultural identity, national origin, religion, sex, gender expression, sexual orientation, physical or intellectual ability, socioeconomic status, or other protected personal attributes.

Transparency

Assessors are provided with information to understand what is expected from them, where their performance needs to improve and what performance improvement action they need to take.

Where an assessor's accreditation is suspended or cancelled, assessors are given clear reasons for this action and opportunity for review.

Managing risks proportionally

The performance management process considers the circumstance of each performance issue and weighs it against the risks to program stakeholders and the integrity of the scheme.

Decisions about assessor conduct and performance are proportional to the seriousness of the risk and breach identified.

3 Assessor requirements

Assessors must be accredited by an assessor accreditation service provider and abide by the **NatHERS for Existing Homes Assessor Code of Practice**. The key categories the **NatHERS for Existing Homes Code of Practice** covers are:

- Workplace Health and Safety
- Trade Marks adherence
- Attending a Private Dwelling
- Privacy and Data protection
- Complaints, Audit and Quality Assurance
- Performance Improvement Action
- Management of Conflicts of Interest
- Maintaining Accreditation
- General responsibilities of assessors.

Regular performance monitoring of assessors ensures that issues with assessor quality or conduct can be identified, and corrective action taken. Performance monitoring can also identify across the cohort of assessors where additional support, training or guidance is needed.

Performance monitoring occurs through a range of processes, including audits under the **NatHERS for Existing Homes Assessor Audit Policy** and investigating complaints in accordance with the **NatHERS Complaints Management Policy**.

- When performance monitoring indicates an assessor is not meeting requirements, the assessor accreditation service provider will determine a response that is impartial, fair, transparent, and proportionate to the risk posed. This may include Performance Improvement Action, suspension of accreditation, or cancellation of accreditation.

4 Performance Improvement Action

Performance Improvement Actions are issued to an assessor, through a Performance Improvement Action Notice, to improve the performance of the assessor and rectify any identified issues.

Performance issues which may be addressed by Performance Improvement Action include, but are not limited to:

- Breaches of conduct, including breaches of the **NatHERS for Existing Homes Assessor Code of Practice**, or conduct issues from complaints received and investigated under the **NatHERS Complaints Management Policy**
- Low audit scores received in audits of assessments produced by the assessor, indicating non-compliance with the **NatHERS for Existing Homes Technical Note**

- Breaches of ongoing obligations for accreditation outlined in the **NatHERS for Existing Homes Assessor Code of Practice**.

4.1 Types of Performance Improvement Action

Where an assessor accreditation service provider decides to issue Performance Improvement Action, they will determine the most appropriate Performance Improvement Action to address the identified performance issue.

In deciding on what action to take, the assessor accreditation service provider will consider the principles set out in relevant NatHERS policies, such as the **NatHERS for Existing Homes Assessor Audit Policy** or **NatHERS Complaints Management Policy**. They will consider:

- all available information relating to the assessor's conduct, including information provided by the assessor
 - whether the assessor's conduct was intentional, accidental, or opportunistic
 - the likelihood of the conduct leading to the breach re-occurring
 - the level of harm that could/has been experienced because of the assessor's conduct, including the situation in which it has or could occur
 - whether the assessor's conduct has improved or not improved over time
 - the number of people/assessments impacted by the assessor's conduct
 - which Performance Improvement Action is more likely to lead to a satisfactory outcome.
- Where the Performance Improvement Action is in response to an audit result, information from Auditors will assist the assessor accreditation service provider to determine the appropriate Performance Improvement Action. Further information on Performance Improvement Action relating to audits is in the **NatHERS for Existing Homes Assessor Audit Policy**.

The main types of Performance Improvement Actions which an assessor may be assigned are detailed in Table 1. An assessor accreditation service provider may also choose to assign other performance improvement actions.

Table 1: Types of Performance Improvement Action

Action	Details
Mentoring	<p>If an assessor accreditation service provider decides that mentoring is needed, it will determine a number (between 1-5) of assessments that need to be reviewed by a Mentor during the mentoring process.</p> <p>The assessor accreditation service provider may also determine other requirements for the mentoring, such as the type of assessments or whether the mentoring is in-person or remote.</p> <p>The assessor accreditation service provider will provide a list of Mentors for the assessor to choose from. The Mentor will be required to review 1-5 assessments, as determined by the assessor</p>

	accreditation service provider. The Mentor must sign off that the assessment has been completed correctly.
Training or education	<p>An assessor accreditation service provider may require additional training, education, or other knowledge and skill improvement activities to be completed by an assessor to ensure adequate knowledge of assessment methods.</p> <p>The assessor accreditation service provider will provide the assessor with one or more training or education options and the relevant provider(s).</p> <p>The assessor may propose alternative training or education (including from a different provider), provided the activity adequately covers the issue that led to the Performance Improvement Action. This must be proposed prior to completing the training or education activity. An assessor accreditation service provider may reject an assessor's request to undertake alternative training or education if the assessor accreditation service provider is not satisfied the issues will be adequately addressed.</p>
Increased assurance over assessments	An assessor accreditation service provider may recommend to the NatHERS Administrator that additional assurance (beyond what is specified in this policy) is required over an assessor's assessments, or that the assessor is required to undertake additional steps (beyond normally required) for their assessments to demonstrate they are meeting requirements.
Warning letter	A formal warning letter is issued to an assessor by the assessor accreditation service provider regarding the assessor's performance and requirements for the assessor to maintain accreditation. Assessors will be placed on notice that continued performance issues may result in Performance Improvement Action, suspension or cancellation of accreditation.

4.2 Performance Improvement Action Notice

Where an assessor is directed to complete Performance Improvement Action to resolve an identified issue, the assessor accreditation service provider will issue a Performance Improvement Action Notice to the assessor.

A Performance Improvement Action Notice must include:

1. the reason for the Performance Improvement Action Notice (which may include an audit, the result of an investigation of a complaint, or any other non-compliance with the **NatHERS for Existing Homes Assessor Code of Practice**)
2. the Performance Improvement Action the assessor is required to take
3. any relevant sections of the NatHERS Technical Note, Assessor Code of Practice, or any other guidance documentation that will assist the assessor in correcting their conduct in the future

4. a copy of any relevant audit report (where the action relates to an audit)
5. a reasonable timeframe in which the Performance Improvement Action must be completed
6. the evidence that must be provided by the assessor of completion of the Performance Improvement Action
7. that non-performance of a Performance Improvement Action may result in Suspension or Cancellation of accreditation
8. the assessor's right to have the decisions made by the assessor accreditation service provider reviewed.

4.3 Completion of Performance Improvement Action

- Assessors are required to complete any Performance Improvement Action in the timeframe specified by the assessor accreditation service provider. The assessor accreditation service provider may, at its absolute discretion, provide the assessor with additional time to complete the Performance Improvement Action.
- Completion of the Performance Improvement Action will be monitored by the assessor accreditation service provider. The assessor must provide the evidence specified in the Performance Improvement Action Notice to demonstrate completion of the Performance Improvement Action.
- The assessor accreditation service provider will provide reasonable assistance to the assessor to complete the Performance Improvement Action.
- If an assessor does not complete the Performance Improvement Action to the satisfaction of the assessor accreditation service provider within the specified timeframe, this may result in additional Performance Improvement Action, suspension of the assessor's accreditation until the Performance Improvement Action is complete, or cancellation of the assessor's accreditation.

5 Suspension of accreditation

The assessor accreditation service provider or NatHERS Administrator may suspend an assessor's accreditation if it believes the continued completion of assessments by the assessor poses an unacceptable risk. This is a temporary measure where an assessor is prevented from undertaking assessments or generating Home Energy Rating Certificates, until specified requirements are met.

Performance issues which may result in suspension include, but are not limited to:

- Failure to complete performance improvement action by the specified time
- Serious breaches of requirements that indicate that continuing to allow the assessor to complete assessments is an unacceptable risk until certain requirements (such as completing Performance Improvement Action) are met
- Repeated or very low scores received in audits of assessments produced by an assessor, indicating repeated non-compliance with the NatHERS for Existing Homes Technical Note

- Repeated performance issues that have continued despite the completion of Performance Improvement Action.

5.1 Deciding to suspend accreditation

When determining whether to suspend an assessor's accreditation, the assessor accreditation service provider or NatHERS Administrator will undertake the following steps, to ensure any suspension is impartial, fair, transparent, and proportionate to risk.

The assessor accreditation service provider or NatHERS Administrator must consider all relevant information relating to the circumstances, including:

1. whether the assessor has breached the **NatHERS for Existing Homes Assessor Code of Practice**
2. the assessor's performance history, including whether they have a history of breaches (including in other energy efficiency programs in which the assessor has held accreditation within the last 10 years, if applicable)
3. the assessor's completion of relevant Performance Improvement Action
4. any complaints made against the assessor, including whether the assessor has a history of complaints in relation to their conduct
5. the assessor's behaviour, including whether the assessor has acted in good faith
6. the risks of allowing the assessor to continue to complete assessments
7. any additional information provided by the assessor (as applicable).

The assessor accreditation service provider or NatHERS Administrator must then make a decision on suspension in a manner that is:

- reasonable
 - timely
 - impartial
 - based on accurate, true, and relevant information.
- Suspension may be required following poor audit performance, including as a response to repeated poor performance or a single very low audit result. For more information about suspension as a consequence of audits, see the **NatHERS for Existing Homes Assessor Audit Policy**.

5.2 Suspension of Accreditation Notice

- If the assessor accreditation service provider decides to suspend an assessor's accreditation, it will provide the assessor with a Suspension of Accreditation Notice. The notice must:
 1. inform the assessor of the decision to suspend the assessor's accreditation;
 2. set out the reasons for the decision, including the provisions in the **NatHERS for existing homes Assessor Code of Practice** (or other NatHERS guidance documentation) that the assessor is considered to have breached
 3. specify the date the suspension will be effective, which will be 10 business days unless the NatHERS Administrator determines that there are exceptional risks that mean the suspension should commence earlier

4. specify the requirements that need to be met to lift the suspension (for example, the assessor's completion of specified Performance Improvement Action by a certain date)
5. inform the assessor of their right to, **within 10 business days**:
 - a. show cause as to why their accreditation should not be suspended
 - b. provide any additional information to consider.

5.2.1 Consideration of additional information

- If the assessor provides any additional information within 10 business days for why their accreditation should not be suspended, this will be considered by the assessor accreditation service provider or NatHERS Administrator.
- If the assessor accreditation service provider or NatHERS Administrator decides (based on the additional information provided) that there were significant extenuating circumstances or that the original decision to suspend was incorrect, it may decide not to suspend the assessor's accreditation. The assessor accreditation service provider or NatHERS Administrator may request additional information from the assessor to make this decision.
- The assessor accreditation service provider or NatHERS Administrator will notify the assessor when this decision has been made, and whether or not the assessor's accreditation will be suspended. The assessor's suspension will not become effective until this notice is provided, unless the NatHERS Administrator determines that there are exceptional risks that mean the assessor's suspension should commence earlier.

5.3 Reinstating accreditation

Once the requirements that must be met to lift the suspension are completed (for example, the assessor's satisfactory completion of Performance Improvement Action in a specified timeframe), the assessor's accreditation will be reinstated.

Failure to meet the requirements for lifting the suspension may result in cancellation of accreditation.

6 Cancellation of accreditation

The assessor accreditation service provider or NatHERS Administrator may cancel an assessor's accreditation if it believes the continued completion of assessments by the assessor poses an unacceptable risk, and that this risk cannot be mitigated by further action.

This will permanently prevent the assessor from undertaking NatHERS from existing homes assessments and generating Home Energy Rating Certificates.

Reasons that an assessor's accreditation may be cancelled include, but are not limited to:

- not meeting the requirements for re-accreditation in accordance with the **NatHERS for existing homes Assessor Code of Practice**
- not meeting the requirements to lift a suspension in the specified timeframe
- failure to complete performance improvement action within the specified time period

- very serious breaches of requirements that indicate the assessor is not suitable to complete assessments
- repeated performance issues that have continued despite past suspension and the completion of Performance Improvement Action

6.1 Deciding to cancel accreditation

Before issuing a Cancellation Notice, the assessor accreditation service provider or NatHERS Administrator will consider all available information to determine if the assessor's accreditation should be cancelled. This includes:

1. whether the assessor has breached the **NatHERS for existing homes Assessor Code of Practice**
2. the assessor's performance history, including whether they have a history of breaches (including in other energy efficiency programs in which the assessor has held accreditation within the last 10 years, if applicable)
3. the assessor's completion of relevant Performance Improvement Action
4. any complaints made against the assessor, including whether the assessor has a history of complaints in relation to their conduct
5. the assessor's behaviour, including whether the assessor has acted in good faith
6. the risks of allowing the assessor to continue to complete assessments
7. any additional information provided by the assessor, including during any related suspension of accreditation process (as applicable).

The assessor accreditation service provider or NatHERS Administrator must then make a decision in a manner that is:

- reasonable
- timely
- impartial
- based on accurate, true, and relevant information.

6.2 Cancellation of Accreditation Notice

6.2.1 Notice of intent to cancel

- If the assessor accreditation service provider or NatHERS Administrator decides to cancel an assessor's accreditation, it will provide the assessor with a notice of its intent to cancel the assessor's accreditation. The notice will:
 1. inform the assessor of the decision to cancel the assessor's accreditation;
 2. set out the reasons for the decision, including the provisions in the **NatHERS for existing homes Assessor Code of Practice** (or other NatHERS guidance documentation) that the assessor is considered to have breached
 3. inform the assessor of their right to, **within 10 business days**:
 - a. show cause as to why their accreditation should not be cancelled
 - b. provide any additional information to consider.

6.2.2 Consideration of additional information

- If the assessor provides any information within 10 business days for why their accreditation should not be cancelled, this will be considered by the assessor accreditation service provider or NatHERS Administrator.
- If the assessor accreditation service provider or NatHERS Administrator decides (based on the additional information provided) that there were significant extenuating circumstances or that the original decision to cancel was incorrect, it may decide not to cancel the assessor's accreditation. The assessor accreditation service provider or NatHERS Administrator may request additional information from the assessor to make this decision.

6.2.3 Final decision

- Once any additional information provided by the assessor has been considered, and a final decision made, the assessor accreditation service provider or NatHERS Administrator will notify the assessor.
- If the final decision is to cancel the assessor's accreditation, the notice will:
 1. inform the assessor of the final decision to cancel the assessor's accreditation;
 2. set out the reasons for the decision, including the provisions in the **NatHERS for existing homes Assessor Code of Practice** (or other NatHERS guidance documentation) that the assessor is considered to have breached
 3. specify the date the cancellation will be effective (which may be the time the notice was issued)
 4. inform the assessor of their right to have the decision reviewed.

Note: The NatHERS Administrator, where it receives substantial and credible information relating to the misconduct of an assessor which has or could cause reputational risk to NatHERS, may take action to ensure an assessor 's accreditation is suspended or cancelled.

7 Reviews and complaints

7.1 Reviews

If you believe a decision is incorrect or unreasonable, you may request a review.

Internal reviews are conducted by staff who have not previously been involved in your matter. A request for internal review must be received **within 30 business days of the date you were notified of the decision**. Your request should explain why you believe the initial outcome is incorrect or unreasonable and provide any supporting information or evidence. A decision may be varied or revoked if you can demonstrate a reasonable argument that the original decision:

- was made without following the processes outlined in this policy
- did not consider, or misinterpreted, available information and evidence
- considered information that was not relevant
- would be considered by a reasonable person to be disproportional to the seriousness of the issue identified

The reviewer will consider all relevant information and may decide to confirm, vary, or revoke the decision. If revoked, a fresh decision will be made.

You will be advised of the outcome of any internal review process, and any external review options available to you. Where possible, internal reviews are completed within 30 business days of the request date (not including time in which the person managing your review is waiting on more information from you).

7.2 Complaints

The **NatHERS Complaints Management Policy** governs any complaints or disputes in relation to NatHERS for existing homes, including about NatHERS accredited assessors, service providers (e.g. software providers and independent auditors) and the NatHERS Administrator. Any complaints should be sent to the contact details in the **NatHERS Complaints Management Policy**.

8 Related Information

- NatHERS for Existing Homes Assessor Audit Policy
- NatHERS Complaints Management Policy
- NatHERS for Existing Homes Assessor Code of Practice
- NatHERS for Existing Homes Conflict of Interest Policy
- NatHERS for Existing Homes Technical Note

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- NatHERS Trade Mark Guidelines
- Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water Privacy Policy

9 Glossary

Term	Definition
AASP	The assessor accreditation service provider (AASP) is the entity that manages the accreditation of NatHERS for existing homes assessors.
Accreditation	The formal approval of an assessor, by an AASP, as someone who is appropriately trained and skilled to conduct assessments.
Assessment	The exercise and activities by which a NatHERS for existing homes assessor undertakes a NatHERS for existing homes assessment to produce a Home Energy Rating Certificate.
Assessor	A person accredited to perform NatHERS for existing homes assessments.
Cancellation	The cancelling of an assessor's accreditation, which means that they may no longer conduct assessments.
CPD	Continuing Professional Development, which provides a mechanism for assessors to maintain and improve skills and knowledge.
Energy performance	Energy performance is the broad management of energy demand, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• energy efficiency – using less energy to do the same thing• demand flexibility – varying when and how energy is used• electrification or fuel switching – swapping to electricity-powered technologies or other cleaner sources of energy.
Home Energy Rating Certificate	The certificate generated by NatHERS energy rating tools for an existing home Assessment. A Home Energy Rating Certificate includes a Home Energy Rating, a Star Rating, as well as other key information including details on a home's emissions.
Mentor	An individual, approved by the AASP, who is highly proficient in the application and use of one or more NatHERS Energy rating tools and can provide tailored advice and assistance to an assessor to help them deliver consistent, accurate and reliable assessments.
Mentoring	The formal process of providing tailored advice and assistance to help an assessor deliver consistent, accurate and reliable assessments. This advice can cover the application and use of one or more NatHERS Software tools, as well as other skills necessary to be an assessor.
NatHERS	Nationwide House Energy Rating Scheme.
NatHERS Administrator	NatHERS is administered by the Australian Government on behalf of all states and territories. The role of NatHERS Administrator is a function of the Australian Government Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW), or any subsequent Australian Government department that assumes responsibility for residential energy efficiency.
Performance Improvement Action	Any action that the AASP may require an assessor to take to improve the Assessor's performance.
Suspension	The temporary pausing of accreditation, preventing an assessor from conducting assessments or issuing certificates.