

# DRAFT - Improving Building Standards Certification Survey – National Results

## Introduction

The purpose of the questionnaire was to collect information on the work profile and the use of certification in Scotland. Additionally it asked for views from certifiers on how certification can be further improved and promoted.

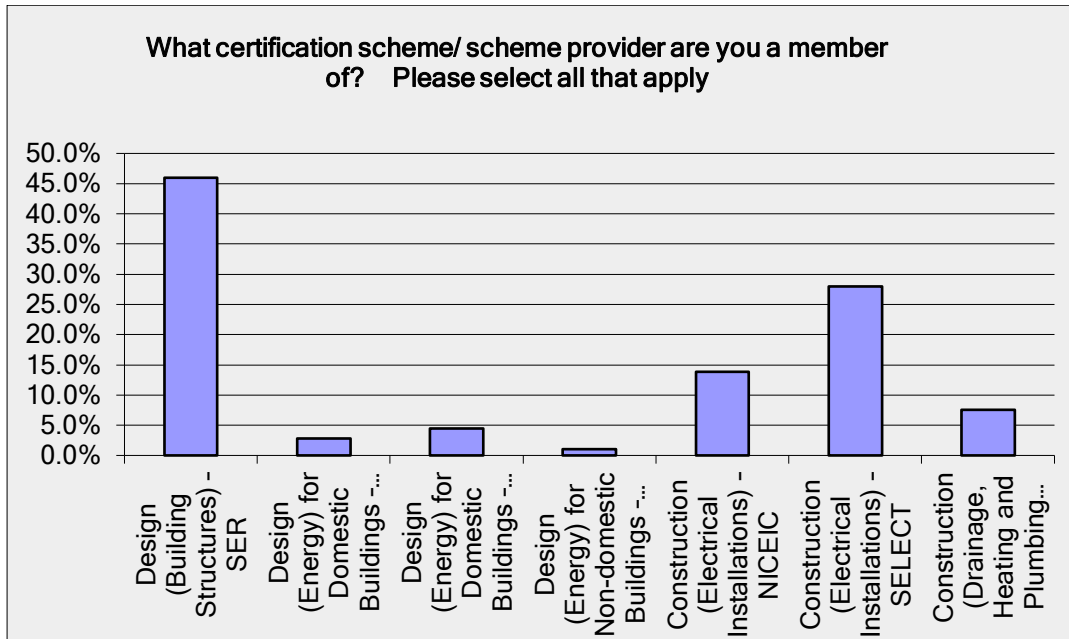
The questionnaire went live on 26 January 2016 and was issued to the 7 certification bodies in Scotland. Scheduled to close on Monday 15 February the timescale for responses was extended until 22 February allowing in total 28 days.

A total of 290 responses were received. However respondents did not answer all questions. The highest responding groups was SER – Design (Building Structures) (46%/133) and SELECT Construction (Electrical Installations) (28%/ 81 responses). Detailed responses are shown below. There were 10 respondents who are members of more than one scheme.

## Question 1

One respondent did not answer this question. The total response count (300) is higher than total respondents 289 as a number of certifiers are members of more than one scheme.

What certification scheme/ scheme provider are you a member of? Please select all that apply		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Design (Building Structures) - SER	46.0%	133
Design (Energy) for Domestic Buildings - BRE	2.8%	8
Design (Energy) for Domestic Buildings - RIAS	4.5%	13
Design (Energy) for Non-domestic Buildings - BRE	1.0%	3
Construction (Electrical Installations) - NICEIC	13.8%	40
Construction (Electrical Installations) - SELECT	28.0%	81
Construction (Drainage, Heating and Plumbing Installations) - SNIPEF	7.6%	22
	<i>answered question</i>	<b>289</b>
	<i>skipped question</i>	<b>1</b>

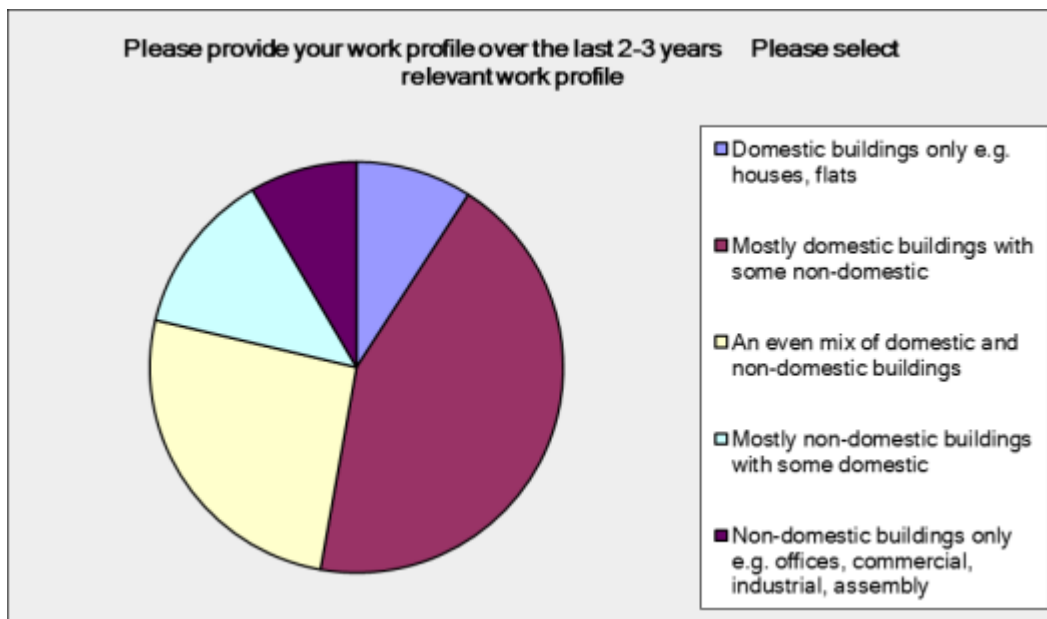


### Question 2

There were 286 responses and 4 respondees failed to answer.

**Please provide your work profile over the last 2-3 years Please select relevant work profile**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Domestic buildings only e.g. houses, flats	9.1%	26
Mostly domestic buildings with some non-domestic	43.7%	125
An even mix of domestic and non-domestic buildings	25.9%	74
Mostly non-domestic buildings with some domestic	12.9%	37
Non-domestic buildings only e.g. offices, commercial,	8.4%	24
<i>answered question</i>		<b>286</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>4</b>



### Question 3

There were 280 responses and 10 respondees failed to answer.

Please provide an estimate of how much of your work required a building warrant (%)			
Answer Options	Response Average	Response Total	Response Count
Insert your estimate (%)	54.56	15,278	280
	<i>answered question</i>		<b>280</b>
	<i>skipped question</i>		<b>10</b>

0% - 25%	96 respondees (34%)
26% - 50 %	38 respondees (14%)
51% - 75%	35 respondees (12%)
76% - 100%	111 respondees (40%)

### Question 4

There were 257 responses and 33 respondees failed to answer.

Please provide an estimate of how much of your work you issued a certificate of design or a certificate of construction for (%)			
Answer Options	Response Average	Response Total	Response Count
Insert your estimate (%)	46.74	12,013	257
	<i>answered question</i>		<b>257</b>
	<i>skipped question</i>		<b>33</b>

0% - 25%	108 respondees (42%)
26% - 50 %	35 respondees (14%)
51% - 75%	28 respondees (11%)
76% - 100%	86 respondees (33%)

### Question 5

There were 42 responses and 248 respondees failed to answer.

If you have never issued a certificate of design or certificate of construction, please explain why	
Answer Options	Response Count
	42
<i>answered question</i>	<b>42</b>
<i>skipped question</i>	<b>248</b>

Detailed responses:

Never/rarely been asked (Client/LA):

- It is not worth the hassle and extra responsibility as we cannot charge accordingly to cover this additional risk and responsibility
- Never be ask for it
- Never asked

- Very rarely asked for
- N/A
- Not required
- They are never asked for
- Never been asked
- No
- Clients choice
- Not required as I am an approved electrician and NICEIC registered
- Not applicable to our works as SER certifiers
- Never been required too
- My clients haven no interest and their architects are mostly unaware of the legislation
- I've been based on site for the last 2-3 years implementing the designs. I have an input to design at an early stage but the detailed design is looked after by a colleague whilst I manage work on site
- Almost all of the company's certificates are issued by the company owner. I only issue a certificate if he is unable to
- Fife Council have never required one
- Any time offered has been refused by local Authority
- Certificate of construction not recognised by local council
- Not got any

**Only recently qualified/no incentive to provide:**

- Only recently qualified and certification not needed yet
- No incentive to provide this at present
- I have just became a member of SER and as yet have not completed a Certified Design
- I'm fairly newly qualified (1 year) and our sites are not at the stage which requires me to issue a certificate until the next few months

**Cost prohibitive**

- Time and cost prohibitive compared to warrant fee savings
- If it's not needed why waste my time.it costs enough to be qualified to be able to supply an electrical certificate
- Clients are not willing to pay additional fees for this service. There is little incentive therefore to self-certificate

**Certificates/evidence provided:**

- Never been asked for this we only issue Electrical Test BS7671
- Building control only require electrical test certificate only
- for getting completion
- Installation certificate sufficient
- Just issued electrical installation certificate which all building control has asked for
- In the majority of cases the Building Warrant has been lodged and it is only when the case officer asks for energy calcs that they come to me
- Letter report was satisfactory

- Design related to changes post Warrant for a project initially not requiring Structural Engineer. As it was for amendment it was less expensive for the client to issue a copy of the calculation rather than SER Certificate
- The authority don't request it and are happy to accept a trade card I know I should give one however it costs time and money so if they accept a trade card it's less time. On saying that I joined select because when it first come out it was said you had to have this training / standard to have your work passed and signed off by building control clearly we as the responsible trader are doing this and the verifier is not sticking with their own regulations

**Other:**

- Working on projects in England
- Some of my application have no section 6 component
- Most of my work (99%) does not have to go through Building Control therefore does not need a certificate
- The time taken to do all the work to produce a certificate before submission is too long. Our clients cannot wait that long and if I were to do this my directors would give me hassle for taking too long to get a project submitted. I also do the checking of SAPs and u-values for our whole office (14 drawing staff) so this does not afford me the time needed.
- Customers not aware of the scheme, and local authorities have no understanding of it. There are no checks of electrical competence whatsoever in my area.
- always issued certificate

**Question 6**

There were 260 responses and 30 respondees failed to answer.

In your role as Approved Certifier, do you charge your client more?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	40.4%	105
No	59.6%	155
<i>answered question</i>		<b>260</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>30</b>



**Question 7**

There were 116 responses and 174 respondees failed to answer.

**If you do charge more as an Approved Certifier, please provide an estimate of how much more you charge (%) e.g. 5%**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Insert your estimate (%)	100.0%	116
<i>answered question</i>		<b>116</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>174</b>

0% - 25%	99 respondees
26% - 50 %	4 respondees
51% - 75%	
76% - 100%	

Other 13 responses:

- 300%
- £20.00 administration fee
- Depends on procurement method
- Has to be less than the 10% warrant fee saving
- N/A
- Question cannot be answered in this way. Not so simple!
- SER Certificate Cost
- Sliding scale 10% for small jobs down to 1-2% for large projects
- The cost of the certificates
- Too complicated to simplify as a %
- Varies depending on project scale. Not always possible to charge more
- Varies from up to 30% for small domestic work to around 4% for larger projects
- vast variation of % depending on construction cost.

## Question 8

There were 249 responses and 41 respondees failed to answer.

What reasons determine whether you issue a Certificate of Design/ Certificate of Construction? Please answer EACH of the statements given below							
Answer Options	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Rating Average	Response Count
It is a client requirement	56	70	63	31	26	2.60	246
Most of the work I do requires a building warrant and can be certified	80	84	42	30	12	2.23	248
It delivers a fee discount for my client's building warrant application	16	57	90	45	36	3.11	244
It speeds up the process for my client	68	88	44	31	16	2.35	247
It demonstrates my competency and distinguishes me from my competitors who cannot certify their work	76	78	48	31	15	2.32	248
It is less expensive and makes my price more competitive	4	18	79	74	71	3.77	246
Clients recognise they are covered by professionals working in a quality assurance environment who are covered by insurance	45	72	68	37	25	2.70	247
Clients are fully aware of all the benefits of using an Approved Certifier	19	33	61	78	57	3.49	248
If none of the above please provide details							12
<i>answered question</i>							<b>249</b>
<i>skipped question</i>							<b>41</b>

### Detailed responses:

#### Customers/clients not aware of benefit:

- Clients are generally not aware of the benefits, or even the existence, of certification
- Very few customers are aware or understand what certification of design is
- My clients do not get me involved at the design stage so I cannot certificate the work. Please remember that my clients are at the bottom end of the industry and have never seen a copy of the building regulations
- Some clients do not see the purpose of SER and it would be good to change how it is charged - I heard it mooted that building control might charge 'calc-only' submissions the cost of an external engineer to check the package which would encourage the client to use SER every time
- never issued a certificate

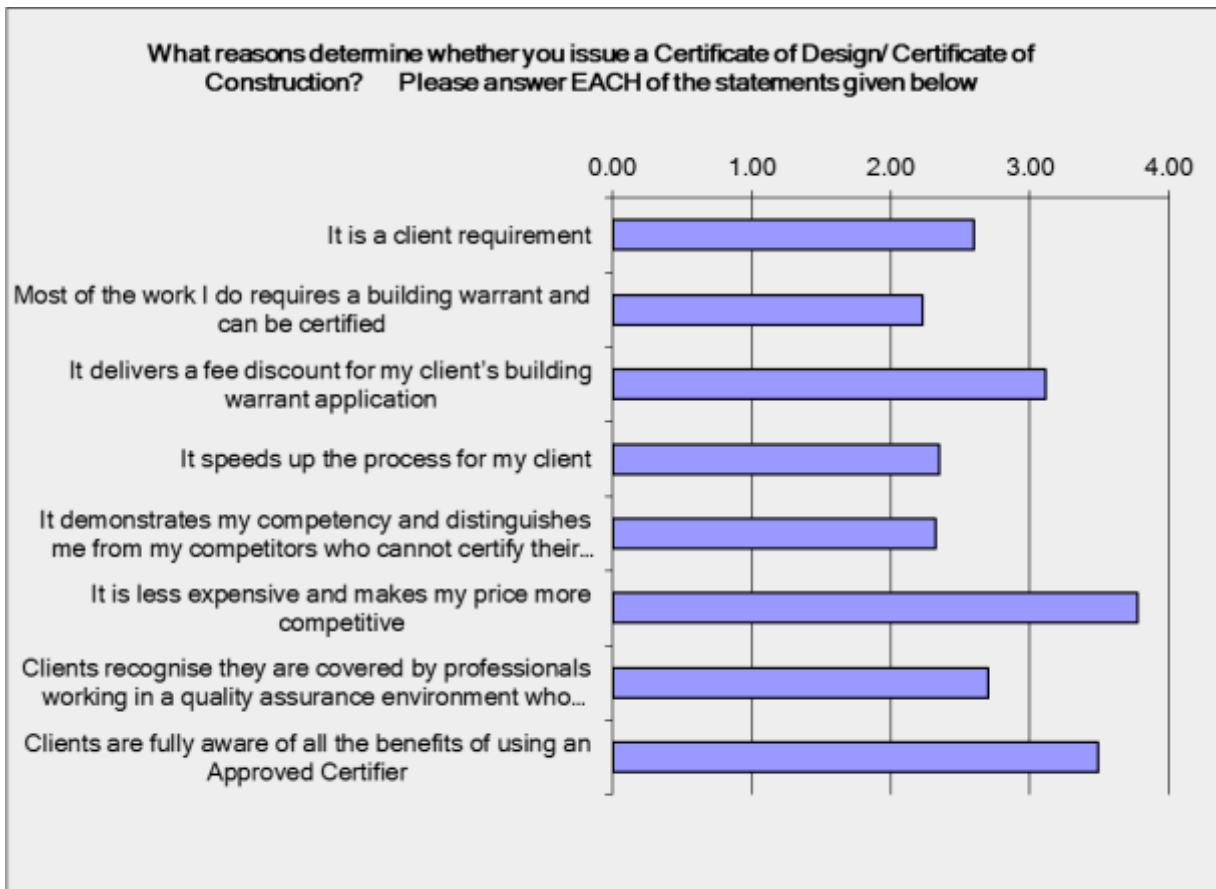
#### LAs require:

- It's the only way to get a warrant as councils won't process calculations
- Most of the projects I work on are sufficiently large that there is little alternative due to Council resource
- Only provided when required by the Local Authority

#### Other:

- Clients and their advisers expect to get the service and it is becoming harder to claim additional fees as it's becoming part of the service
- Have yet to issue a design certificate for any project so cannot comment on the statements above
- Local authority only asks for an electrical installation certificate-from installers who do not know what they are, and therefore fabricate the test results. local authority

verifiers are not qualified to be able to recognise certificates which are works of fiction.



## Question 9

There were 251 responses and 39 respondees failed to answer.

**What actions do you think could help promote the demand for Building Standards Certification? Please answer EACH of the statements given below**

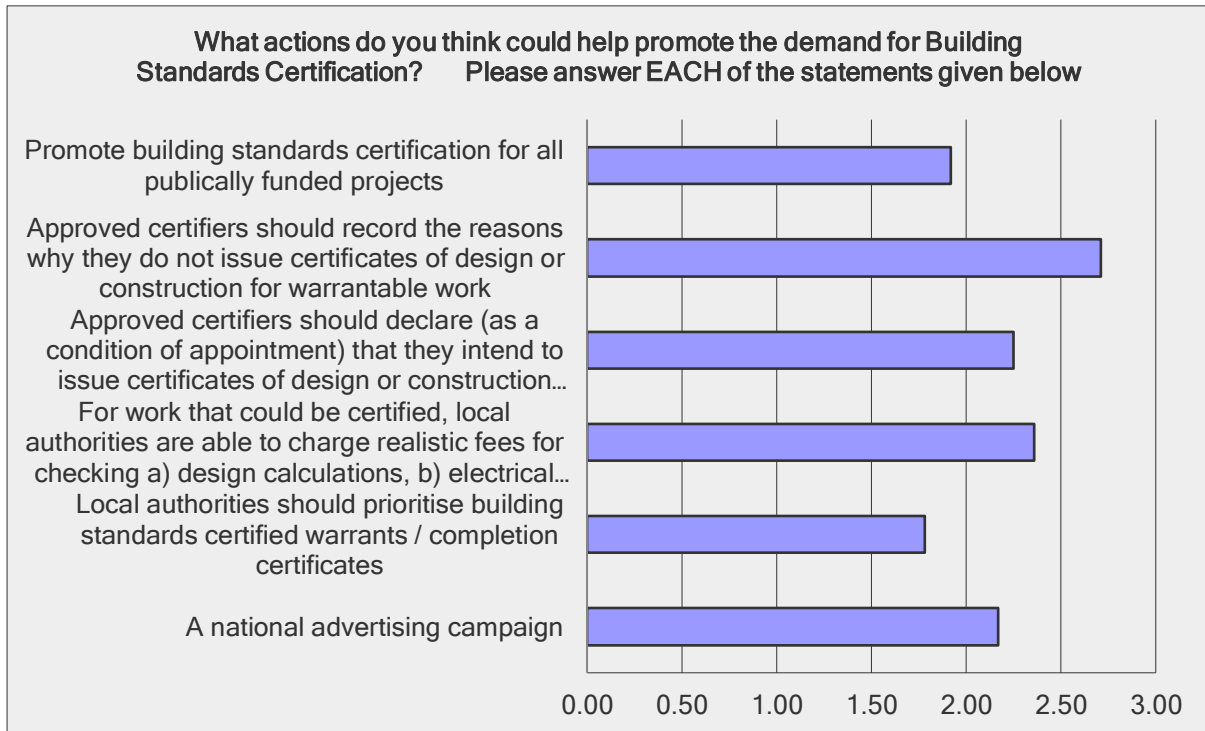
Answer Options	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Rating Average	Response Count
A national advertising campaign	78	85	56	22	7	2.17	248
Local authorities should prioritise building standards certified warrants / completion certificates	116	93	26	8	6	1.78	249
For work that could be certified, local authorities are able to charge realistic fees for checking a) design calculations, b) electrical installations and c) drainage, heating and plumbing installations	61	82	72	21	12	2.36	248
Approved certifiers should declare (as a condition of appointment) that they intend to issue certificates of design or construction for warrantable work	64	92	68	16	9	2.25	249
Approved certifiers should record the reasons why they do not issue certificates of design or construction for warrantable work	46	55	92	37	19	2.71	249
Promote building standards certification for all publically funded projects	101	85	52	6	6	1.92	250
If none of the above please provide details							6
<i>answered question</i>							<b>251</b>
<i>skipped question</i>							<b>39</b>

### Detailed responses:

- Direction by the local authorities to require certification would be the biggest driver



- I already think that the demand for SER is high, as Clients and their agents see this as necessary in achieving building warrant. However, there is a real lack of understanding in terms of the roles of the Approved Certifier, and I think that both SER and the Scottish Government could do a lot more to educate clients, contractors and other building professionals; and greatly assist in raising the status of Approved Certifiers
- In my experience demand is not an issue 100% of my clients use a certifier
- I do not see demand as a problem; the certification system is an issue
- The main problem is often Building Control officers not understanding the system and secondly Building Control not asking for Form Q at completion



### Question 10

There were 122 responses and 168 respondees failed to answer.

<b>Do you have any other comments you wish to make about Building Standards Certification in general or about the</b>	
<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
	122
<i>answered question</i>	<b>122</b>
<i>skipped question</i>	<b>168</b>

**Note:** Detailed responses to this question will be included in the individual scheme provider results to follow.