

PEPA POSITION STATEMENT ON THE ABBE LEVEL 3 CERTIFICATE IN ENERGY ADVICE (HOME)

PEPA members fully support the role of qualified advisors able to provide expert help to homeowners looking to reduce energy waste, save money and cut their emissions. We also believe that this role needs to be based on nationally recognised, competence-based qualifications.

However, we have significant concerns over the scope of the National Occupational Standards (NOS) underpinning the newly launched Level 3 Certificate in Energy Advice (Home) qualification (often referred to as the Home Energy Advisor or HEA qualification) and the prospective market for individuals investing in the qualification.

PEPA members have therefore decided that they will not be offering the qualification and would suggest that prospective candidates consider carefully whether to pursue the qualification at this time.

The NOS and associated qualifications were developed to meet the needs of advice provision within the CERT framework. However, advice activity under CERT has been negligible to date and there is no evidence that this will change during the remaining CERT period.

Furthermore, the qualification is also being launched before the requirements of the Green Deal scheme have been defined in terms of knowledge, competence, qualifications, accreditation and the distinction between advice provision and sales activity.

As such, we are concerned that energy assessors may be encouraged to invest in a qualification for which there is little or no current demand and which may not meet future requirements.

We have suggested to ABBE that they delay registering candidates for this qualification pending a review of its content and finalising a revised qualification, perhaps at Level 4, which can address the full requirements of industry in the emerging Green Deal.

PEPA members believe that advice must be provided to a robust technical methodology that takes account of the energy needs of the household and the characteristics of their property. This needs to be delivered to a recognised standard of quality and with controlled codes of conduct and governance. A detailed and comprehensive technical knowledge of the range of products available is essential and needs to cover the full range of technologies, including renewables. We intend to explore how we can best support assessors accredited with PEPA members in acquiring such knowledge and competencies.
