



## Department for Energy Security & Net Zero

Lord Callanan  
Parliamentary Under Secretary of  
State for Energy Efficiency and  
Green Finance

**Department for Energy, Security  
& Net Zero**

[www.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)

Andrew Percy MP  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

Our ref: MCB2023/13529

9 June 2023

Dear Andrew,

Thank you for your email dated 25<sup>th</sup> May enclosing correspondence from your constituent, Derek Marsh regarding the MCS criteria. I am responding as this matter falls within my Ministerial portfolio.

MCS, the Microgeneration Certification Scheme, is a nationally recognised quality assurance scheme for renewable technologies setting high standards for products and installations.

To ensure installations are high quality, MCS certification is required for installations receiving Government grant funding, including the Boiler Upgrade Scheme. Installers also must be members of a Consumer Code that ensures customers are protected by a Trading Standards Institute Approved Code of Practice. This ensures that property owners are covered by consumer protection schemes governing the products and their performance, as well as the quality of the installation and service they receive from the installer.

Depending on the size of the property, a full heat loss survey can take half a day for a contractor to complete. For larger contractors, it is not uncommon that they provide a heat loss survey free of charge as a way of gaining the sale, because they can afford to do so. For smaller contractors, losing half a day without a guaranteed sale isn't sustainable, which is why they impose this fee.

MCS do not mandate a full heat loss survey before contract, however, the contractor must provide a system performance estimate which is set out within MIS (Microgeneration Installation Standard) 3005. If there is a significant deviation from the system performance estimate, then a variation of contract must be awarded or the customer has the right to pull out of the agreement. The System Performance Estimate follows an industry-backed, standardised methodology. This provides customers with an understanding of how their proposed system may perform, based on the specific characteristics of the building. The System Performance Estimate acts as both a key element in the investment decision and in setting customer expectations. This ensures that customers receive unambiguous and understandable estimates of the proposed system performance, which can be directly compared fairly with those of other MCS-certified contractors. The reason

MCS do it this way is to offer protection to both parties where contractors don't lose time carrying out heat loss surveys without a guaranteed sale, whilst also providing customers with a way of comparing fairly when receiving multiple quotes, which MCS also encourage homeowners to do.

All heat loss surveys must be carried out in accordance with BS EN 12831 (method for calculation of the design heat load). This is what MCS currently mandate to standardise the process and therefore there shouldn't be significant variations between calculators. Heat loss surveys can be considered subjective due to assumptions having to be made when there is unknown information regarding the property (i.e. the amount of insulation in the walls). MCS is aware this can lead to under/over sizing of systems. However, currently there is no better alternative methodology that can give both whole building heat loss and a room by room split to cover heat pump, emitter and hydraulics sizing and specification. MCS are actively engaged in conversations in anticipation of improved methodologies, but until then BS EN 12831 is used in agreement with MCS's technical working groups.

Please contact DLUHC regarding the planning permission and permitted development query, as these are DLUHC owned policy areas.

Thank you for writing to highlight Mr Marsh's concerns. I trust this information will be helpful.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Martin Callanan', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**Lord Callanan**