

**USER MANUAL**

**CIBSE Low Carbon Consultants  
CARBON RETURN**

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## Summary

This report provides guidance on how the annual Carbon Return should be made by registered Low Carbon Consultants.

## Description

The CIBSE Low Carbon Consultants (LCC) scheme and register provides accredited expertise and consultancy resources to help lower the carbon dioxide emissions (referred to as carbon emissions) from the energy use of the UK building stock.

Registered LCC consultants are required to report annually on their contribution and specifically the reduction in carbon emissions that they have been responsible for during the previous 12 months. This reporting is in the form of an annual Carbon Return submitted by each LCC consultant to the scheme managers at CIBSE.

A consultant's Carbon Return records the increase in their total annual carbon savings for each contributing "project" which has progressed during the year. A project can for example be a design project, refurbishment works or an operational/management initiative and can be for a single building or an initiative across a whole estate of buildings.

A project's reported annual carbon saving duration following completion and monitoring is limited to a maximum of ten years for newbuild or major refurbishment and five years for management or control measures, unless evidence is provided that the saving has endured longer.

The LCC consultant evaluates and reports the carbon savings on a project in relation to an appropriate baseline standard for the project - taken to be what would have happened without the LCC consultant's contribution. This is normally defined as nominal Part L and planning compliance<sup>1</sup> for new buildings and refurbishment works, and continuation of the status quo for operational management situations.

Energy and carbon emission evaluations should be compatible with the National Calculation Method (for example iSBEM) for construction and major refurbishments, and with Display Energy Certificate procedures for metered energy improvements in occupied buildings.

Annual carbon savings are claimed

- (i) once-only at the completion of three key stages of a project, and then
- (ii) annually following completion/implementation and with savings monitored.

The key stage claims are established using standard **project progress percentages** of the total project annual savings agreed for the LCC scheme as follows:

40% after design, with authorisation to proceed

80% after implementation such as construction (for newbuild) or installation (for existing)

100% after monitored and reported savings over at least one year

so the 100% total claim can be made when monitored savings confirm expected savings. The duration of a project's savings is limited to a maximum of ten years for design/construction and five years for management/controls - however LCC consultants can make a case for extending these. The procedure prevents double counting by ensuring that no previously claimed savings on a project can be re-claimed.

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<sup>1</sup> It may be argued that nominal Part L compliance is not yet at strict Part L compliance where the design or building control industry has not yet caught up with the Regulations. The same applies for renewables required by planning authorities. If such an elevated baseline is claimed, the case for this must be made in notes accompanying the Carbon Return.

The LCC consultant may be **working in a team**, sometimes with other LCC consultants. The procedure takes equitable account of this as the LCC consultant must claim an agreed percentage of the overall project savings. The procedure prevents double counting by requiring that the total percentage savings claimed from all LCC consultants and others in the same carbon specialist role, is no more than 100%. Retrospective claims (for example by a team member who later becomes an LCC consultant) would not normally be allowed.

The LCC consultant is not required to **submit evidence documents** with the return but the consultant records what evidence is available and describes each project sufficiently that claims can be verified.

It is not expected that all **returns will be verified** but the consultant records if any formal verification by CIBSE has been completed.

### **The Carbon Return form**

The LCC consultant should complete the attached Carbon Return form which is a single Excel<sup>TM</sup> spreadsheet with one column per project. The form requires entry of the minimum information to achieve the approach described above and has space for a consultant to enter details for up to 40 projects in a year. Many cells show help text if you move the cursor into the cell. A pdf printout of a return with two illustration projects is appended below - this does not show the help text.

The form has less than ten general data items and 30 project-related items. The LCC consultant's reported annual carbon saving is summed in column C at the bottom of the page - this is the total of contributions from the projects listed in columns to the right.

The form should be completed, saved to a secure storage system and returned by email to the scheme manager at CIBSE. As the scheme may require historical submissions, it is advisable to keep a hardcopy unless you have full confidence in your electronic filing and backup/archive arrangements.

**ANNEX**

**Completed Example**

(Note: extensive help boxes appear during completion)