



2nd Generation Software & the National Qualification

Overview of 2nd Generation Software & National Qualification

Residential Building Thermal Performance rating is about to become significantly more advanced. With the introduction of 2nd Generation software tools there will be greater ability than ever before to assess and analyse building thermal performance.

ABSA Accreditation for 2nd Generation tools will be based on the new National Qualification *Short Course in Building Thermal Performance Assessment (Residential)*.

This qualification defines a skill set that recognises the increased sophistication of the use of 2nd generation tools, especially in their ability to analyse building performance. Further knowledge is also deemed necessary as building regulations increase in stringency and complexity, requiring higher levels of understanding of building thermal performance.

This document is designed to introduce 2nd Generation software and the National Qualification, to provide an understanding of how they will operate, and outline the steps to take if you decide to take up the use of 2nd Generation tools and the National Qualification.

It is recommended that new candidates should also consult the related ABSA documents:

- [The ABSA National Accreditation Scheme](#)
- [Becoming an ABSA Accredited Assessor](#)

ABSA Accreditation – 2nd Generation Tools

National Qualification

A new National Qualification has been developed by the National NatHERS Administrator, on behalf of all State governments with the introduction of 2nd Generation simulation software tools. It has been designed to deliver practical and essential knowledge for the role of Building Thermal Performance Assessors. The National Qualification has also been structured to complement and extend existing training and experience held by current Assessors.

The National Qualification consists of three modules:

1. Design Theory (12 hours)

This module is an in depth exploration of building thermal performance theory. It includes topics such as how heat flows occur through building elements, and develops an understanding of the thermal physics principles that define the overall performance of a dwelling. It will explain what building properties are significant, and how performance can be influenced by design and construction, specific to the various climate zones in Australia. This component will help you develop knowledge of building thermal performance which will enhance your ability to understand and analyse the often hidden results obtained from simulation software.

2. Software (16 hours)

This module provides hands on experience using 2nd generation software, and develops an understanding of the assumptions behind the software, how to interpret outputs and to propose recommendations to improve thermal performance.

3. Professional Practice (4 hours)

This module provides an understanding of the regulatory, accreditation and professional requirements of undertaking thermal performance assessments.

The National Qualification can be obtained through the attendance of all above modules, which include some short in-class assessment tasks. All ABSA training has been designed and will be delivered to ensure that it meets the requirements of the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF). These framework requirements must be met by training providers in order for any training to be recognised as satisfying the competency standards of the National Qualification.

For all further information on this training course, as well as course location, dates, and their availability, please consult the training pages of our website -

<http://www.absa.net.au/training/training.aspx>.

Candidates taking training from other training providers should ensure that it meets AQF standards to be suitable to be recognised as part of the National Qualification. Only Assessors that have successfully completed the National Qualification successfully will be able to use 2nd Generation software to issue Certificates for regulatory compliance under ABSA Accreditation.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

In all ABSA courses Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is offered to candidates prior to enrolment. If you believe you have adequate experience to meet the competency levels of this qualification you can apply for Recognition of Prior Learning¹ (RPL). You will be required to complete an RPL exam (equivalent to in-class assessment tasks). Consult the training page of the ABSA website for further details.

¹ A specific RPL process is available for all Accurate Pilot Participants.

ABSA National Accreditation

To become an ABSA Accredited Assessor you will need to attain the National Qualification prior to completing the ABSA Accreditation Examination. New Assessors will be required to sit this exam, no re-examination is required for all existing ABSA Assessors

Accredited Assessors in all States using 1st Generation software can make the transition both to 2nd Generation software and the National Qualification at any time until the eventual phasing out of 1st Generation tools in your State.

Software

The ABSA National Accreditation Scheme recognises and provides the rating framework for all approved software tools in all States. The ABSA National Accreditation Scheme incorporates all software tools approved to provide energy ratings in accordance with regulatory requirements in all States.

Software approval is determined by the Australian Building Codes Board (ABCB) Software Validation Protocol, and through any State variations.

Currently ABSA provides the rating framework for all approved 1st Generation software tools (NatHERS, FirstRate, BERS).

In addition ABSA is now offering the rating frameworks for all approved 2nd Generation tools (AccuRate, BERS Pro, FirstRate v5), which will become approved under the BCA in 2007. It has been confirmed by the ABCB that all States can now approve 2nd Generation software tools for use in their jurisdiction (through State based Building Notes or equivalent). To date NSW and WA have confirmed approval (NSW commencing by end of November 2006). Once they have been approved in your State you will be able to start using 2nd Generation tools provided you have attained the National Qualification.

Accreditation will be software specific, and Assessors may choose to qualify and be accredited to use one, two or all three tools. The Software module will first be delivered in Accurate and BERS (until further tools become available). Training in other second generation tools will be available once they are released.

ABSA is an independent training and accreditation organisation and is not involved in the development, sale or support of the assessment software. We can not recommend any one program. Your selection of which program to utilise should be based upon functionality, cost and quality of support. For further information on each of these programs please click on the links below.



Notes:

1. All current licence holders of the latest version of NatHERS (v. 2.32b) purchased in the last 12 months will receive a discount on Accurate (reduced cost \$325)
2. All Accurate Pilot Participants will receive a 15% discount from the full price of Accurate for their involvement in its piloting
3. All current licence holders of FirstRate will receive a discount on FirstRate 2nd Generation for first 3 months after announced release date. We have been informed that pricing and demo software will available shortly.

Enquiries

For enquiries relating to the National Qualification, Accreditation Scheme, and 2nd Generation tools please contact:

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