



# Guidance Note 3 – Revision C

## Options for Certification

In order to download a certificate from the SER website the Certifier is required to record the method that has been used to certify the design in Schedule 2 of the certificate.

This schedule is **not** intended as a qualification of the extent of certification (SER certificates certify the entire building in respect of the structural requirements of Regulations 1.1 and 1.2). Nor is it intended as a scoping exercise, or check list, for the project and should not be construed as such. The schedule is intended to record whether the Certifier has certified common elements of the building, as designer, checker, on the basis of a review, or for elements outwith their competence and experience where they have relied on the advice of a third party expert or specialist.

The Certifier can choose from a number of options, which may be used in conjunction, when undertaking the certification for a project. Whichever option is chosen, for each aspect of the design, it must be recorded along with the reasons for that choice for future audit. This Guidance Note is intended to explain the intention behind the options offered by the system.

Certifiers are reminded of their holistic responsibilities in respect of the compliance of the whole building and in particular of the need to carefully consider the interfaces and interaction between various building elements. This is of particular importance where they have fulfilled different roles in respect of the design of various elements of the building.

It is important to appreciate that certification and checking are separate activities. Certifiers cannot delegate their responsibilities to a third party, although they may take advice from others. Design checks should only be undertaken by an individual with the necessary experience in the particular aspect of the check. Further guidance on certification checking is provided in Guidance Note 11.

Appendix A, while not exhaustive, has been provided to assist the certifier identify structural elements that may be encountered on a project and the information that will be necessary for the Certifier to undertake the task.

Certifiers should be aware that all items listed on any Schedule 1 (Third Party Designed Details) are still included in the 'coverage' of the certificate and that the Certifier is in effect confirming that the design of these elements complies with the appropriate Regulations and Technical Standards through the inclusion of a sufficiently detailed performance specification in the Warrant application package. Building Elements listed in Schedule 1 should therefore also be included in the Schedule 2 of the certificate, along with the option used to certify the adequacy of the conceptual design and performance specification which form part of the warrant application (in accordance with this Guidance Note).

Option	Notes on Suitability
<p><b>Option 1</b> Certifier was Designer, design checked by others</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Where the Certifier is also the designer, an independent check of the design must be undertaken prior to certification by a suitably experienced person.</li> <li>2. Certifiers may only design those aspects of the building for which they are suitably experienced.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Option 2</b> Certifier was Checker, design carried out by others</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Where the Certifier is also the checker the design should be carried out by a suitably experienced person.</li> <li>2. Certifiers may only check those aspects of the design for which they are suitably experienced.</li> <li>3. Certifiers may be checking the work of other employees in the same company or may be carrying out a detailed check on a design prepared by others.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Option 3</b> Certifier was neither Designer nor Checker</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Certifiers should carry out a review of the design to satisfy themselves that the design complies with the relevant standards.</li> <li>2. The extent of the review will depend on the competence of the designers and checkers.</li> <li>3. This option may be used where senior members of staff are reviewing work carried out and checked by staff under their control or when they are reviewing designs submitted by third party designers, including those employed by specialist sub-contractors.</li> <li>4. There should be sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the designs have been adequately checked by competent persons as set down in Guidance Note 12.</li> <li>5. Certifiers must make a suitable record of their review, and the enquiries made to satisfy themselves of compliance.</li> <li>6. Certifiers may wish to request CVs or other documents from third party designers and checkers to demonstrate their qualifications and experience to assist them in determining the extent of the review that they need to carry out. However, there is no requirement to do this.</li> <li>7. It should be noted that there may not be any obligation on third party designers and checkers to provide the certifier with CVs or other documents.</li> <li>8. It is not sufficient just to rely on CVs and other documents that demonstrate the competence of the designers and checkers as evidence of the adequacy of the design.</li> </ol>

Option	Notes on Suitability
	<p>9. Where the competence of the designers and checkers cannot be verified Certifiers may have to arrange an alternative check or undertake the check themselves; in the latter case option 2 would then be the appropriate certification option.</p> <p>10. Certifiers must satisfy <b>themselves</b> that the design complies with the required Standards.</p>
<p><b>Option 4</b> Certifier used competence of an identified third party</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Option 4 is <b>only</b> to be used where the design of the element under consideration is outwith the competence and experience of the Certifier and only in circumstances where the <b>extent to which the option is used on the project is limited</b>. Certifiers should always consider whether or not they have sufficient competence to certify the project.</li> <li>2. For the few elements on projects where this option is used, the Certifier may rely on advice as to the adequacy of the design given by a suitably qualified and experienced person, who has reviewed the design on behalf of the Approved Body.</li> <li>3. It is not considered appropriate for the certifier to rely solely on the competence of a third party designer employed by a supplier or sub-contractor as evidence that the design is compliant. The advice should come from a suitably experienced person who is able to give the certifier impartial advice.</li> <li>4. Certifiers retain responsibility for the integrity of the checking process and must see that there is sufficient evidence to show that the designs have been checked by a competent person to the level set down in Guidance Note 12.</li> <li>5. Certifiers must make a suitable record of how they satisfied themselves of compliance.</li> <li>6. Relying on the advice of an identified third party does not absolve the Approved Body and the Approved Certifier of their respective obligations under the Scheme.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Option 5</b> Certifier was Designer and Checker and self-checked the design</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Option 5 should only be used for the certification of works associated with Risk Group 1A described in Guidance Note 12, where the Certifier is also the designer and has carried out a separate self-check of the design prior to certification.</li> <li>2. Evidence of the check should be retained with the certification records and made available, if required, at audit.</li> </ol>

## Appendix A: Checklist of Structural Elements

It is the responsibility of the Certifier to identify all of the building elements that should be covered by the design certificate for each specific project. The following list is intended to assist with that process however it should not be regarded as exhaustive and should be read in conjunction with the SER Procedures for Auditing the Activities of Approved Bodies and Approved Certifiers.

Design Feature	Sub-Options	Information to be Supplied to Certifier		
		Calculations	Drawings	Other Information
<b>Details of Structural Design Team</b>	Design team organisation			Names of companies providing structural design and scope of their appointment
	Designers and checkers			Details of individuals responsible for design / checking including qualifications and experience
<b>General Design Overview</b>	Condition assessment of existing building		As built	Report on condition
	Loading assessment	Yes		
	Overall stability	Yes		Statement of approach
	Disproportionate collapse	Yes		Statement of approach
	Site investigation scope and application to ground conditions		BH/TP locations	Ground investigation reports (factual & interpretative)
	Bearing capacity	Yes		
	Mineral stability / grouting		Yes	Specification/completion report
<b>Substructures</b>	Basement Raft Spread foundations	Yes	Yes	Specification
	Underpinning	Yes	Yes	Specification & method statement
	Piles Minipiles Cantilever retaining wall Piled retaining wall Mass gravity wall	Yes	Yes	Specification
	Anchored wall	Yes	Yes	Specification and details of anchoring system
<b>Ground Improvement</b>	Dynamic compaction Vibro compaction		Yes	Specification/ test reports
<b>Structural Fire Protection</b>	Elements of structure		Yes	Period of fire resistance and method/specification for achieving required standard
	Portal frames	Yes	Yes	Boundary condition requirement

Design Feature	Sub-Options	Information to be Supplied to Certifier		
		Calculations	Drawings	Other Information
<b>Principal Superstructure</b>	Structural frame Structural movement joints Suspended floor(s) Loadbearing walls Slab on solid Shear walls Racking panels Stair enclosure(s) Staircase Roof structure Link bridges Galleries and catwalks Ties, fixings & connections Slappings	Yes	Yes	Specification
<b>Building Envelope</b>	Masonry / brick / block Wall cladding Rainscreen cladding Overcladding Roof cladding Windows Glazing systems Curtain walling Rooflights	Yes	Yes	Specification - Calculations may be replaced by appropriate test certification
	Cladding movement joints		Yes	Specification for construction
	Wall ties			Certification reference
	Fixings & Supports	Yes	Yes	Calculation may be replaced by appropriate test certification
<b>Secondary Structure</b>	Protective barriers	Yes	Yes	Specification and fixings details
	Internal partitions Suspended ceilings	Yes	Yes	Calculations may be replaced by appropriate test certification for proprietary systems
<b>Other Structure</b>	Canopies Balconies Catwalks and gangways Tank supports Stages and raised platforms Tiered seating Bridges, boundary walls & fences Masts, Flagpoles, Advertising hoardings	Yes	Yes	Specification - Calculations may be replaced by appropriate test certification for proprietary systems