

PAS 9980 revision project overview

A PAS is a sponsored fast-track standard that is developed through a consensus-building process facilitated by BSI Standards Limited. A PAS should not be regarded as a BS, EN or ISO standard.

PAS identifier and draft title	PAS 9980, <i>Fire risk appraisal and assessment of external wall construction of existing blocks of flats - Code of practice</i>
PAS Sponsor	Department for Levelling up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC) and Home Office are the official joint sponsors of the PAS
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Key dates (estimated)	Public consultation (~6 weeks): Jan/March 2025 PAS publication: September 2025

1 Background and aim of the BSI PAS 9980 revision development project

BSI is pleased to provide this proposal for the revision of PAS 9980:2022 *Fire risk appraisal of external wall construction and cladding of existing blocks of flats - Code of practice*. The revision hopes to clarify and streamline some content in the PAS and update references to include new guidance that has been published.

The Grenfell tragedy highlighted the need for a universally acceptable method for fire risk appraisal and assessment of external wall construction on existing residential buildings. The previous absence of such a method resulted in a situation where fire risks could not be evaluated by assessors and other professionals for compliance to regulations. PAS 9980:2022 addressed this situation by providing a method of fire risk appraisal and assessment of external wall construction that could be adopted by all industry stakeholders and satisfy regulatory requirements.

BSI conducts a biennial review of PASs in line with our governance standard PAS 0. The purpose of the review is to determine whether the content still captures good practice and still meets the needs of the market. As part of this process, BSI contacts the original sponsor of the PAS and other relevant stakeholders to help inform the review.

Following the review of PAS 9980:2022, it has been determined that a revision should be undertaken.

A one-day validation workshop with key industry stakeholders is proposed prior to starting the PAS revision process to obtain a better understanding of key challenges. This closed industry workshop will provide feedback on the original PAS and identify any particular areas where revision is required. One of the aims will be to reduce pagination where possible, making the PAS easier to navigate and improving overall usability. BSI will prepare the format, duration and materials and the contracted Technical Author will lead the discussion. The results will form the basis of the revision.

2 Draft Scope of the PAS Revision

The draft scope has been agreed as follows:

This PAS gives recommendations and guidance on undertaking a fire risk appraisal of external wall construction and cladding of an existing multistorey, multi occupied residential building.

NOTE 1 For ease of reading, a fire risk appraisal of external wall construction and cladding is described in this PAS as a fire risk appraisal of external walls (FRAEW).

The purpose of a fire risk appraisal of external walls (FRAEW) is to assess the risk to occupants from a fire spreading over or within the external walls of the building, and to make a decision as to whether, in the specific circumstances of the building, remediation or other mitigating measures to address the risk are considered necessary. It is applicable where the risk is known, or suspected, to arise from the form of construction used for the external wall build up, such as the presence of combustible materials. The outcome of an FRAEW is intended to inform fire risk assessments (FRAs) of multistorey, multi occupied residential buildings.

NOTE 2 FRAEWs are particularly applicable to FRAs carried out in accordance with PAS 79 2, but they can be carried out independently of the PAS 79 2 FRA process.

NOTE 3 External walls of existing buildings that comprise only masonry or concrete construction, or in which combustible materials are limited to insulation within the cavity of double skin masonry walls, are usually considered to present an acceptable risk in terms of life safety, and an FRAEW is not considered necessary for these buildings.

NOTE 4 The reference to combustible materials does not include small quantities of combustible material that are likely to be present in most external wall build ups, e.g. membranes, seals and gaskets, and that represent a negligible or inconsequential fire load.

This PAS also gives recommendations and guidance in relation to the competence of those completing FRAEWs.

This PAS applies predominantly to multistorey blocks of flats, but also includes the following types of buildings if, from the perspective of general fire strategy and means of escape design, and specifically evacuation strategy, they are similar in nature to a purpose built block of flats:

- a) student accommodation;
- b) sheltered and other specialized housing; and
- c) buildings converted into flats.

NOTE 5 Within this PAS, the term "flat" is used to describe a self contained domestic dwelling within a building. Other terms, such as "apartment", are commonly used to describe such accommodation. The term "flats" is intended to include those arranged on more than one storey, such as maisonettes or duplex apartments.

NOTE 6 This is also intended to include blocks of flats which are part of a mixed use building with, for example, shops or offices below.

The approach set out in this PAS is intended to determine the need for any risk proportionate actions in relation to external wall construction required to protect occupants of blocks of flats, including residents and their visitors, anyone working in the building and people in the immediate vicinity of the building.

This PAS addresses the risk from fire spread over the external walls of multistorey blocks of flats of any height.

It addresses situations in which there is a single wall type or a mixture of different wall types. It also addresses buildings that are partially clad, as well as those that are fully clad, in combustible materials.

Wall build ups within the scope of this PAS include, but are not limited to:

- 1) external walls incorporating a rainscreen cladding system, with or without insulation within any associated cavity;
- 2) external thermal insulation composite systems (ETICS), particularly those comprising rendered insulation;
- 3) composite panels, including insulated core (“sandwich”) panels;
- 4) glazed façades with infill/spandrel panels;
- 5) substrates or backing walls, including concrete blockwork, brick, steel framing systems (SFSs), timber framing and structural insulated panels (SIPs); and
- 6) curtain walling.

It also covers attachments to the external walls of buildings.

This PAS does not address spread of fire from one building to another, the performance of external walls in terms of fire resistance, or the ability of the walls to maintain structural stability. It is not applicable to new buildings.

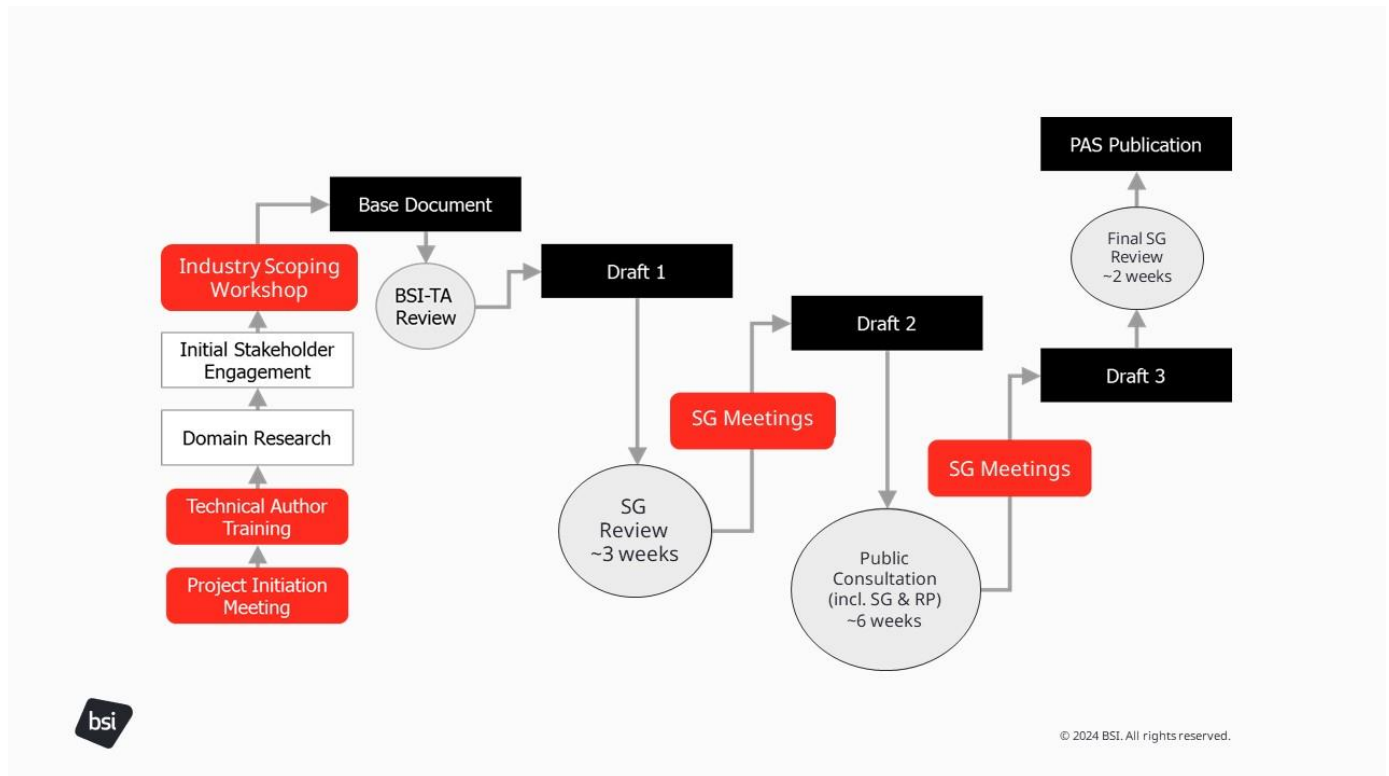
3 Responsibilities of the PAS 9980 Review Panel (RP)

The RP is a wide formation of organizations and individuals representing those stakeholder groups that may be affected by the implementation of a PAS, even if only peripherally affected. Consultation with the RP is vital in terms of building consensus in the development of a PAS.

RP members will be invited to submit comments electronically during a public consultation via the BSI [Standards Development Portal](#) in Jan to March 2025. **There are no RP meetings.**

Due to the time constraints of the project, comments received after the deadline or in any format other than online via the Portal cannot be considered.

4 Development process for the PAS revision



- SG** steering group (typically 12 to 15 stakeholders)
- RP** review panel (targeted stakeholders, including BSI technical committees)
- SG Review** draft is made available to SG only, for technical review
- Public Consultation** draft is made publicly available for technical review through BSI's online draft review system <https://standardsdevelopment.bsigroup.com/>
- SG Editorial Review** draft is made available to SG only, for final editorial review
- SG Meeting Round** set of meeting sessions where review comments are resolved by the SG members