



What is PAS 9980

Published by the BSI, PAS 9980 provides a process for the fire risk appraisal of external wall construction and cladding of multistorey and multi occupied residential buildings.

This forms part of the periodic fire risk assessments under the Fire Safety Order. The external wall must now be included as part of the fire risk assessment process thanks to changes brought in by the Fire Safety Act in 2021.

Who is PAS 9980 for?

This PAS is intended for use by competent fire risk assessors, engineers and other competent building professionals required to advise on the fire risk of external wall construction of existing blocks of flats.

The fire risk assessor will either need to use their own expert knowledge of the construction and material nature of the external wall or get advice from a fire engineer or other fire safety professional, for the fire risk assessment to (1) satisfy the fire assessment statute and (2) for the fire risk assessment to be considered complete.

A Step By Step Assessment To Help You Understand And Categorise Risk.

The PAS 9980 guidance document runs to 178 pages, and it seeks to set out a process for assessing what level of risk an external wall has. There are in essence five steps to assessment under PAS 9980:



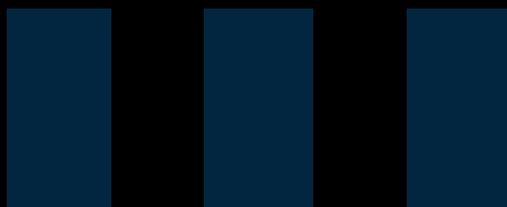
Under the PAS 9980 framework the methodology will result in a building being considered as either low, medium, or high risk.

For a building that is deemed low risk there will be no remediation necessary. If a building receives a medium risk rating the building owner could decide (subject to receiving professional advice) to take no action and consider the external wall make-up as just part and parcel of the residual risk that a particular building has. For high risk rated buildings remediation will be necessary and / or carrying out of other mitigating works to combat the risks identified.

The Importance Of Life Safety & Building Collateral Protection.

Fire risk assessors will apply the PAS 9980 methodology to assess the risk to life. Therefore, it follows that the onus of the fire engineers and assessors is to ensure that in a fire emergency the risk to injury and of loss of life is reduced as low as reasonably possible. However, from a building insurance perspective an insurance provider may still require actions which might include remediation, even where the PAS 9980 assessment has arrived at a medium / tolerable level of risk.

In these circumstances and although the risk to life could be categorised as acceptable, from a “total-loss of asset” perspective, the situation may not be acceptable to insurers. This might lead to the removal of insurance cover or a steep increase in premiums if actions are not taken to reduce or remove their perceived risk concerns. It is also conceivable that the residual asset value of the building and individual flats might also be affected due to the perceived risk from insurers if no remediation action is taken.

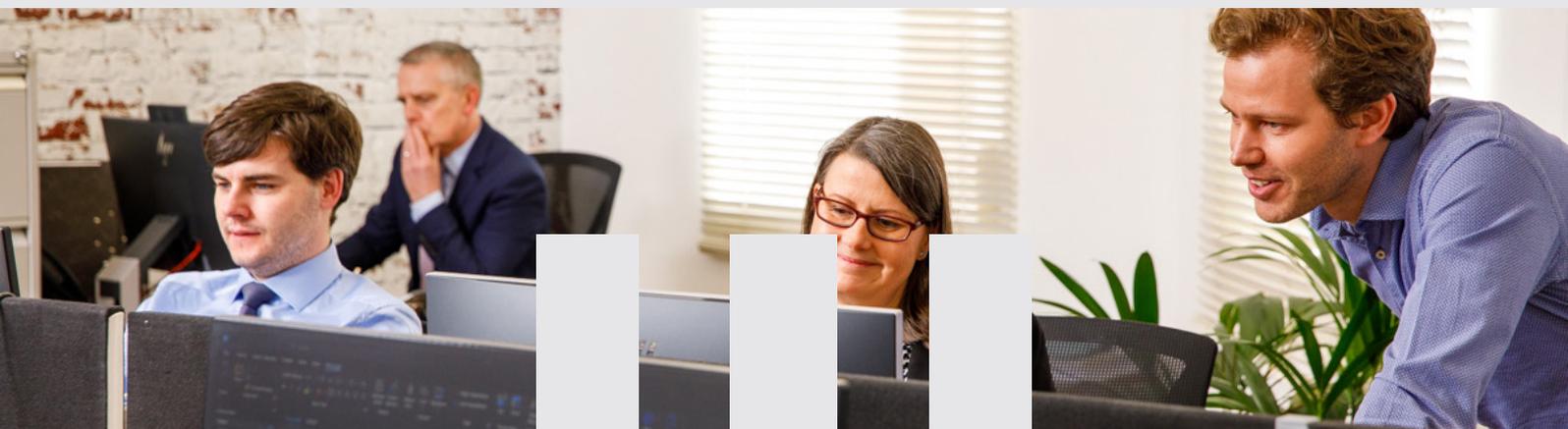


How Can leading Building and Project Consultants **Harris Associates, Help?**

We offer fire risk assessors, fire engineers, building owners and property managers a range of services that help speed up the process of assessment whilst ensuring that the information upon which assessments will be made is accurate and reliable. We have a dedicated façade and compliance team, comprising of qualified façade engineers and chartered building surveyors that are experienced in forensic investigation and on-site intrusive survey work. We are able to complete stages 1 and 2 of the five-stage assessment process completely in-house. Stage 1 and 2 is often the most time consuming. We provide a full package of information that fire risk assessors and fire engineers can use to complete their PAS 9980 assessment. As importantly, as part

of our stage 1 and 2 services, we are also able to identify those buildings where the full weight of the PAS 9980 is unnecessary. This leads to a reduction in fire engineering and assessment expense and time.

If required we can also facilitate stage 3, 4 and 5 through our fire engineering partners and panel of approved consultants, providing a one-stop shop regarding PAS9980. Our inherent knowledge of building construction, linked with our façade expertise and in-depth knowledge and understanding of the statute and related standards gives us the ability to provide all round and flexible consultancy advice. As a RICS regulated firm we are committed to act with impartiality and transparency, and therefore proportionately as experts.



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