

VBAS

GUIDEBOOK for BUILDING CERTIFICATION

Hong Kong Quality Building Assessment Panel Secretariat
(October 2022)

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. To arrest the long-standing problem of building neglect and to ensure building safety in the long run, the Building Authority (BA) commenced the implementation of the Mandatory Building Inspection Scheme (MBIS) and Mandatory Window Inspection Scheme (MWIS) for all types of private buildings aged 30 years or above and buildings aged 10 years or above respectively (except domestic buildings not exceeding 3 storeys) on 30 June 2012.
2. Under the MBIS, owners of buildings aged 30 years or above are required to conduct building inspection once every 10 years. While for buildings aged 10 or above, building owners are required to conduct window inspection once every 5 years under the MWIS.
3. To provide an alternative for well managed buildings, the Hong Kong Housing Society (HKHS) develops and operates the Voluntary Building Assessment Scheme (VBAS). Buildings certified by the VBAS will be recognized by the BA as having fulfilled the requirements under the MBIS and MWIS (for windows in common parts only) within the respective inspection cycles and will not be selected as target buildings under the two mandatory inspection schemes.

II. PURPOSE OF GUIDEBOOK

4. This guidebook aims at outlining the framework of the VBAS and providing guidelines to building owners for building certification related issues including the application eligibility and procedural requirements.
5. This guidebook is subject to review as and when required.

III. BUILDING CERTIFICATION

(A) Target Buildings

6. All private domestic buildings and composite buildings (domestic & commercial) in Hong Kong with building management, of any building age, can join the VBAS on a voluntary basis.
7. The usage of the building/development shall refer to that stated in the Occupation Permit (OP) or Deed of Mutual Covenant (DMC) of the concerned building/development.

8. Applications for VBAS from the buildings/developments of usage other than those stated in paragraph 6 will not be accepted.

(B) Benefits

9. Building/Development certified under the VBAS has the following benefits:
- (i) Recognition by the BA for having fulfilled the requirements under the Mandatory Building Inspection Scheme and Mandatory Window Inspection Scheme (for windows in common parts only) and not required to conduct mandatory inspections within the respective inspection cycles.
 - (ii) Positive recognition of building management and maintenance standard through professional assessment.
 - (iii) Enhancing the image of the property.
 - (iv) Guidance to building owners to assess the building conditions to identify areas for attention and follow up.

(C) Scope of Building Certification

10. The scope of certification of the Building/Development to be included in each individual application shall be as follows:

With DMC: (Multi-owned)	All building block(s) and all common parts covered by the same DMC or sub-DMC for phased development. <u>OR</u>
With DMC: (Single-owned buildings in Mixed Development)	Individual building blocks which are solely owned by a single owner while others were sold to individual owners and the single owner opts to join VBAS independently: All the whole building block(s) and all parts solely owned by the single owner, if the DMC/sub-DMC(s) can define the boundary of the separate ownership. <u>OR</u>

Without DMC: (Single-owned)	All building block(s) and all common parts covered by the same occupation permit (OP) or other instrument; or All building blocks and all common parts in the same phase of development having different OPs.
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The application may also cover all privately owned elements including privately owned external walls and the associated projections, unenclosed balcony and verandah that is connected to the individual premises, and signboards, if any.

If the building(s) has/ have privately owned elements but fail(s) to complete the assessment regarding ALL privately owned elements, “VBAS Premium Certificate” will not be awarded. Details refer to “Certificate and Quality Labels”.

11. Applicant can, at his/ her choice, join VBAS by either Single or Phased Application:-

Single Application

All building blocks, privately owned elements (if any) and all common parts within the scope of certification of the same estate or development are included in the same application;

Phased Application

The building blocks, privately owned elements (if any) and all common parts split in various phases within the scope of certification of the same estate or development as proposed by the Applicant and accepted by the Panel Secretariat;

The demarcation of phases shall be based on OP, DMC or Sub-DMC, other instruments or discernible structures such as road or fence, etc.

12. Assessment of Building Safety and Management Category (Elements 1-10) shall be conducted for each Single or Phased Application.

13. The BA has discretion to issue MBIS & MWIS (for windows in common parts only) Statutory Notices or re-activate any MBIS & MWIS (for windows in common parts only) Statutory Notices if building safety risk(s) are noted during the participation of VBAS, the VBAS assessment period and examination period by the Hong Kong Quality Building Assessment Panel Secretariat (Panel Secretariat).
14. For Phased Application, a Phasing Programme for building certification of all building blocks within the whole development (with or without DMC/ Sub-DMC) with target date for application and completion of each phase clearly stated, together with a Demarcation Plan marked clearly thereon the scope of certification of each phase, shall be submitted for consent by the Panel Secretariat upon First Application. For the application of the subsequent phases(s), an updated Phasing Programme and Demarcation Plan shall also be submitted to the Panel Secretariat for consent upon each phased application.
15. If there is any default application for the subsequent phases(s) under the Phased Application, the Panel Secretariat shall inform BA to take actions under the MBIS & MWIS as deemed fit including issuance of Warning Letter(s)/ Statutory Notice(s) or reactivation of any Statutory Notice(s) to default buildings.

(D) Scope of Assessment

16. The coverage of the VBAS is more extensive than that of the MBIS. The assessment of all buildings of any age under VBAS will adopt one single set of assessment criteria which is divided into two categories:

Building Safety Category
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. External Elements and Other Physical Elements 2. Structural Elements 3. Fire Safety Elements 4. Drainage System 5. Unauthorized Building Works (UBWs) 6. Window Elements (for windows in common parts only)

Building Management Category
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Building Maintenance Elements 8. Building Management Elements 9. Environmental Protection Elements 10. Value-added Elements

17. The VBAS Assessor shall report to the BA the UBWs identified in the common parts, exterior of the building (such as external wall, roof or podium, yard or slope adjoining the building) or on the street on which the building fronts or abuts. The BA will deal with such UBWs in accordance with its prevailing enforcement policy. However, existence of UBWs will not affect the compliance with and award of VBAS Certificate / VBAS Premium Certificate, except the UBWs constitute an obvious hazard or imminent danger to lives or properties.
18. Inspection of windows in individual private premises is NOT covered by the VBAS.

(E) Assessment Cycle

19. Buildings are subject to assessment of the conditions of the buildings and assessment of past documentary records of building management and maintenance at the time of assessment.
20. There is no assessment cycle set for VBAS. Building owners are encouraged to carry out periodic building assessment in order to upkeep the conditions of their buildings and the

prestige of the VBAS Certificate / VBAS Premium Certificate and Quality Labels they have acquired.

21. For buildings aged 30 or above, building assessment should be carried out with reference to the MBIS cycle in order for the BA to maintain the recognition for fulfilling the MBIS requirements.
22. If building owners would like to maintain the BA's recognition for fulfilling the requirements of MWIS for windows in common parts, building assessment should be carried out with reference to the MWIS cycle.
23. The BA reserves the right to serve MBIS or MWIS (for windows in common parts only) Statutory Notice against the building concerned should any basis upon which the VBAS Certificate / VBAS Premium Certificate issued is subsequently found to be invalid or should change in circumstances of the building concerned after the issuance of VBAS Certificate / VBAS Premium Certificate warrant it.

(F) Certificate and Quality Labels

24. The VBAS awards Certificate and Quality Labels to certified buildings to positively recognize the buildings with quality management and maintenance. There are two types of certificates and four types of labels to be awarded. Certificate and Quality Labels will be awarded on the basis of each Single or Phased Application, wherein the coverage will be clearly defined for recognition purpose. The Certificate and Quality Labels awarded shall have no validity period. The criteria for award of the Certificate and Quality Labels are as below:

(i) Full Scope of Assessment for "VBAS Premium Certificate"

"VBAS Premium Certificate" shall be the prime certificate to achieve which requires a full scope of assessment on both the building safety and building management elements.

- Same as the current Code of Practice (CoP) for MBIS & MWIS as promulgated by BA from time to time, assessment and making good all identified deficiencies and defects of building safety elements are required for all common parts (except the areas within individual private premises), external walls (whether or not the external walls are common parts), projections as prescribed in the Building (Inspection and Repair) Regulation (B(I&R)R) and signboards erected on a building (whether or not the projections and signboards is/are privately owned). For single-ownership buildings without registration of DMC in the Land Registry, the assessment under the VBAS shall cover the external walls, projections as prescribed in the B(I&R)R, signboards and those parts that are not for the exclusive use, occupation or enjoyment of the owner or occupier of any premises. For the avoidance of doubt, if there are no 'Privately

Owned Elements' or exclusively used parts, the requirements of prescribed inspection and repairs for such will be deemed satisfied; and

- Shall satisfy the core building management & maintenance related statutory requirements and the best industry practices as prescribed by the Panel Secretariat for the Building Management Category.

(ii) **Reduced Scope of Assessment on Common Parts Only for “VBAS Certificate”**

If the buildings failed to complete the assessment required by “VBAS Premium Certificate”, “VBAS Certificate” can be awarded only if the following requirements are achieved:-

- Able to complete the assessment of all common parts in the Building Safety Category as required by the current CoP for MBIS & MWIS even though the assessment of all those ‘Privately Owned Elements’ cannot be completed; and
- Able to satisfy a minimum set of criteria complying with related statutory and basic requirements in building management and maintenance as prescribed by the Panel Secretariat.

(iii) **Quality Labels**

Additional “Quality Labels (優質獎章)” will be awarded with the VBAS Premium Certificate when extra distinguished performance in the following areas of Building Management, Building Maintenance, Environmental Protection and Value-added Elements are observed:

Areas of Extra Distinguished Performance	Name of Quality Labels
Building Management Elements & Valued-added Elements	Building Management Quality Label
Building Maintenance Elements	Building Maintenance & Repair Quality Label; or
	Building Maintenance & Repair Excellent Quality Label
Environmental Protection Elements	Environmental Awareness Quality Label

For the award of ‘VBAS Certificate’, additional award of ‘Quality Labels’ will not be considered.

25. Building Maintenance & Repair Quality Label is split into two levels for the award:
- (i) Building Maintenance & Repair Quality Label is designed to recognize buildings with extra distinguished performance in the areas of building maintenance & repair.
 - (ii) Building Maintenance & Repair Excellent Quality Label is designed to recognize buildings with extra distinguished performance in the areas of building maintenance and repair plus free of UBWs (except those which have been validated under the Household Minor Works Validation Scheme and/ or the Validation Scheme for Unauthorized Signboards).

(G) Pre-requisite for the Awards

26. Buildings with critical defects or deficiencies that pose an obvious or imminent danger to the safety of the occupants or the public will not be awarded any VBAS Certificate / VBAS Premium Certificates and Quality Labels.
27. In the meantime, all statutory orders and notices, other than the MBIS & MWIS statutory notices, issued by BA under Cap. 123 on the OC or all owners, if any, shall be cancelled, withdrawn or discharged on compliance. In case the buildings have received MBIS & MWIS statutory notices (for windows in common parts only) issued by BA, they may join VBAS Scenario 1A or Scenario 2 as referred to Paragraph 29.

IV. APPLICATION FOR BUILDING CERTIFICATION

(A) Who may apply

28. For those target buildings as given in Paragraph 6 above, application for building certification can be made by:
- (i) Owners' Corporation
 - (ii) Owners' Committee
 - (iii) Mutual Aid Committee
 - (iv) Property Management Company
 - (v) Registered owner of a single-ownership building

(B) How to apply**Pre-Assessment Check**

29. To help building owners know whether their buildings are eligible and ready for building certification, building owners may carry out a preliminary check before filing an application. A Pre-Assessment Checklist for VBAS can be downloaded from the VBAS website or obtained from the Panel Secretariat. The Pre-Assessment Checklist shall be duly completed by the Applicant and submitted together with the application.

Scenarios of Application for Building Certification

30. There are three scenarios where applications can be made under the VBAS:
- (i) Scenario 1: Application before Completion of MBIS & MWIS Inspections and Repairs without MBIS & MWIS (for windows in common parts only) Statutory Notices received
- This scenario applies to buildings which have not received MBIS & MWIS (for windows in common parts only) Statutory Notices.
 - If building owners have only received Pre-Notification Letters served by the BA, they may still submit their applications for VBAS under Scenario 1, and such applications should be submitted well in advance of the targeted date of issuance of Statutory Notices.
 - If building owners have already received Statutory Notices served by the BA under MBIS & MWIS (for windows in common parts only), they can join the VBAS under Scenario 1A or Scenario 2 as stated in paragraphs 29(ii) and 29(iii) below.
 - Assessments of both Building Safety Category and Building Management Category are required.
- (ii) Scenario 1A: Application before Completion of MBIS & MWIS Inspections and Repairs with MBIS & MWIS (for windows in common parts only) Statutory Notices received
- This scenario applies to buildings which have received MBIS & MWIS (for windows in common parts only) Statutory Notices.
 - If building owners have received the aforesaid Statutory Notices served by the BA, they may still submit their applications for VBAS under Scenario 1A, and such

applications shall be submitted within 2 months from the date of MBIS Statutory Notices.

- After acceptance of the applications by the Panel Secretariat, the BA will withhold the enforcement action of the MBIS & MWIS (for windows in common parts only) Statutory Notice(s) in respect of the building(s) joined the scheme.
- If VBAS certificate is successfully awarded afterward, the BA will withdraw the MBIS & MWIS (for windows in common parts only) Statutory Notice(s). Otherwise, BA will re-activate the MBIS & MWIS (for windows in common parts only) Statutory Notice(s) previously served.
- Assessments of both Building Safety Category and Building Management Category are required.

(iii) Scenario 2: Application after Completion of MBIS & MWIS Inspections and Repairs

- This scenario applies to buildings which have completed the prescribed inspections and prescribed repairs in accordance with the CoP for MBIS & MWIS by Registered Inspectors (RIs)/ Qualified Persons (QPs) in their buildings and received the Compliance Letters for MBIS & MWIS (for windows in common parts only)/ Acknowledgement Letters for Voluntary Building and Window (for windows in common parts only) Inspection issued by the BA.
- In this scenario, only Building Management Category shall be assessed by VBAS Assessor(s) while assessment of Building Safety Category shall be exempted.

(C) Application

31. Application for building certification shall be made by submitting the Application Form for Building Certification (Form No. VBAS-AP-01) and Pre-Assessment Checklist which can be downloaded from the VBAS website or obtained from the Panel Secretariat.

32. Documents required to be attached to the application form include:

- (i) Copy of Occupation Permit;
- (ii) Copy of DMC and Sub-DMC;
- (iii) Copy of Lease Plan marked with scope of certification;
- (iv) Document for authorization of a person to submit application (required if the applicant is not the registered owner of a single-ownership building);
- (v) Copy of Pre-Notification Letter(s) for MBIS (if applicable);
- (vi) Copy of Pre-Notification Letter(s) for MWIS (for windows in common parts only) (if applicable);
- (vii) Copy of Statutory Notice(s) for MBIS (for applications under Scenario 1A only);

- (viii) Copy of Statutory Notice(s) for MWIS (for windows in common parts only) (for applications under Scenario 1A only)
 - (ix) Copy of Compliance Letters for MBIS & MWIS (for windows in common parts only)/ Acknowledgement Letters for Voluntary Building and Window (for windows in common parts only) Inspection issued by the BA (for applications under Scenario 2 only);
 - (x) Phasing Programme showing target dates for application and completion for each phased application upon First Application (for Phased Application only);
 - (xi) Demarcation Plan showing scope of certification of each phased application upon First Application (for Phased Application only);
 - (xii) Updated Phasing Programme and Demarcation Plan upon application(s) of the subsequent phase(s) (for Phased Application only);
 - (xiii) Pre-Assessment Checklist; and
 - (xiv) Crossed cheque for payment of Application Fee (made payable to the “Hong Kong Housing Society”).
33. All the supporting documents supplied by the applicants will not be returned.
34. The completed application form together with the required documents are to be sent to the Panel Secretariat either by post or in person at the following addresses:
- (i) By Post : P.O. Box No. 9127, General Post Office Hong Kong; or
 - (ii) In Person : 30/F., 1063 King’s Road, Quarry Bay, Hong Kong
Office Hours : Monday to Friday (except Public Holidays)
8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. & 1:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

(D) Preliminary Vetting of Applications

35. Upon receipt of the complete set of application document for Building Certification, the Panel Secretariat will conduct application vetting inclusive of conducting a site visit to the building/development for the following purposes:
- (i) to verify the eligibility of application;
 - (ii) to verify the scope of building certification;
 - (iii) to acknowledge the Phasing Programme (for Phased Application only).
36. The Panel Secretariat will notify the applicant in writing whether the application is accepted or rejected within 20 working days.
37. After the application for building certification is accepted by the Panel Secretariat, the owners of the building/development may proceed with appointment of VBAS Assessor(s) to carry out building assessment prescribed by the VBAS.

V. APPOINTMENT OF VBAS ASSESSORS

(A) Register of VBAS Assessors

38. The VBAS assessment shall be conducted by VBAS Assessors trained and registered under the VBAS. Three Assessors' Lists – List 1, List 2A and List 2B are established. VBAS Assessors shall carry out assessment to different elements in accordance with their professional qualifications. The Assessors' Lists are posted on the VBAS website for access by the public.

39. VBAS Assessors (List 1)

- VBAS Assessors (List 1) can carry out building assessment to all assessment elements under the Building Safety Category and Building Management Category i.e. Elements 1 – 10.

40. VBAS Assessors (List 2A)

- VBAS Assessors (List 2A) are restricted to assess Elements 7-10 only.

41. VBAS Assessors (List 2B)

- VBAS Assessors (List 2B) are restricted to assess Elements 8-10 only.

(B) Appointment of VBAS Assessors

42. Building owners can appoint at their choices any VBAS Assessor(s) on appropriate Lists to carry out assessment of their buildings.

43. Either single or multiple VBAS Assessors are allowed in a building assessment. However, for Building Safety Category, only one VBAS Assessor on List 1 shall be appointed for inspection while another VBAS Assessor on List 1 can be appointed for supervision of repair works. For different individual elements of Building Management Category, the same or multiple VBAS Assessors are allowed.

44. To avoid conflict of interests, VBAS Assessors are not allowed to carry out assessment on those records undertaken by them that are required for assessment under the Building Management Category.

45. Building owners shall not appoint a person as VBAS Assessor if he/she has been personally involved in any work or employment in providing property management, maintenance and repair services as the Building Manager of the building / development for the past one year counting from the date of appointment.

46. Building owners shall not engage an appointed VBAS Assessor in rendering property management, maintenance and repair services as the Building Manager of the building/development until the completion of the assessment.
47. VBAS Assessors shall exercise their professional judgment and abide by the Code of Conduct as stipulated in the Handbook for VBAS Assessors to avoid any personal interest which will or may affect their carrying out of building assessment. Each VBAS Assessor being appointed for the building assessment is required to sign a “Declaration of Interest” Form (Form No. VBAS-VA-02).
48. Within 7 working days after appointment, each appointed VBAS Assessor shall submit a “Notice of Appointment of VBAS Assessor” (Form No. VBAS-VA-10) duly signed by the applicant and the VBAS Assessor together with the “Declaration of Interest” Form to the Panel Secretariat.
49. If there is a change of the VBAS Assessor(s) during the assessment process, the applicant and the newly appointed VBAS Assessor(s) are required to notify the Panel Secretariat by submitting a “Notice of Appointment of VBAS Assessor” (Form No. VBAS-VA-10) together with the “Declaration of Interest” Form (Form No. VBAS-VA-02) within 7 working days after appointment.

(C) Duties of VBAS Assessors

50. The prime duties of the VBAS Assessors are to personally inspect the building conditions and assess the management & maintenance system of a building. Under the Building Safety Category, VBAS Assessors shall follow the requirements of the MBIS & MWIS to ensure building safety. The VBAS Assessors shall also follow the VBAS Assessment Manual to assess the existence of an effective building management and maintenance system under the Building Management Category.
51. VBAS Assessors must sign the respective Report(s)/Certificates(s)/Assessment Form(s) under their assessment and shall be held responsible for the elements they assessed. The Reports and Certificates for Building Safety Category shall be submitted to BA as required by the law and copies for submission shall be made to the Panel Secretariat.
52. VBAS Assessors are directly employed by the building owners to carry out VBAS assessment for the concerned buildings. They are directly responsible to the building owners and will be personally liable to the building owners for any neglect, fraud, misconduct and/or wrongful acts etc. committed throughout the whole assessment process.

53. VBAS Assessors shall attend enquiries from the Examiners of Panel Secretariat and site audits with the Examiners, if required.

VI. REGULATION OF VBAS ASSESSORS

54. The Hong Kong Quality Building Assessment Panel (the Panel) will ensure proper regulation of VBAS Assessors. The Panel Secretariat shall conduct full checking of all VBAS assessment reports and handle all complaints against VBAS Assessors.
55. If there are any irregularities, whether due to professional misconduct or negligence, the VBAS Assessors concerned will be subject to disciplinary actions and reports will be made to the professional institutes and/or registration boards to which the VBAS Assessors belong.
56. Apart from the above, the VBAS Assessors (List 1) may be subject to prosecution actions by the BA if irregularities result in contravention of the Buildings Ordinance.

VII. FEES

(A) Payment for Building Certification

57. Applicants who apply for building certification are required to pay fees to the Panel Secretariat in two stages.
58. At the time of making application for building certification, building owners are required to pay Application Fee. Application Fee is required for each Single or Phased Application.
59. At the time of final submission of Assessment Reports after completion of the building assessment, Certification Fee is to be paid. Certification Fee is calculated at no. of domestic units of the whole development with reference to DMC/ Sub-DMC/ OP as appropriate. For Phased Application, Certification Fee shall be paid on pro-rata basis according to the total no. of phases of the same estate or development.
60. The fees are subject to review from time to time. If buildings / developments join VBAS after having completed the prescribed inspections and repairs under MBIS & MWIS (for windows in common parts only), they are exempted from assessment of the Building Safety Category and only required to carry out assessment of the Building Management Category. Half Certification Fee will be charged.

Stage 1	Application Fee	HK\$500		
Stage 2	Certification Fee	Size of building/development	Scenario 1 & 1A	Scenario 2
		Property with 100 domestic units or below	HK\$10,000	HK\$5,000
		Property with 101–2,000 domestic units	HK\$20,000	HK\$10,000
		Property with 2,001–4,000 domestic units	HK\$30,000	HK\$15,000
		Property with 4,001 domestic units or above	HK\$40,000	HK\$20,000

61. Payment of the prescribed fees must be made by crossed cheque payable to the “Hong Kong Housing Society”. Fees paid are not refundable and not transferrable.

(B) Payment for Building Assessment

62. The selection and appointment of VBAS Assessors is purely a private and contractual relationship between the building owners and the VBAS Assessors. Building owners are to pay VBAS Assessors appointed by them directly for building assessment. The fees are to be agreed between the building owners and the Assessors.

VIII. TIME LIMITS FOR BUILDING ASSESSMENT & SUBMISSION

63. Applicants are required to complete building assessment and submit Assessment Reports within the prescribed time limit. There are different requirements for applications under Scenario 1, Scenario 1A and Scenario 2.

64. Scenario 1

- (i) Assessment of Building Safety Category and Building Management Category and the Assessment Reports for each Single or Phased Application shall be completed within 12 months from the date of acceptance of VBAS application.
- (ii) Submissions of the Assessment Reports for both Categories to the Panel Secretariat for each Single or Phased Application shall be made in one go within 3 months from the date of completion of the Assessment Reports.

- (iii) If any building(s) fail(s) to have the assessment and repairs of ALL 'Privately Owned Elements' be completed under the VBAS, if any, the Panel Secretariat will not accept any part submission regarding the 'Privately Owned Elements' for examination. Instead, the VBAS Assessor concerned will be required to make submissions of all those 'Privately Owned Elements' completed by him / her to Buildings Department (BD) in a bundle, as and when appropriate. BD may then follow up all 'Privately Owned Elements' under the MBIS & MWIS.
- (iv) In case there are genuine difficulties, where the building assessment and assessment reports for a building/development cannot be completed within the prescribed 12 months period as stated in paragraph 63(i) above, the applicant should seek approval of the Panel Secretariat for extension of time by completing the "Application for Extension of Time for Building Certification" (Form No. VBAS-AP-01b) not later than 8 weeks prior to the deadline for building assessment, together with justification and supporting documents. The Panel Secretariat may consider each case on its individual merit.

65. Scenario 1A

- (i) Assessment of Building Safety Category and Building Management Category and the Assessment Reports for each Single or Phased Application shall be completed within 12 months from the date of MBIS Notices.
- (ii) Submissions of the Assessment Reports for both Categories to the Panel Secretariat for each Single or Phased Application shall be made in one go within 3 months from the date of completion of the Assessment Reports.
- (iii) If any building(s) fail(s) to have the assessment and repairs of ALL 'Privately Owned Elements' be completed under the VBAS, if any, the Panel Secretariat will not accept any part submission regarding the 'Privately Owned Elements' for examination. Instead, the VBAS Assessor concerned will be required to make submissions of all those 'Privately Owned Elements' completed by him / her to BD in a bundle, as and when appropriate. BD may then follow up all 'Privately Owned Elements' under the MBIS & MWIS.

- (iv) In case there are genuine difficulties, where the building assessment and Assessment Reports for a building/development cannot be completed within the prescribed 12 months period as stated in 63(i) above, the applicant shall seek approval of the Panel Secretariat for extension of time by completing the “Application for Extension of Time for Building Certification” (Form No. VBAS-AP-01b) not later than 8 weeks prior to the deadline for building assessment, together with justification and supporting documents. The Panel Secretariat may consider each case on its individual merit.

66. **Scenario 2**

- (i) Assessment of Building Management Category and the Assessment Reports for the Building Management Category shall be completed and submitted to the Panel Secretariat within 3 months from the date of issuance of both the Compliance Letters for MBIS & MWIS (for windows in common parts only) as well / both the Acknowledgement Letters for Voluntary Building and Window (for windows in common parts only) Inspection as well issued by the BA.
- (ii) The true copy of Compliance Letters for MBIS & MWIS (for windows in common parts only)/Acknowledgement Letters for Voluntary Building and Window (for windows in common parts only) Inspection certified by VBAS Assessor as supporting documents for completion of assessment of Building Safety Category together with the Assessment Reports for the Building Management Category shall be submitted in one go to the Panel Secretariat.

IX. FINAL SUBMISSION

67. Upon completion of building assessment by the VBAS Assessor(s), the applicant shall duly complete, sign and submit the Final Submission Form (Form No. VBAS-AP-01a) to the Panel Secretariat together with:
- (i) All relevant reports, specified forms, Assessment Forms, supporting documents and photos properly bound.
 - (ii) A non-rewritable DVD-ROM containing a copy of the inspection report and completion report for Building Safety Category (Elements 1-6) and Assessment Form for the Building Management Category (Elements 7 – 10) in PDF file format of 200 dpi resolution.

68. Photographic records shall be colour printed and clear with the following details:

- (i) Photos taken for Building Safety Category (Elements 1-6) shall follow the requirements of MBIS & MWIS;
- (ii) Photos taken for Building Management Category (Elements 7-10) shall be dated with proper numbering and description and attached with plans indicating the positions where photos were taken.

69. Checklist for submission under different scenarios for building certification is given below:

Submission Requirements for Building Safety Category (Elements 1 – 5)	
Scenario 1 & 1A	Scenario 2
Assessment Report for Building Safety Category	Supporting Document for Completion of Assessment of Elements 1-5 under MBIS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Copy of MBIS Inspection Report; (ii) Copy of MBIS Completion Report, if prescribed repair is required; (iii) Copy of MBIS Detailed Investigation Proposal and BA's endorsement letter, if any; (iv) Copy of specified forms to the BA including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MBI 1 Notification of appointment of RI for prescribed inspection and/or supervision of prescribed repair of building ▪ MBI 2 Notification of nomination of another RI to temporarily supervise the prescribed repair ▪ MBI 3 Certificate of building inspection (applicable where prescribed repair is required after inspection) ▪ MBI 3a Certificate of building inspection (applicable where no prescribed repair is required after inspection) ▪ MBI 4 Certificate of building repair ▪ MBI 5 Certificate of no business connection (applicable where the RI appointed for the prescribed inspection did not supervise the prescribed repair completed) (v) Copy of BA's acknowledgement letters for the above documents submitted under MBIS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Copy of MBIS Inspection Report; (ii) Copy of MBIS Completion Report, if prescribed repair is required; (iii) Copy of MBIS Detailed Investigation Proposal and BA's endorsement letter, if any; and (iv) True copy of BA's Compliance Letter for MBIS/Acknowledgement Letter for Voluntary Building Inspection certified by VBAS Assessor.

Submission Requirements for Building Safety Category (Element 6)	
Scenario 1 & 1A	Scenario 2
Assessment Report for Building Safety Category	Supporting Document for Completion of Assessment of Element 6 under MWIS
Situation 1: For that period (i.e. on/ before 31 July 2018) where the forms MWI 1, MWI 2, MWI 2a, MWI 3, MWI 4, MWI 5 are applicable	
<p>(i) Copy of report and specified forms to the BA including:</p> <p>(A) Applicable to Prescribed Repair is required after Inspection</p> <p>(a) Same VBAS Assessor (List 1) is appointed for inspection and supervising the prescribed repair</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MWI 1 Notification of appointment of QP for prescribed inspection and/or supervision of prescribed repair of windows ▪ MWI 3 Certificate of window inspection and repair ▪ MWI 5 Notification of appointment of QP for prescribed inspection/prescribed inspection and supervision of prescribed repair of windows and certificate of window inspection/ window inspection and repair <p>(b) Different VBAS Assessors (List 1) are appointed for inspection and supervising the prescribed repair</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MWIS Inspection Report ▪ MWI 1 Notification of appointment of QP for prescribed inspection and/or supervision of prescribed repair of windows ▪ MWI 2 Certificate of window inspection (applicable where prescribed repair is required after inspection and different QP is appointed for supervising the prescribed repair) ▪ MWI 4 Certificate of window repair (applicable where the QP supervised the prescribed repair completed and the earlier prescribed inspection was carried out by another QP) <p>(B) Applicable to No Prescribed Repair is required after Inspection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MWI 1 Notification of appointment of QP for prescribed inspection and/or supervision of prescribed repair of windows ▪ MWI 2a Certificate of window inspection (applicable where no prescribed repair is required after inspection) ▪ MWI 5 Notification of appointment of QP for prescribed inspection/prescribed inspection and supervision of prescribed repair of windows and certificate of window inspection/window inspection and repair <p>(ii) Copy of BA's acknowledgement letters for the above documents submitted under MWIS.</p>	<p>(i) True copy of BA's Compliance Letter for MWIS (for windows in common parts only)/ Acknowledgement Letter for Voluntary Window Inspection (for windows in common parts only) certified by VBAS Assessor.</p>

Submission Requirements for Building Safety Category (Element 6)	
Scenario 1 & 1A	Scenario 2
Assessment Report for Building Safety Category	Supporting Document for Completion of Assessment of Element 6 under MWIS
<u>Situation 2: For that period (i.e. on/ after 30 April 2018) where the forms WI 1, WI 2, WI 3 are applicable</u>	
<p>(i) Copy of report and specified forms to the BA including:</p> <p>(A) Same VBAS Assessor (List 1) is appointed for prescribed inspection and supervision of prescribed repair, if necessary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ WI 1 Notification of Appointment of Qualified Person (QP) and Certificate of Prescribed Inspection / Repair of Windows <p>(B) Different VBAS Assessors (List 1) are appointed for prescribed inspection and supervision of prescribed repair</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MWIS Inspection Report ▪ WI 2 Notification of appointment of QP for prescribed inspection and/or supervision of prescribed repair of windows ▪ WI 3 Certificate of window inspection (applicable where prescribed repair is required after inspection and different QP is appointed for supervising the prescribed repair) <p>(ii) Copy of BA's acknowledgement letters for the above documents submitted under MWIS.</p>	<p>(i) True copy of BA's Compliance Letter for MWIS (for windows in common parts only)/ Acknowledgement Letter for Voluntary Window Inspection (for windows in common parts only) certified by VBAS Assessor.</p>

Submission Requirements for Building Management Category (Elements 7 – 10)
Assessment Report for Building Management Category
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ VBAS Assessment Forms

Submission Requirements for Photographic Records (Elements 1 - 10)
<p>(i) All photos shall be colour printed and clear;</p> <p>(ii) Photos taken for Building Safety Category (Elements 1-6) shall follow the requirements of MBIS & MWIS;</p> <p>(iii) Photos taken for Building Management Category (Elements 7-10) shall be dated with proper numbering and description and attached with plans indicating the positions where photos were taken.</p>

X. EXAMINATION OF SUBMISSIONS

70. To monitor the quality of work of the VBAS Assessors and to provide the assurance to support the credibility of the building assessment, an examination system is established for the VBAS.
71. Under the examination system, all submissions for building certification shall be examined by the Examiners of the Panel Secretariat.
72. Examination is composed of two activities, namely “Document Check” and “Site Check”. To facilitate the examination, VBAS Assessors shall attend audit queries including Site Check, if required.
73. The scope of examination shall cover both Building Safety Category and Building Management Category and subject to review from time to time to ensure it meets the assessment standards and requirements under the VBAS.
74. The examination shall be carried out prior to the award of VBAS Certificate and Quality Labels to ensure due compliance with the VBAS requirements.
75. **Document Check**
 - (i) ALL submissions shall be examined to ensure the essential information required is contained and to identify critical issues for subsequent Site Check.
76. **Site Check**
 - (i) To confirm availability of support evidence as included in the VBAS Assessment Reports and to ensure the assessment results are true and fair, sampling check on site shall also be undertaken.
 - (ii) The Site Check shall cover accessible common parts and building elements while those concealed elements, elements inside private premises, and elements located at unreachable levels may also be included if the Examiners have any doubt about it or consider it necessary.

77. Different examination approaches are adopted under two different application scenarios:

(i) For Applications under Scenario 1 & 1A

- Both Assessment Reports under Building Safety Category and Building Management Category, including copy of the Reports and Certificates for Building Safety Category submitted to the BA as required by the law, shall be examined by the Examiners of the Panel Secretariat.
- Both Document Check and Site Check shall be carried out upon receipt of completed Assessment Reports.

(ii) For Applications under Scenario 2

- Submissions for MBIS & MWIS (for windows in common parts only) will be audited by the BA during prescribed inspection and prescribed repair stages and the Examiner of the Panel Secretariat shall only examine certified true copy of Compliance Letters for MBIS and MWIS (for windows in common parts only)/ Acknowledgement Letters of Voluntary Building and Window (for windows in common parts only) Inspection.
- Assessment Reports for Building Management Category shall be examined by the Examiner of the Panel Secretariat upon receipt of completed Assessment Reports through Document Check and Site Check.

XI. AUDIT BY BD

78. To ensure compliance with the MBIS/MWIS requirements, the BD may conduct audit checking to the VBAS application under Scenario 1 & 1A. The audit results will not affect the certificates already issued.

79. For Scenario 2 applications, MBIS & MWIS (for windows in common parts only) has already been completed with the proof of BD's compliance letters / acknowledgement letters before participation of VBAS, the Panel Secretariat will examine the assessment of Building Management Category only. BD will not carry out audits to applications under Scenario 2.

XII. AWARD OF VBAS CERTIFICATE / QUALITY LABELS

80. Under normal circumstances, the VBAS Certificate / VBAS Premium Certificate / Quality Label(s) will be awarded within 3 months upon receipt of full and valid Final Submission Form with all the required documents.
81. The Panel Secretariat will notify the BA the details of the certified buildings. The name and address of the buildings/developments, name of the Building Managers, the Certificate and Quality Labels awarded and the issue date(s) will also be posted on the VBAS website for public viewing.

XIII. PROCEDURES FOR BUILDING CERTIFICATION

82. A summary of building certification process is outlined in the “Flowchart of Application for Building Certification” in Appendix I.

XIV. GUIDELINES FOR USE OF VBAS CERTIFICATES AND QUALITY LABELS

83. The Certificate and Quality Label(s) shall only be displayed at the certified buildings.
84. The Certificate and Quality Label(s) or any reference to the certification shall not be applied on any product and its packaging or be associated with any product in such a way as to suggest that the product itself is certified by the Panel.
85. The Certificate and Quality Label(s) or any reference to the certification shall not be used in any misleading manner.
86. In the event that the Certificate and Quality Label(s) are incorrectly or improperly used in any publication or promotional material, the holders of the Certificate and Quality Label(s) shall immediately withdraw the same.
87. The holders of the Certificate and Quality Label(s) shall forthwith discontinue the use of or make reference to the Certificate and Quality Label(s) which have been revoked by the Panel.
88. The holders shall not use the Certificate and Quality Label(s) in such a manner that would bring the Panel, the HKHS and/or the VBAS into disrepute or lose public trust.

XV. REVOCATION OF VBAS CERTIFICATES / QUALITY LABELS

89. In case any one of the following situations may take place, the Panel may revoke the VBAS Certificate / Premium Certificate or Quality Label(s) which have already been awarded to a building/development:
- (i) false information was provided leading to the award of Certificate / Premium Certificate and/or Quality Label(s); or
 - (ii) misuse of the Certificate / Premium Certificate or Quality Label(s); or
 - (iii) any other circumstances that the Panel may consider necessary.

XVI. ENQUIRY and COMPLAINT

90. Any enquiries or complaints shall be lodged with the Panel Secretariat.
91. All verbal and written complaints will be recorded, handled and investigated by the Panel Secretariat.
92. Complainant may be requested by the Panel Secretariat to attend an interview or to provide further information if necessary.
93. Failure to attend the interview or provision of necessary information within the prescribed period of time without justifiable reason will be treated as voluntary withdrawal of the complaint and the Panel Secretariat has discretion to close the case.
94. If the complaint against a VBAS Assessor is substantiated after investigation, the Panel Secretariat if considers necessary, shall refer the case to the Appeal and Disciplinary Sub-Committee (ADSC) for review.

XVII. APPEAL

95. Should the Applicant disagrees with the decision made by the Panel regarding Building Certification, he may lodge an appeal with the Panel Secretariat.
96. The Applicant may lodge an appeal in writing on a prescribed Appeal Form (Form No. VBAS-GE-04) and the form shall reach the Panel Secretariat within 14 working days from the date of notification letter concerning the outcome or decision of the Panel on the issues of VBAS. The Applicant shall state the grounds of appeal and provide evidence to justify the appeal.

97. The Panel Secretariat shall refer the appeal to ADSC for review. The appellant may be invited to provide further information and/or attend an interview with members of the ADSC in a meeting convened for the purpose.
98. Failure to provide the necessary information within the prescribed period of time or attend the interview without justifiable reason will be treated as voluntary withdrawal of the appeal and the case will be closed accordingly.
99. The ADSC will consider the appeal and make recommendation to the Panel for approval. The decision of the Panel shall be final.
100. Normally, the appeal procedure will be completed within 30 working days from the date of receipt of the appeal, unless extension of time is deemed necessary or if another interview is needed.
101. The appellant will be notified of the result of the appeal in writing.

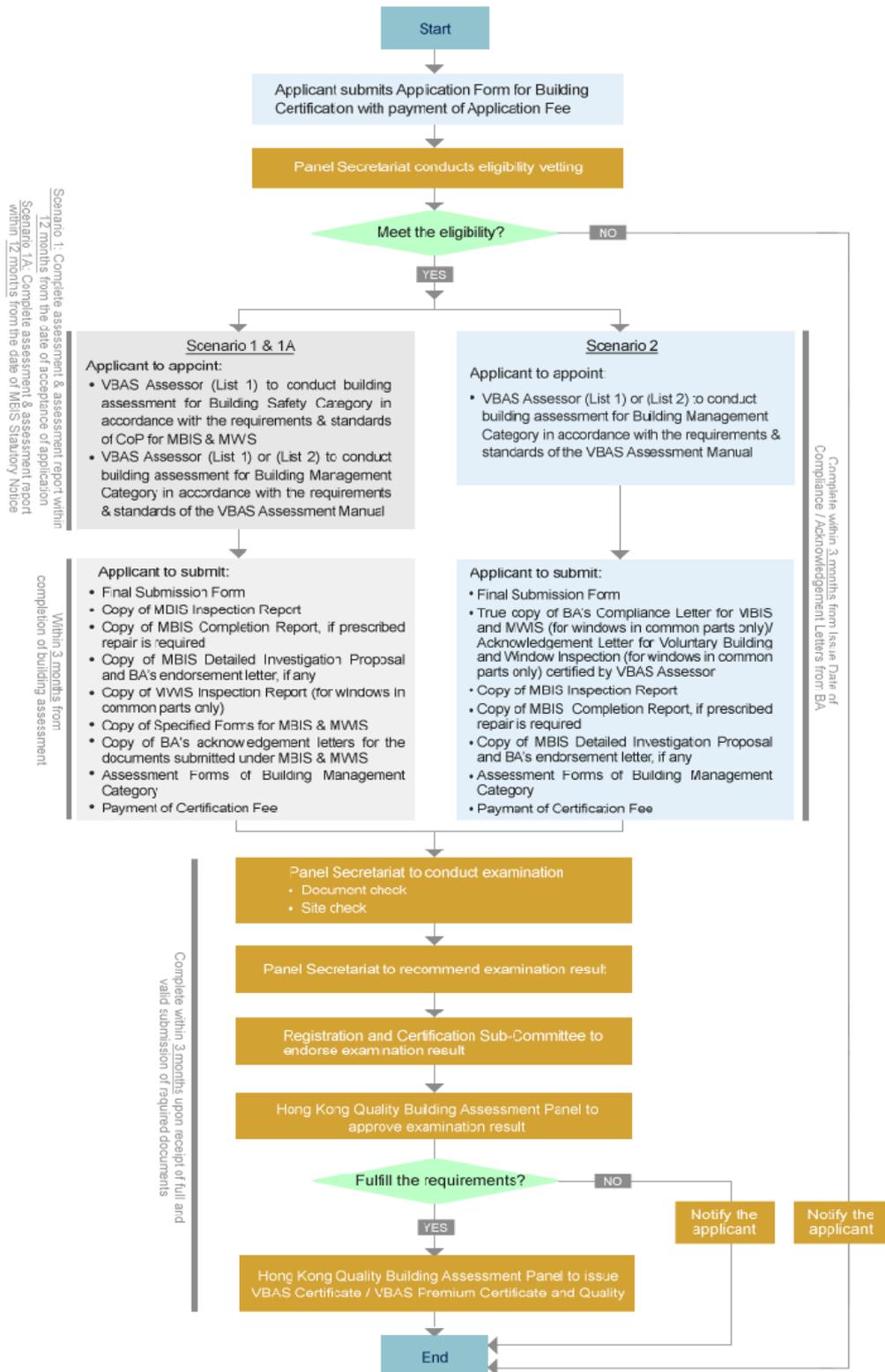
XVIII. CONTACT PANEL SECRETARIAT

102. The VBAS is operated under the Hong Kong Quality Building Assessment Panel Secretariat:

Office Address	:	8/F., 1063 King's Road, Quarry Bay, Hong Kong
Postal Address	:	P.O. Box No. 9127, General Post Office Hong Kong
Telephone	:	8108 0108
Fax	:	2884 2551
E-mail	:	vbasenquiry@hkhs.com
Office Hours	:	Monday to Friday (except Public Holidays) 8:30 a.m. – 12 :30 p.m. & 1:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.
Website	:	http://vbas.hkhs.com

- END -

Flowchart of Application for Building Certification



Note: (1) The applicant and appointed VBAS Assessor is to inform the Panel Secretariat by "Notice of Appointment of VBAS Assessors" and submit "Declaration of Interest by the VBAS Assessor" within 7 working days upon confirmation of appointment
 (2) According to the Buildings Ordinance, MBIS Report(s), MWIS Report and Specified Form(s) shall be submitted to the BA