

Sustainable timber

What is sustainable timber?

Timber that is sustainable is grown, felled and handled in a responsible manner. It is sourced from well-managed forests that are continuously replenished, reducing any negative environmental and social impacts.

The two main UK sustainable timber certifications are:

- Forestry Stewardship Council (FSC)
- Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC)

For a wood product to be FSC or PEFC certified there needs to be a continuous chain of custody certification trail. This chronological trail of evidence must track the timber from its source in the certified forest via every handler to the manufacturer and finished product. Each of these touch-points must be FSC or PEFC certified and must have their own individual chain of custody number that should be matched against every wood product.

BREEAM, **LEED** and **SKA** have requirements that timber and wood products are sustainably sourced and have on site criteria to ensure each scheme's credits, good practice measures or points are achieved.

What are BREEAM requirements for sustainable timber? (UK Refurbishment and Fit Out 2014)

BREEAM sets out the pre-requisite in 'Responsible sourcing of materials' (Mat 03) that all timber and timber-based products are "*legally harvested and traded*". This is a minimum requirement for achieving any BREEAM rating. This can be met by ensuring that all timber or wood products used on projects are FSC or PEFC certified.

BREEAM awards additional credits from Mat 03 when a range of building materials (including timber) are responsibly sourced. This means that materials used on the project are either covered by a recognised 'Responsible Sourcing Certification Scheme' or they have been reused. For timber and wood-based materials, this means being covered by an FSC, PEFC or Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) certification.

Evidence of responsible sourcing is an FSC or PEFC certificate for the supplier, along with documents such as delivery notes and invoices that contain a chain of custody number which corresponds with that certificate.

What are SKA good practice measures for sustainable timber? (Offices 1.2 and Higher Education)

SKA comprises more than 100 “Good Practice Measures” (GPMs) which encourage the specification of products and materials with good environmental performance. The following GPMs are relevant to offices which use certified timber (*those in italics are specifically for SKA Higher Education projects*):

- **M05** – Hardwoods
- **M10** – Suspended ceilings
- **M11** – Hard flooring
- **M18** – Kitchen fittings
- **M22** – Other loose ancillary furniture
- **M20** – Chairs
- **M29** – *Chairs: Soft Seating*
- **M21** – Storage units
- **M23** – Window treatments
- **M27** – *Countertops*
- **D20** – Timber
- **M08** – Re-locatable partitions
- **M06** – Joinery
- **M19** – Workstations and tables
- **M17** – Doors
- **M28** – WC cubicles
- **M13** – Hard wall coverings
- **M16** – Wall coverings
- **M25** – Shopfitting display and exhibition equipment



Many GPMs are achieved by ensuring that timber or timber-based products are either FSC, PEFC, SFI or Canadian Standards Association (CSA) certified. Therefore, to achieve a SKA rating, any timber - from joinery installations to WC cubicles - is required to be made from certified timber.

Evidence of responsible sourcing is an FSC or PEFC certificate for the supplier, along with documents such as delivery notes and invoices that contain a chain of custody number which corresponds with that certificate.

What are LEED requirements for sustainable timber? (Commercial Interiors)

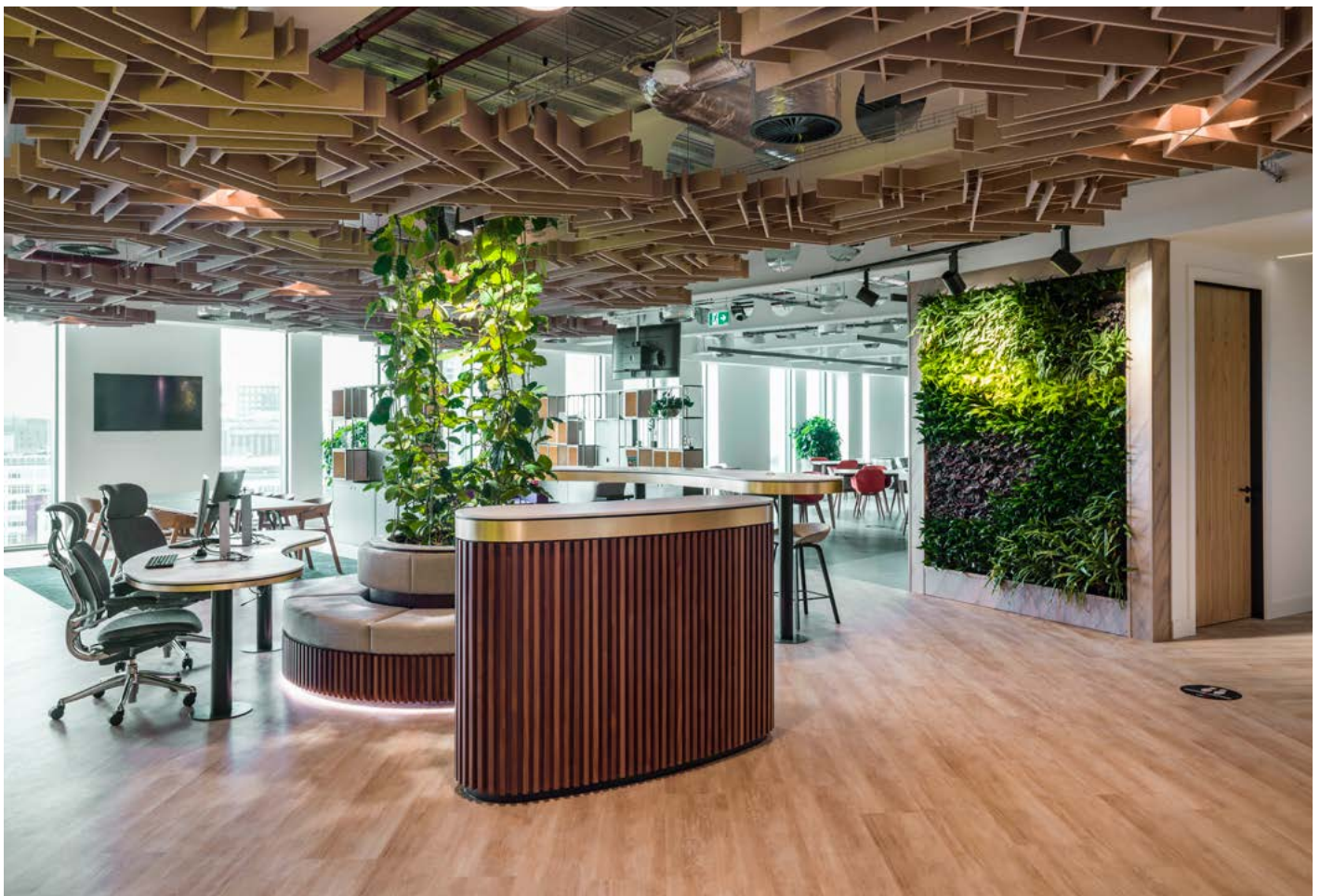
LEED v4 awards 1 point when 25% of the cost of materials are responsibly extracted. One of the ways to achieve this is by using wood products that are FSC certified as LEED does not recognise PEFC certified timber. If a product is FSC certified then 100% of the cost of the product is achieved for the credit.

Evidence to achieve the point includes invoices with all costs recorded. All the timber-based items must be broken down on a line-by-line basis with the chain of custody number and the cost of the item shown against each item.

What is a broken chain of custody for sustainable timber?

Under BREEAM and SKA there is a possible alternative route if at any point the continuous chain of custody certification trail is broken. For example this might occur if an uncertified subcontractor transports certified flooring from an FSC source to the site of the project.

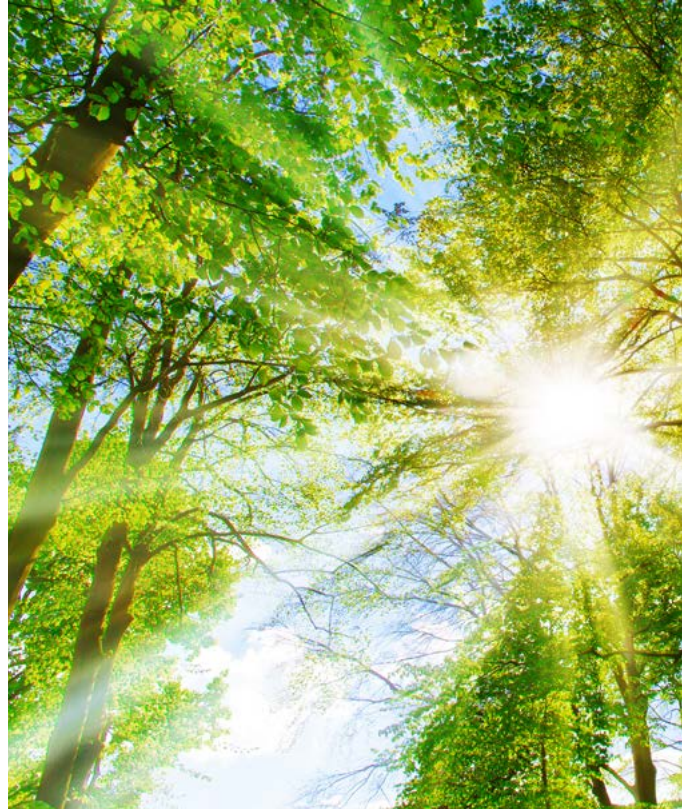
In this case, detailed 'Category B' evidence would be required. This checklist: breaks down all the timber elements and provides source locations; sets out the controls in place to prevent mixing certified and non-certified materials; and gives evidence of these procedures. In addition, delivery notes and invoices are needed to confirm that certified timber was bought by the subcontractor or supplier.



What to do on site to ensure a sustainable timber rating

The following steps should be taken for any project involving sustainable timber that is targeting a BREEAM, LEED or SKA rating:

1. Ensure an FSC (or equivalent) joinery contractor is appointed and that they understand the requirements for the project.
2. Ensure all directly purchased timber is from reputable suppliers with FSC (or equivalent) certification and that they understand the requirements of the project.
3. Communicate effectively with all subcontractors on the project that only FSC (or equivalent) timber can be used on site and ensure certificates are obtained before any order is placed.
4. Obtain delivery notes and invoices for all timber deliveries with chain of custody numbers recorded.
5. Undertake delivery spot checks during the project to ensure certified sustainable timber is being used.



About Overbury

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Our company-wide commitment to low carbon and sustainability means we have reduced our own emissions by 64 percent since 2010, as we continue to work towards our net zero target by 2030. On every project, we work closely with our clients, consultants and supply chains to help them achieve their own low carbon goals.

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