

Changes to the VEU program from 1 July 2023 - FAQs

New accreditation standards

What are the new accreditation standards?

From 1 July 2023, the accreditation requirements and process to participate in the Victorian Energy Upgrades program will change.

Under the new accreditation rules, applicants will be required to demonstrate they meet both 'fit and proper person' and 'competence and capability' requirements by providing specific information and supporting evidence so that the commission can decide whether to grant, refuse, or renew accreditation.

Accredited persons will be required to renew their accreditation annually, with a new annual fee. Annual renewal of accreditation will provide for a regular assessment of whether participants are continuing to meet the standards and the rules of the program.

When will the changes come into effect?

The new accreditation standards will come into effect on 1 July 2023.

What does 'fit and proper' and 'competent and capable' mean? Will past performance be used against us?

The commission may consider a broad range of information when assessing an applicant's suitability for accreditation.

Under the new accreditation standards, applicants will be required to demonstrate they meet both 'fit and proper person' and 'competence and capability' requirements by providing specific information and supporting evidence so that the commission can decide whether to grant, refuse, or renew accreditation.

To be a fit and proper person, you must be honest, knowledgeable and have the ability to participate properly in the VEU Program. The commission will assess a range of matters, including the applicant's character and reputation.

To be a competent and capable person, you must have the skill, judgment, power and qualifications to participate properly in the VEU program. The commission will assess a range of matters, including the applicant's policies, protocols, training, contractual arrangements, past performance and forward plans.

Past performance in the Victorian Energy Upgrades program and performance in other similar programs will be used as one of many relevant matters to help the commission consider applications for accreditation.

Where past performance raises concerns, the commission may consider what steps the applicant has taken to remediate any harm caused and ensure it performs well in the future. Previous compliance, enforcement and criminal history are likely to be relevant considerations.

Can non-compliance by lead generators or installers influence my accreditation status?

Accredited persons are accountable for the conduct of lead generators and installers (and other scheme participants) who undertake work on their behalf.

We will consider all available information when considering accreditation applications or renewals, including the overall compliance history of an accredited person, compliance with the Code of Conduct by lead generators and installers, and the quality of installations performed under the program.

How long will it take to receive accreditation?

We are required to make a decision on an application for accreditation within a period of 20 business days, commencing from the day we receive your complete application with accompanying fee.

However, where we require further information in relation to your application, the timeframe may be paused to enable that information to be provided. We may also seek your agreement to extend the timeframe to consider your application.

Will I have to renew my accreditation every year?

Yes. From 1 July 2023, accredited persons will be required to apply for renewal of accreditation each year.

Applications for annual renewal of accreditation must be submitted at least 90 calendar days before the expiry of your existing accreditation status.

Will I have to pay a fee to renew my accreditation every year?

Yes, there will be an annual renewal of accreditation fee of \$1000.

Will we need to go through the full process every year?

The annual accreditation renewal process is designed to promote compliance and safeguard program integrity, without overburdening applicants. Supporting documentation to be submitted by accredited persons will be information collected as part of regular business processes throughout the year.

The process and level of detail required will be the same for both initial applications for accreditation and renewal applications. However, for renewal applications, assessment will predominantly be focused on the preceding 12-month period.

Will you impose conditions on accreditations?

From 1 July 2023, the commission will be able to grant approval of accreditation or renewal of accreditation with any conditions the commission considers to be appropriate.

These conditions may:

be standard to all accredited persons, or

apply to all accredited persons with approval to undertake a particular prescribed activity, or

be particular to an accredited person and responsive to the particular matters raised as part of the assessment for accreditation or renewal of accreditation.

An example of a 'standard condition' is a condition requiring an accredited person to conduct only the type of lead generation and marketing that it stated it would conduct in its application and that it has been approved to undertake.

An example of a condition applied to all accredited persons where a particular prescribed activity is undertaken, is a condition that accredited persons must not submit more than five Victorian Energy Efficiency Certificates to the commission for registration per installer per day for water heating activities.

An example of a condition particular to an accredited person is a condition that the accredited person perform phone audits of 25 per cent of its installation activities every month. This might be appropriate for an accredited person who has not previously participated in the VEU program and has little relevant experience.

If we don't submit the information required within the time required, will I lose my accreditation?

Applications for annual renewal must be submitted at least 90 calendar days before the expiry of your existing accreditation status.

The commission may accept a late application for renewal of accreditation, however, there will be a fee for late applications. From 1 November 2023, the late fee will be \$13,814.

If we don't respond to your requests for further information, will you reject my application?

The commission will request further information as needed to assess an application. If the information is not provided it may lead to the application being refused.

I am currently accredited under the program – when will I have to renew my accreditation?

There will be a transition period for existing accredited persons to apply to renew their accreditation. We will nominate dates on which the accreditation of each accredited person expires, and provide further information about when you need to apply for renewal of your accreditation. This information will be coming shortly.

I've just submitted an application for accreditation. Will I need to re-submit it?

Any applications for accreditation submitted prior to 1 July 2023 will be assessed under the current process and against existing legislative requirements.

I'm accredited under the program, but haven't been active – can I cancel my accreditation? Will I automatically lose my accreditation after a period of inactivity?

Applications for annual renewal of accreditation must be submitted at least 90 calendar days before the expiry of your existing accreditation status.

If an accredited person does not apply to renew their accreditation prior to the expiry date that will be specified for that accredited person, accreditation will automatically be cancelled.

If you do not intend to maintain your accreditation moving forward, please email veu@esc.vic.gov.au to request a cancellation of accreditation.

New fees

What are the new fees?

The new fee structure from 1 July 2023 (and further revisions to fees occurring on 1 November 2023) will help resource the commission to effectively exercise its functions and provide oversight of the program.

From 1 July 2023:

	Existing fee	New Fee
Application for accreditation	\$500	\$3000
Application for renewal of accreditation	N/A	\$1000
Application for approval of a project impact report	N/A	\$500
Application to list a product on the ESC Register	N/A	\$500
Lodging an energy acquisition statement	N/A	\$3122
Request for reconsideration of a reviewable decision	N/A	\$750

What are the fees coming into effect in November?

In addition to the new fees coming into effect on 1 July 2023, from 1 November 2023:

	Existing fee	New Fee
Application for registration of a certificate (cost per certificate)	\$1 / certificate (for registration)	\$2.33 / certificate (for creation)
Late lodgement of an application for renewal of accreditation	N/A	\$13,814
Application for variation of conditions of accreditation	N/A	\$1,500

Application to open a VEET scheme registry account	N/A	\$2,000
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Why are there so many new fees?

The current fee structure for the program has not been revised since the program began in 2009. The Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action undertook a review of the program's fees, including consultation with stakeholders and program participants.

The new fee structure will help resource the commission to effectively exercise its functions and provide oversight of the program.

Expanded powers for the commission

What are the changes?

From 1 July 2023, the commission will have new and strengthened functions to regulate the Victorian Energy Upgrades program.

These extended powers will provide stronger protections for consumers and accredited providers, helping to prevent and deter non-compliance with the program, and providing new enforcement powers to take action where required against unethical, unsafe, misleading or fraudulent activity. These include powers to direct and undertake assurance and compliance audits, and new enforcement tools for specified breaches of the program rules (such as issuance of penalty notices and civil penalty litigation).

Why does the commission need expanded powers?

Expanded regulatory powers are needed to ensure a level playing field for accredited persons and scheme participants, protection of consumers against unscrupulous practices and to achieve the overarching goal of the VEU program to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

What are the commission's new audit powers?

The commission's new powers include the ability to conduct, or to require an accredited person to appoint an independent person to conduct, a compliance audit. These powers can be exercised where the commission has reasonable grounds to suspect that the accredited person has contravened the program rules.

The commission may also require an accredited person to obtain an independent audit of the reliability, accuracy and completeness of a matter specified by the commission. These are known as assurance audits. An assurance audit will be required from each accredited person at least once every two years and will be undertaken at an accredited person's expense.

Further information on a new audit framework will be provided in due course.

Supporting resources

For more information and supporting resources, visit: [Changes to the Victorian Energy Upgrades program from 1 July 2023 | Essential Services Commission](#)

Contact us

If you have any queries, please contact VEU Support on (03) 9032 1310 or email veu@esc.vic.gov.au