



Building Standards Technical Handbooks 2026

Summary of changes for 6 April 2026

This document provides a summary of changes included in the Building Standards Technical Handbooks, updating Section 0 (General), Section 2 (Fire), Section 3 (Environment), Section 4 (Safety) and Appendix A (Defined Terms), which apply from 6 April 2026; information on awareness events.

Changes to regulations and standards

Amendments to the building regulations and standards are now made by Part 2 of [The Building \(Scotland\) Amendment Regulations 2025](#). Changes introduced in the latest handbooks relate to Simon and Richard's Law, mandating the installation of an automatic fire suppressions in traditionally constructed buildings converted to hotel use, whilst new guidance has been introduced in relation to flooding and groundwater and accessible entrances.

The new domestic and non-domestic technical handbooks incorporate changes which will be published in Summer 2026. The interim documents being issued aim to disseminate and inform stakeholders ahead of the effect date of 6 April 2026. These documents contained only updated sections in isolation to allow focussed attention on updated technical guidance.

Section 0 (General)

- Regulation 8 relating to durability, workmanship and fitness of materials is amended to include a hotel, guest house, boarding house or hostel as a defined 'relevant building' with a storey at a height of 11 metres or more;
- Regulation 8 is amended to include additional exceptions (solar shading device components & balcony floor layer) to the ban on the use of combustible materials in external wall cladding systems on defined 'relevant buildings' with a storey at a height of 11 metres or more;
- Amendment of Schedule 5 to Regulation 9 relating to building standards applicable to design and construction for Simon and Richard's Law mandating the installation of an automatic fire suppression system for the conversion of a traditionally constructed building to hotel use; and

Section 2 (Fire)

- Amendment to building standard 2.15 relating to Simon and Richard's Law, mandating the installation of an automatic fire suppression system for the conversion of a traditionally constructed building to hotel use.

These changes form part of the output from the Building and Fire Safety Expert

Working Group¹ and measures proposed within the 2024/25 consultation on the Cameron House Hotel recommendations and fire safety topics².

Section 3 (Environment)

- New guidance has been provided to demonstrate compliance with mandatory standard 3.3 for flooding and groundwater. This guidance provides detailed information on construction methods for buildings constructed in areas of high floor risk.

Section 4 (Safety)

- New guidance has been provided under mandatory standard 4.1 for access to buildings. This provides additional guidance on the positioning of a letterplate where included in a doorset at an accessible entrance.

The revised standards and supporting guidance apply to all building warrants submitted on or after 6 April 2026 and are published at:

<https://www.gov.scot/policies/building-standards/monitoring-improving-building-regulations/>.

A full list of all latest changes can also be found in clauses 0.1.7, 2.0.5, 3.0.3, and 4.0.3 in each of the 2026 technical handbooks. More detail on the range of key changes are listed below.

¹ [Building and Fire Safety: Ministerial Working Group - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/policies/building-standards/monitoring-improving-building-regulations/).

² [Scottish Building Regulations: Proposed review of fire safety topics including Cameron House Hotel recommendations: - Scottish Government consultations - Citizen Space](#)

Section 0 (General)

Changes listed are to both the Domestic and Non-domestic Technical Handbooks

- 0.2.1 – Updated list of amended legislation – 2025 regulations added.

Section 0.8 – Regulation 8. Durability, workmanship and fitness of materials

Regulation 8 – Amended to prohibit the use of combustible external wall cladding systems to hotels, hostels, boarding houses and guest houses and to include additional exceptions for solar shading device components and balcony floor layer.

- Regulation 8(3) amended wording relating to reaction to fire classification.
- Regulation 8(4) amended to list materials which are not subject to regulation 8(3), which requires materials forming an ‘external wall cladding system’ or ‘specified attachments’ to be non-combustible in ‘relevant buildings’
- Regulation 8(6) amended to include hotel, guest house, hostel and boarding house in the definition of the term ‘relevant building’. Also, amended wording relating to the reaction to fire classification and the meaning of solar shading.

Section 2 (Fire)

Domestic handbook - guidance to standard 2.0.5 (latest changes)

- Amendment to Clause 2.0.5 to include 2026 changes.
- Minor revisions of existing text to reflect new or amended guidance.

Domestic handbook - guidance to standard 2.4.0 (cavities)

- Amendment to Clause 2.4.0 to include additional guidance when converting existing older buildings.
- Amendment to Clause 2.4.3 to include additional guidance on fire resisting ceilings as an alternative to cavity barriers.

Domestic handbook - guidance to standard 2.7 (spread on external walls)

- Amendment to Clause 2.7.1 to clarify the guidance on sheathing and backing boards.

Domestic handbook - guidance to standard 2.14 (fire and rescue service facilities)

- Amendment to provide new Clause 2.14.10 on external premises information plates.

Domestic handbook - guidance to standard 2.15 (automatic fire suppression systems)

- Mandatory standard amended and the limitation added 'is a traditionally constructed residential building with 15 or more rooms used for sleeping accommodation'.

Domestic handbook – Annex 2.B reaction to fire

- Clause 2.B.1 – Amendment to the list of exemptions that form part of an external wall cladding system, to include components associated with a solar shading device and materials forming the floor layer of a balcony.

Non-Domestic handbook - guidance to standard 2.0.5 (latest changes)

- Amendment to Clause 2.0.5 to include 2026 changes.
- Minor revisions of existing text to reflect new or amended guidance.

Non-Domestic handbook - guidance to standard 2.0.7 (alternative approaches)

- Amendment to Clause 2.0.7 to include additional guidance when converting traditionally constructed buildings to hotel use.

Non-Domestic handbook - guidance to standard 2.4.0 (cavities)

- Amendment to Clause 2.4.0 to include additional guidance when converting existing older buildings.
- Amendment to Clause 2.4.5 to include additional guidance on fire resisting ceilings as an alternative to cavity barriers.

Non-Domestic handbook - guidance to standard 2.7 (spread on external walls)

- Amendment to Clause 2.7.1 to clarify the guidance on sheathing and backing boards.

Non-Domestic handbook - guidance to standard 2.9 (escape)

- Amendment to Clause 2.9.7 to clarify guidance on exits.

Non-Domestic handbook - guidance to standard 2.10 (escape lighting)

- Amendment to Clause 2.10.3 to include additional guidance on low level way finding systems.

Non-Domestic handbook - guidance to standard 2.15 (automatic fire suppression systems)

- Mandatory standard amended and the limitation added 'is a traditionally constructed residential building with 15 or more rooms used for sleeping accommodation'.
- Amendment to provide new Clause 2.15.7 relating to Simon and Richard's Law mandating the installation of an automatic fire suppression system for the conversion of a traditionally constructed building to hotel use.

Non-Domestic handbook – Annex 2.E reaction to fire

- Clause 2.E.1 – Amendment to the list of exemptions that form part of an external wall cladding system, to include components associated with a solar shading device and materials forming the floor layer of a balcony.

Section 3 (Environment)

Domestic handbook – guidance to standard 3.0.3 (latest changes)

- Amendment to Clause 3.0.3 to include 2026 changes.

Domestic handbook – guidance to standard 3.3 (flooding and ground water)

- Amendment to Clause 3.3.0 relating to flooding risk and property flood resilience.
- Amendment to Clause 3.3.1 relating to flood risk assessment.
- Amendment to Clause 3.3.2 relating to groundwater.
- Amendment to Clause 3.3.3 relating to resilient construction in flood risk areas and approaches to property flood resilience.

Domestic handbook – Annex 3.B (building standards advice on flooding)

- New advice on flooding, flood resistant materials and forms of construction that may be required to demonstrate compliance with Standard 3.3

Non-domestic handbook – guidance to standard 3.0.3 (latest changes)

- Amendment to Clause 3.0.3 to include 2026 changes.

Non-domestic handbook – guidance to standard 3.3 (flooding and ground water)

- Amendment to Clause 3.3.0 relating to flooding risk and property flood resilience.
- Amendment to Clause 3.3.1 relating to flood risk assessment.
- Amendment to Clause 3.3.2 relating to groundwater.
- Amendment to Clause 3.3.3 relating to resilient construction in flood risk areas and approaches to property flood resilience.

Non-domestic handbook – Annex 3.A (building standards advice on flooding)

- New advice on flooding, flood resistant materials and forms of construction that may be required to demonstrate compliance with Standard 3.3

Section 4 (Safety)

Domestic handbook – guidance to standard 4.0.3 (latest changes)

- Amendment to Clause 4.0.3 to include 2026 changes.

Domestic handbook – guidance to standard 4.1 (access to buildings)

- Amendment to Clause 4.1.7 to include additional guidance on the positioning of letterplates at an accessible entrance.

Appendix A (Defined Terms)

Domestic handbook – Appendix A defined terms

- Amendment to “**Relevant building**” list to include hotels, hostels, boarding houses and guest houses.

Non-Domestic handbook - Appendix A defined terms

- Amendment to “**Relevant building**” list to include hotels, hostels, boarding houses and guest houses.

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