

Appendix A: Main and secondary heating systems

A1 General principles

The main heating system is that which heats the largest proportion of dwelling. It is a heating system which is not usually based on individual room heaters (although it can be), and often provides hot water as well as space heating. Main heating systems are either identified via the boiler efficiency database or are categorised on the basis of the generic types in Tables 4a and 4b. Occasionally there may be two central heating systems, for example two separate boilers used to heat different parts of the property. In this case the calculation should be undertaken using the system that heats the largest part of the property.

The secondary heating system is based upon a room heater. Secondary heating systems are taken from the room heaters section of Table 4a.

Only fixed secondary heaters are included in a description of the property (e.g. a gas fire, a chimney and hearth capable of supporting an open fire, a wall-mounted electric fire).

Portable heaters are not counted for the purposes of SAP assessments: these are characterised by being:

- completely free standing and self supporting on feet, legs or base on the floor, i.e. not wall mounted or specifically designed for a fireplace, and in the case of gas or oil heaters containing a built-in fuel store; and
- readily and easily transferred and relocated from one room to another, in the case of an electric heater having a lead and a plug.

For detailed selection rules for main and secondary systems see A2 below.

If a fixed secondary heater is not present, a secondary heating system is nevertheless used for the calculation of the energy use and energy ratings where the main system is not sufficient in itself to heat all habitable rooms in the dwelling to the level on which the SAP is based (21°C in the living area and 18°C elsewhere). This should be taken as applicable if there are any habitable rooms without heat emitters associated with the main heating system. See section A4 as regards the calculation routine.

A secondary system is always specified when the main system is electric storage heaters or off-peak electric underfloor heating.

Note that building regulations or other regulations may make additional specifications in relation to secondary heaters, which should be followed in the case of compliance calculations.

The SAP calculation is based on the characteristics of the dwelling and the systems installed and not on the heating practices of the occupying household. That does not preclude further estimates of energy consumption being made to take account of actual usage. Such estimates are not part of SAP but could form the basis of advice given to the occupying household on how to make best use of the systems at their disposal.

A2 Procedure for identifying main and secondary heating systems

A2.1 Identifying the main system

- (1) If there is a central system that provides both space and water heating and it is capable of heating at least 30% of the dwelling, select that system as the main heating system. If there is no system that provides both space and water heating, then select the system that has the capability of heating the greatest part of the dwelling. For this purpose only habitable rooms should be considered (i.e. ignore heaters in non-habitable rooms).
- (2) If there is still doubt about which system should be selected as the main system, select the system that supplies useful heat to the dwelling at lowest cost (obtained by dividing fuel cost by conversion efficiency).

A2.2 Identifying the secondary system

- (1) Count the number of habitable rooms and the number heated habitable rooms (for the definition of habitable rooms see S9.1 in Appendix S).
- (2) If a fixed secondary heater is found in a habitable room, that heater is the secondary, whether or not there are any unheated habitable rooms.
- (3) If there is an unheated habitable room and no fixed secondary heater in any habitable room, but there is a fixed heater in a non-habitable room, that heater is the secondary.
- (4) If no heater is identified in (2) or (3) there is no fixed secondary heater.

In some cases it may not be immediately clear which of two systems present should be classified as the main system and which as the secondary. In these cases the system which is cheapest to use should be taken as the main system, and if there is still doubt, i.e. if they are both equally cheap to use, select the system that heats the living room. The other system can still be input as a secondary system but it needs to be input as a room heater. A room heater system should be chosen so that its efficiency closely reflects (but does not exceed) that of the actual system (as defined by Table 4a). The chosen room heater should also use the same fuel/tariff as the actual system.

If two types of secondary heater are present, that which heats the greater number of rooms should be specified as the secondary system. If that condition does not resolve the choice, the system which is the cheapest to run should be specified.

A3 Dwellings with inadequate heating systems

A3.1 New dwellings

The SAP assumes that a good standard of heating will be achieved throughout the dwelling. For dwellings in which the heating system is not capable of providing the standard, it should be assumed that the additional heating is provided by electric heaters, using the fraction given in Table 11 (but see also A3.3). For new dwellings that have no heating system specified, it should be assumed that all heat will be provided by electric heaters using electricity at the standard domestic tariff.

A3.2 Existing dwellings

Some existing dwellings have heaters only in a limited number of rooms, generally gas or electric fires. In these cases the usual basis of calculation, that the dwelling is fully heated, still applies. Rooms without heaters are assumed to be heated by electric room heaters. The choice between main and secondary heating for the purposes of the calculation is decided as follows.

- (1) If 25% or less of the habitable rooms are actually heated, and are heated by room heater(s) using a fuel other than electricity, the (assumed) electric system is the main system for the purposes of the calculation and the other fuel is the secondary. This applies only if the identified main heater is a room heater, and is subject to A3.3 below. A heated room means one with a heat emitter in the room.
- (2) If the number of habitable rooms actually heated is more than 25% but there is no identified secondary heater according to the rules in A2.2, the heaters in these rooms are the main system and the (assumed) electric heaters are the secondary.
- (3) If the number of habitable rooms actually heated is more than 25% and a secondary heater is identified, the procedure for assigning main and secondary heating systems outlined in section A2 applies.

Examples. A house with 6 habitable rooms with one gas fire would be treated as being electrically heated with a gas secondary heater (1 room out of 6). If there were two gas fires (2 rooms out of 6), the gas fires are the main heating and electricity the secondary. If there were 4 habitable rooms, and one gas fire (1 out of 4), the main heating would be electric and the gas fire the secondary.

A3.3 Highly insulated small dwellings

In the case of highly insulated small dwellings, item (2) in A3.2 may not be realistic, for example a 3 kW gas fire could suffice to provide most of the heating needs. Accordingly, if the design heat loss (DHL) is less than 3 kW, the heating in the main room is the main system irrespective of the number of rooms heated. For this purpose, DHL is the heat loss coefficient as calculated at box (37) of the worksheet, multiplied by a design temperature difference of 20 K.

A3.4 Broken heating systems

SAP assumes that the installed heating systems are operational and takes no account of whether they are working or not. However, in the case where the main heating unit (e.g. boiler) is missing and thus the dwelling has no installed main heating system, the rules in A3.2 should be followed.

A4 Description of the dwelling's heating systems and software implementation

A SAP assessor should record, for the purposes of entry into SAP calculation software, the actual heating systems (as found in the dwelling in the case of a site survey or indicated on building plans or associated documentation in the case of new construction), together with the number of habitable rooms and the number of heated habitable rooms. Where case A3.2 (1) applies, the description of the property includes the actual main system. Where a choice has to be made between alternative systems, as described in Section A2, the SAP assessor should make the choice according to the circumstances existing in the property while recording in a separate note any other fixed heaters present.

Software implementing the SAP calculation procedure then applies the remaining rules of this Appendix, namely:

- a) If 25% or less of the habitable rooms are heated and their heating is by a room heater (not electric), assign electric heaters as the main system and the identified room heaters as the secondary system, applying the secondary fraction according to Table 11 for electric room heaters as the main system.
- b) Otherwise if there are any unheated habitable rooms and no secondary system has been identified, undertake the calculation with electric secondary heating.
- c) If any fixed secondary heater has been identified, the calculation proceeds with the identified secondary heater, whether or not there are unheated habitable rooms.
- d) If there are no unheated habitable rooms and no fixed secondary heater in a habitable room, undertake the calculation with no secondary heating.
- e) An assumed heater, where main or secondary, is an electric portable heater. In case of main heater it does not have thermostatic control.

Table 11 gives the fraction of the heating that is assumed to be supplied by the secondary system. The treatment of secondary systems is not affected by any control options for the secondary system.