

Metered Connections Guaranteed Standards of Service

May 2021

Introduction

This guide sets out the guaranteed standards for metered demand and generation connection services provided by your electricity distribution company, which owns the electricity wires and cables by which electricity is supplied to your premises. Distributors are not responsible for meter reading or billing – your supplier does this. In this document the electricity distribution company is referred to as “we” and “us”.

This guide summarises the Electricity (Connection Standards of Performance) Regulations 2015 No.698 (in relation to metered demand connections) and the Direction under Distribution Licence Condition 15A (in relation to generation connections).

Ofgem, the industry regulator, sets the guaranteed standards. If we fail to meet these guaranteed standards you (“you” being a domestic or non-domestic customer) are entitled to receive a payment.

Sometimes the guaranteed standards may not apply including under exceptional circumstances, events beyond our control, industrial action, actions of third parties or if we are not able to gain access to premises. If any of these exemptions are invoked, we will need to demonstrate that we had taken all reasonable steps to prevent the circumstances occurring and to prevent failure.

These guaranteed standards do not apply:

- a) Where some of the connections work is to be carried out by an independent connections provider. Separate service standards and compensation arrangements apply for the aspects we undertake; and
- b) Where reinforcement is required due to the installation of approved equipment (such as small-scale generation) at domestic premises or small businesses where no modification to the physical connection is required and no connection charge is made.

Where a new demand connection includes the installation of a single micro-generator (previously known as a small-scale generation unit (SSEG)), the relevant demand standards will apply. Where a new demand application includes the installation of multiple micro-generators or large-scale (G99, previously known as G59) generation, the relevant generation standards will apply.

CONNECTION GUARANTEED STANDARDS

We guarantee our key connection services. The guarantees apply to new or modified connections. However, please note that works solely associated with moving a customer’s meter are only included within the scope of ‘modified connections’ for the purposes of Budget Estimates, Quotations and the Quotation Accuracy Scheme.

Provision of Budget Estimates

If you ask us for a desk-top budget estimate of connection costs that does not require a visit, we will provide this within the following timescales from when you have given us all the information that we need and paid us any applicable fees, including any connection offer expenses that we may require.

If the required capacity of the connection is less than 1MVA, we will provide the budget estimate within 10 working days.

If the required capacity of the connection is 1MVA or more, we will provide the budget estimate within 20 working days.

If we fail we will pay you £130.

Provision of Quotations

If you ask us for a quotation (i.e. a formal offer of terms) for a connection, we will provide this within the following timescales from when you have given us all the information that we need and paid us any applicable fees, including any connection offer expenses that we may require.

If we fail we will pay you a fixed amount for each working day we are late.

<i>Type of Connection</i>	<i>Demand Timescale</i>	<i>Generation Timescale</i>	<i>Late payment per working day</i>
Single LV service demand connection or service alteration (including work associated with moving a meter)	5 working days	-	£30
Small project demand connection (domestic developments of 2 – 4 units requiring no LV network extension; or domestic developments of 1 – 4 units requiring LV network extension; or single premises of any kind requiring 2 or 3 phase connections requiring no LV network extension, in all cases involving LV only and whole-current metering)	15 working days	-	£30
Other LV connections with LV works	25 working days	45 working days	£130
Connections involving HV works	35 working days	65 working days	£270
Connections involving EHV works	65 working days	65 working days	£400

Quotation Accuracy Scheme

This only applies to customers asking for a quotation for a single LV service demand connection or for small-project demand connections.

Customers have the right to challenge the accuracy of their quotation under the Quotation Accuracy Scheme. If the quotation is found to be inaccurate or incomplete, we will make a fixed payment to you. We will provide you with a correct quotation and also refund you the amount of any overpayment you have made. If we have undercharged you, we will require you to pay the additional amount.

<i>Type of Connection</i>	<i>Payment</i>
Single LV service demand connection or alteration (including work associated with moving a meter)	£670
Small-project demand connection (domestic developments of 2 – 4 units requiring no LV network extension; or domestic developments of 1 – 4 units requiring LV network extension; or single premises of any kind requiring 2- or 3-phase	£1340

connections requiring no LV extension, in all cases involving LV only and whole-current metering)	
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Making Contact to Schedule Work and Completing Work for Single LV Service and Small LV Projects demand connections

Once we have received written acceptance of our quotation and you have paid any required amount quoted we will contact you within 7 working days to discuss dates for carrying out the works. It may not always be possible to agree a date when we contact you initially, for example if wayleaves or other consents are required. Please note that works associated with moving meters are not covered by this guaranteed standard.

If we fail to contact you we will pay you £30 for each working day we are late.

Once a date is agreed to complete the works (or a phase of works specified in the quotation), this may be varied at the customer's request or by agreement or as notified by us (for example if severe weather causes us to postpone planned works, if there are delays in obtaining wayleaves or other consents, or if prerequisite works have not been completed). We will complete the works on the agreed date.

If we fail we will pay you £70 for each working day we are late.

Making Contact to Schedule Work and Commencing and Completing Work for all Other LV Connections, HV and EHV Connections

Once we have received written acceptance of our quotation and you have paid the full amount quoted (or an amount for phases of work as specified in the quotation), we will contact you to arrange to discuss dates to carry out the work. It may not always be possible to agree dates when we contact you initially, for example if wayleaves or other consents are required.

If we fail to contact you we will pay you a fixed amount for each working day we are late.

<i>Type of Connection</i>	<i>Timescale to make contact</i>	<i>Late payment per working day</i>
Other LV connections with LV works	7 working days	£130
Connections involving HV works	10 working days	£270
Connections involving EHV works	15 working days	£400

We will agree dates to commence the work, complete the work (or a phase of the work as specified in the quotation) and if required energise the supply. These dates may be varied at the customer's request or by agreement or as notified by us (for example if severe weather causes us to postpone planned works, if there are delays in obtaining wayleave consents, or if we are unable to undertake live working on our system for safety reasons or prerequisite works have not been completed). We will commence on-site work, complete the on-site works, and energise if required, on the agreed dates.

If we fail to meet an agreed date we will pay you a fixed amount for each working day we are late.

<i>Type of Connection</i>	<i>Late payment per working day for commencing work</i>	<i>Late payment per working day for completing work</i>	<i>Late payment per working day for energising where required</i>

Other LV connections with LV works	£50	£270	£270
Connections involving HV works	£50	£400	£400
Connections involving EHV works	£50	£540	£540

Notification of Payment under Guaranteed Standards

If we fail to meet any of the guaranteed standards we will make you a payment by cheque, within the following timescales:

<i>Guaranteed Standard</i>	<i>Failure payment due within:</i>
Budget estimates	10 working days from the date on which we should have issued the budget estimate
Quotations	10 working days from the date on which we issued the quotation
Quotation Accuracy Scheme	10 working days from the date on which a quotation is found to be incomplete or inaccurate
All other guaranteed standards	10 working days from the date on which we either contacted you, commenced or completed the relevant activity or energisation occurred, as appropriate.

If we fail to make the payment within the required timescale we will send you an additional £130.

Complaints

If you have a complaint about any aspect of our service, please contact us. You will find our complaints handling procedure on our website (see details below) or you can ring our general enquiry line to request a copy. If we are unable to resolve the matter with you and you are a domestic or small business customer and you are making a complaint in that capacity in respect of services we have provided, you can refer it to the Ombudsman Services: Energy. This is a free and independent dispute-resolution service.

Ombudsman Services: Energy is able to offer free independent advice and will look at your complaint, but will expect you to let us try to sort it out first. You can telephone the Ombudsman Services: Energy on 0330 440 1624. You can find further information on the Ombudsman Service's website: www.ombudsman-services.org/energy

Disputes

If you are unable to resolve a dispute with us about whether you should receive a payment, you may refer the case to the Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (Ofgem), the independent regulator for the electricity industry, to request a formal decision.

In line with Section 39A (5) of the Electricity Act 1989 (as amended by the Utilities Act 2000), any guaranteed standard payments you receive will not prejudice your entitlement to any other remedy or action that may be open to you because of your distributor's failure to meet the relevant standard.

Performance Information

Performance against these guaranteed standards, including the levels of compensation paid out, is published from time to time by the National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux and Association of Citizens Advice Scotland.

Contacting Us

Connections Enquiries (Mon-Fri) (unless otherwise stated)	Customer Relations No. (Mon-Fri) (unless otherwise stated)	Website Address
0800 096 3080 (09:00 – 17:00)	0800 096 3080 09:00 – 17:00	<u>www.westernpower.co.uk</u>

Please note if you ring or email us outside normal working hours, we will treat your enquiry as having been received at the start of business on the next working day.

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