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**Methods of test and characterization  
of performance for energy recovery  
components**

*Méthode d'essai et caractérisation des performances des composants  
récupérateurs d'énergie*

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# Contents

	Page
<b>Foreword</b> .....	<b>v</b>
<b>1 Scope</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>2 Normative references</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>3 Terms and definitions</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>4 Symbols and abbreviated terms</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>5 Metrics</b> .....	<b>5</b>
5.1 General.....	5
5.2 Effectiveness.....	6
5.3 Pressure drop.....	6
5.3.1 Measured pressure drop.....	6
5.3.2 Standardized pressure drop.....	6
5.4 Recovery efficiency ratio.....	7
5.5 Outside air correction factor.....	8
5.6 Exhaust air transfer ratio.....	8
5.7 Sensible energy transfer rate for the supply airstream.....	8
5.8 Humidity transfer rate for the supply airstream.....	8
5.9 Total energy transfer rate for the supply airstream.....	8
<b>6 General test requirements</b> .....	<b>9</b>
6.1 Test apparatus.....	9
6.2 Installation.....	9
6.3 Static pressures.....	9
6.4 Instrument calibration.....	9
<b>7 Effectiveness tests</b> .....	<b>10</b>
7.1 Test requirements.....	10
7.2 Stability limits when testing effectiveness.....	10
7.3 Data collection period.....	11
7.4 Data sampling rates.....	11
7.5 Temperature and humidity conditions: inlets to exchanger.....	12
7.6 Test temperature limits.....	12
<b>8 Pressure drop tests</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>9 Leakage tests</b> .....	<b>13</b>
9.1 General test requirements.....	13
9.2 Outside air correction factor.....	13
9.3 Exhaust air transfer ratio.....	13
<b>10 Uncertainty limits</b> .....	<b>13</b>
10.1 General.....	13
10.2 Uncertainty limits for effectiveness tests.....	14
10.3 Uncertainty limits for RER.....	14
10.4 Uncertainty limits for measured pressure drop tests.....	14
10.5 Uncertainty limits for leakage tests.....	14
<b>11 Inequality limits</b> .....	<b>15</b>
11.1 General.....	15
11.2 Inequality limits for thermal tests.....	15
11.3 Inequality limits for leakage tests.....	15
<b>12 Reporting of test results</b> .....	<b>15</b>
12.1 Pressure drop test results.....	16
12.2 Leakage test results.....	16
12.3 Thermal test results.....	16
12.4 Uncertainties.....	16

<b>Annex A</b> (informative) <b>Example of test data collection and calculation of metrics</b> .....	<b>17</b>
<b>Annex B</b> (informative) <b>Best practices</b> .....	<b>21</b>
<b>Annex C</b> (informative) <b>Expression of performance metrics for use in calculation of system performance</b> .....	<b>32</b>
<b>Annex D</b> (informative) <b>Inequality limits for use when condensate flow rate can be measured</b> .....	<b>37</b>
<b>Annex E</b> (informative) <b>Expressions, used in other standards, related to effectiveness as defined in this document</b> .....	<b>38</b>
<b>Bibliography</b> .....	<b>44</b>

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## Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see [www.iso.org/directives](http://www.iso.org/directives)).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see [www.iso.org/patents](http://www.iso.org/patents)).

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), see [www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html](http://www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html).

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 86, *Refrigeration and air-conditioning*, Subcommittee SC 6, *Testing and rating of air-conditioners and heat pumps*.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at [www.iso.org/members.html](http://www.iso.org/members.html).

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# Methods of test and characterization of performance for energy recovery components

## 1 Scope

This document specifies methods for testing and characterizing the performance of air-to-air heat/energy exchangers when used as devices to transfer heat or heat and water vapor between two airstreams used in ventilation systems. It also specifies methods to characterize the performance of exchangers for use in calculation of the energy performance of buildings. This document is applicable to:

- fixed-plate exchangers (also known as recuperators),
- rotary exchangers, including heat wheels and total energy wheels (also known as regenerators),
- heat pipe exchangers using a heat transfer medium, excluding those using mechanical pumping.

This document does not provide a method for measuring the response of exchangers to the formation of frost.

## 2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 3966, *Measurement of fluid flow in closed conduits — Velocity area method using Pitot static tubes*

ISO 5167-1, *Measurement of fluid flow by means of pressure differential devices inserted in circular cross-section conduits running full — Part 1: General principles and requirements*

ISO 5801, *Fans — Performance testing using standardized airways*

ISO 13253, *Ducted air-conditioners and air-to-air heat pumps — Testing and rating for performance*

ISO/IEC 17025:2017, *General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories*

## 3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

- ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>
- IEC Electropedia: available at <http://www.electropedia.org/>

### 3.1

#### effectiveness

actual energy transfer rate (sensible, latent, or total) divided by the maximum possible energy transfer rate

Note 1 to entry: The formula for effectiveness is given in 5.2.

### 3.2 exhaust air transfer ratio

EATR

tracer gas concentration difference between the *leaving supply air* (3.12) and the *entering supply air* (3.11), divided by the tracer gas concentration difference between the *entering exhaust air* (3.13) and the *entering supply air* (3.11), which quantifies the air quantity transferred from the exhaust to the supply

Note 1 to entry: The formula for EATR is given in 5.6.

Note 2 to entry: It can be expressed as a percentage for rating purposes, but is used as a ratio in the calculation of RER (3.6).

### 3.3 fixed-plate exchanger

exchanger with multiple alternate airflow channels, separated by a heat or heat and water vapor transfer plate(s) and connected to supply and exhaust airstreams

### 3.4 heat pipe exchanger

exchanger with an array of finned and sealed tubes that are placed in side-by-side supply and exhaust airstreams, which may include an internal wick structure in each tube, and filled with a heat transfer medium

Note 1 to entry: Thermosiphon exchangers are a subset (or type) of heat pipe exchanger in which the heat transfer medium moves by gravitational forces only.

### 3.5 outside air correction factor

OACF

factor defined as the *entering supply air* (3.11) divided by the *leaving supply air* (3.12)

Note 1 to entry: The formula for OACF is given in 5.5.  
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### 3.6 recovery efficiency ratio

RER

ratio of the recovered energy rate divided by the sum of the calculated combined fan power and the auxiliary power

Note 1 to entry: The formula for RER is given in 5.4.

Note 2 to entry: RER can be characterized as gross, or as net in which case EATR (3.2) is accounted for.

### 3.7 rotary exchanger

exchanger with porous discs, fabricated from materials with heat or heat and water vapor retention capacity, that are regenerated by collocated supply and exhaust airstreams

### 3.8 standard air

dry air with a density of 1,204 3 kg/m<sup>3</sup> and a dynamic viscosity of 1,824 7 x 10<sup>-5</sup> kg/(m·s)

Note 1 to entry: These conditions approximate dry air at 20 °C and 101,325 kPa absolute.

### 3.9 station

location in the test apparatus at which conditions such a temperature, humidity, pressure or airflows are measured

Note 1 to entry: indicated in Figure 1 as 1, 2, 3 and 4.



### 3.10 static pressure differential

static pressure at supply outlet minus the static pressure at exhaust inlet

Note 1 to entry: A positive pressure differential occurs when the static pressure at *station* (3.9) 2 is higher than the static pressure at station 3. A negative pressure differential occurs when the static pressure at station 2 is lower than the static pressure at station 3.

### 3.11 entering supply air

supply air inlet  
outdoor airflow  
OA  
outside air entering the exchanger

Note 1 to entry: Indicated in [Figure 1](#) as 1.

### 3.12 leaving supply air

supply air outlet  
supply airflow  
SA  
outside air after passing through the exchanger

Note 1 to entry: Indicated in [Figure 1](#) as 2.

### 3.13 entering exhaust air

exhaust air inlet  
return airflow  
RA  
indoor air entering the exchanger

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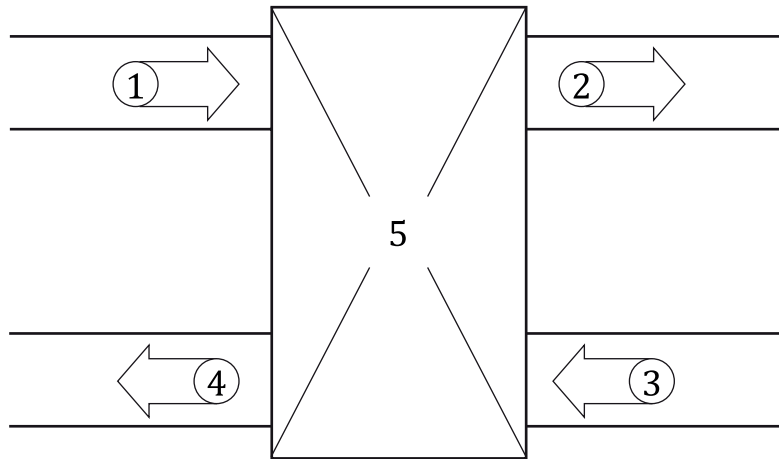
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Note 1 to entry: Indicated in [Figure 1](#) as 3.

### 3.14 leaving exhaust air

exhaust air outlet  
exhaust airflow  
EA  
indoor air after passing through the exchanger

Note 1 to entry: Indicated in [Figure 1](#) as 4.



**Key**

- 1 entering supply air
- 2 leaving supply air
- 3 entering exhaust air
- 4 leaving exhaust air
- 5 exchanger

**Figure 1 — Schematic diagram of airflows for heat and energy recovery exchangers**

**4 Symbols and abbreviated terms**

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Symbol	Term	Units
$C_i$	Tracer gas concentration at station $i$ ( $i = 1, 2, 3, 4$ )	$10^{-6}$
$C_p$	Specific heat of condensate at its measured temperature	kJ/kg
$C_{p,i}$	Specific heat of dry air at station $i$ ( $i = 1, 2, 3, 4$ )	J/(kg·K)
$\delta T_i$	Maximum deviation of any temperature reading of $T_i$ from $T_{AVE,i}$	K
$\delta W_i$	Maximum deviation of any humidity ratio reading of $W_i$ in from $W_{AVE,i}$	kg water / kg dry air
$\Delta P_e$	Pressure drop through the exchanger, exhaust air stream, measured	Pa
$\Delta P_{e,ref}$	Pressure drop through the exchanger, exhaust air stream, at reference conditions	Pa
$\Delta P_s$	Pressure drop through the exchanger, supply air stream, measured	Pa
$\Delta P_{s,ref}$	Pressure drop through the exchanger, supply air stream, at reference conditions	Pa
$\Delta p_{s,2,3}$	Static pressure differential	Pa
$\Delta T_{1-2}$	Temperature change in the supply airstream	°C or K
$\Delta W_{1-2}$	Humidity change in the supply airstream	kg water / kg dry air
$\epsilon$	Effectiveness	%
$\epsilon_{sensible}$	Sensible effectiveness	%
$\epsilon_{latent}$	Latent effectiveness	%
$\epsilon_{total}$	Total effectiveness	%
$F_{oac}$	Outside air correction factor (OACF)	1 <sup>a</sup>
$h_i$	Enthalpy of air at station $i$ ( $i = 1, 2, 3, 4$ )	kJ/kg dry air
$h_{fg}$	Heat of vaporization of water	J/kg

<sup>a</sup> Some quantities of dimension 1 are defined as ratios of two quantities of the same kind. The coherent derived unit is the number 1 (ISO 80000-1:2009, 3.8).

Symbol	Term	Units
$\dot{m}_{\text{condensate}}$	Measured condensate flow rate	kg/s
$\dot{m}_i$	Mass flow rate of dry air at station $i$ ( $i = 1, 2, 3, 4$ )	kg/s
$m_s/m_e$	Ratio of supply air outlet mass flow rate to exhaust air inlet mass flow rate	1 <sup>a</sup>
$\eta_{fs,fe}$	Combined efficiencies of the supply and exhaust air fan and drive	1 <sup>a</sup>
$p_{s_i}$	Static pressure at station $i$ ( $i = 1, 2, 3, 4$ )	Pa
$q_{\text{aux}}$	Auxiliary power input to the exchanger (e.g. to rotate a wheel)	kW
$Q_{\text{latent}}$	Humidity transfer rate	kg water/(kg dry air · s)
$Q_{\text{sensible}}$	Sensible energy transfer rate	W
$Q_{\text{total}}$	Total energy transfer rate	W
$Q_2$	Leaving supply volume flow rates	m <sup>3</sup> /s
$Q_3$	Entering exhaust volume flow rates	m <sup>3</sup> /s
$\rho_i$	Dry air density at station $i$ ( $i = 1, 2, 3, 4$ )	kg/m <sup>3</sup>
$R_{\text{eat}}$	Exhaust air transfer ratio (EATR)	1 <sup>a</sup>
$R_{\text{rer,gross}}$	Gross recovery efficiency ratio (gross RER)	W/W
$R_{\text{rer,net}}$	Net recovery efficiency ratio (net RER)	W/W
$\theta$	Purge angle	°
$T_{\text{AVE},i}$	Average value of temperature readings taken at station $i$ ( $i = 1, 2, 3, 4$ ) during a measurement period	°C
$T_{\text{condensate}}$	Measured temperature of the condensate	°C
$T_e$	Temperature efficiency	%
$T_i$	Dry-bulb temperature at station $i$ ( $i = 1, 2, 3, 4$ )	°C
$T_{\text{WB},i}$	Wet-bulb temperature at station $i$ ( $i = 1, 2, 3, 4$ )	°C
$U$	Expanded relative uncertainty	1 <sup>a</sup>
$W_{\text{AVE},i}$	Average value of humidity readings taken at station $i$ ( $i = 1, 2, 3, 4$ ) during a measurement period	kg water/kg dry air
$W_e$	Humidity efficiency	%
$W_i$	Humidity at station $i$ ( $i = 1, 2, 3, 4$ )	kg water/kg dry air
$\mu_i$	Dynamic viscosity at station $i$ ( $i = 1, 2, 3$ or $4$ )	kg/(m·s)
$\mu_s$	Dynamic viscosity of standard air = 1,824 7 × 10 <sup>-5</sup>	kg/(m·s)

<sup>a</sup> Some quantities of dimension 1 are defined as ratios of two quantities of the same kind. The coherent derived unit is the number 1 (ISO 80000-1:2009, 3.8).

## 5 Metrics

### 5.1 General

The performance of an air-to-air heat/energy exchanger is primarily characterized by its sensible, latent, and total effectiveness [see [Formulae \(1\), \(2\) and \(3\)](#)] its pressure drops [see [Formulae \(4\), \(5\), \(6\) and \(7\)](#)], its recovery efficiency ratio [see [Formulae \(8\) and \(9\)](#)], the outside air correction factor [see [Formula \(10\)](#)], and its exhaust air transfer ratio [see [Formula \(11\)](#)]. [Formulae \(1\) to \(3\)](#) reproduced with permission from ANSI/ASHRAE 84:2020. [Formulae \(4\) through \(11\)](#) are based on formulae in ANSI/ASHRAE 84:2020 with permission from ANSI/ASHRAE. Annex E provides guidance on equivalence between the metrics provided in this document and related metrics in use in certain other standards.

Derived metrics that are needed for use in calculating the performance of complete systems include sensible energy transfer rate (see [Formula \(12\)](#)), humidity transfer rate (see [Formula \(13\)](#)) and enthalpy transfer rate (see [Formula \(14\)](#)).

See [Clause 4](#) for the units of different quantities.

## 5.2 Effectiveness

The sensible, latent, and total effectiveness ( $\epsilon_{\text{sensible}}$ ,  $\epsilon_{\text{latent}}$  and  $\epsilon_{\text{total}}$ ) are defined by [Formulae \(1\)](#), [\(2\)](#) and [\(3\)](#):

$$\epsilon_{\text{sensible}} = \frac{\dot{m}_2 (C_{p,1} T_1 - C_{p,2} T_2)}{\dot{m}_{\text{min}} (C_{p,1} T_1 - C_{p,3} T_3)} \quad (1)$$

$$\epsilon_{\text{latent}} = \frac{\dot{m}_2 (h_{\text{fg},1} W_1 - h_{\text{fg},2} W_2)}{\dot{m}_{\text{min}} (h_{\text{fg},1} W_1 - h_{\text{fg},3} W_3)} \quad (2)$$

$$\epsilon_{\text{total}} = \frac{\dot{m}_2 (h_1 - h_2)}{\dot{m}_{\text{min}} (h_1 - h_3)} \quad (3)$$

where

$\dot{m}_i$  is the mass flow rate at station  $i$  ( $i = 1, 2$  or  $3$ )

$\dot{m}_{\text{min}}$  is the lesser of  $\dot{m}_2$  and  $\dot{m}_3$

$C_{p,i}$  is the specific heat of dry air at station  $i$  ( $i = 1, 2$  or  $3$ )

$h_{\text{fg},i}$  is the heat of vaporization of water at station  $i$  ( $i = 1, 2$  or  $3$ )

$T_i$  is the dry-bulb temperature at station  $i$  ( $i = 1, 2$  or  $3$ )

$W_i$  is the humidity ratio at station  $i$  ( $i = 1, 2$  or  $3$ )

$h_i$  is the enthalpy at station  $i$  ( $i = 1, 2$  or  $3$ )

## 5.3 Pressure drop

### 5.3.1 Measured pressure drop

The air friction pressure drops ( $\Delta P_s$  and  $\Delta P_e$ ) at specific conditions and air mass flow rate through the exchanger are defined by [Formulae \(4\)](#) and [\(5\)](#):

$$\Delta P_s = ps_1 - ps_2 \quad (4)$$

$$\Delta P_e = ps_3 - ps_4 \quad (5)$$

where  $ps_i$  is the static pressure at station  $i$  ( $i = 1, 2, 3$  or  $4$ ).

### 5.3.2 Standardized pressure drop

Air friction pressure drops at reference conditions ( $\Delta P_{s,\text{ref}}$  and  $\Delta P_{e,\text{ref}}$ ) can be determined by [Formulae \(6\)](#) and [\(7\)](#):

$$\Delta P_{s,\text{ref}} = \left| ps_1 \left( \frac{\rho_1}{\rho_s} \right) \left( \frac{\mu_s}{\mu_1} \right) - ps_2 \left( \frac{\rho_2}{\rho_s} \right) \left( \frac{\mu_s}{\mu_2} \right) \right| \quad (6)$$

$$\Delta P_{e,\text{ref}} = \left| p s_3 \left( \frac{\rho_3}{\rho_s} \right) \left( \frac{\mu_s}{\mu_3} \right) - p s_4 \left( \frac{\rho_4}{\rho_s} \right) \left( \frac{\mu_s}{\mu_4} \right) \right| \quad (7)$$

where

- $\rho_i$  is the density at station  $i$  ( $i = 1, 2, 3$  or  $4$ )  $\text{kg/m}^3$
- $\rho_s$  is the standard density of air =  $1,2043 \text{ kg/m}^3$
- $\mu_i$  is the dynamic viscosity at station  $i$  ( $i = 1, 2, 3$  or  $4$ )  $\text{kg/(m}\cdot\text{s)}$
- $\mu_s$  is the dynamic viscosity of standard air =  $1,8247 \times 10^{-5} \text{ kg/(m}\cdot\text{s)}$

#### 5.4 Recovery efficiency ratio

- a) The gross recovery efficiency ratio ( $R_{\text{rer,gross}}$ ) of a heat/energy exchanger is defined by [Formula \(8\)](#):

$$R_{\text{rer,gross}} = \frac{\dot{m}_2 |h_1 - h_2|}{\frac{\Delta P_s Q_2}{1000 \cdot \eta_{\text{fan,s}}} + \frac{\Delta P_e Q_3}{1000 \cdot \eta_{\text{fan,e}}} + q_{\text{aux}}} \quad (8)$$

- b) The net recovery efficiency ratio ( $R_{\text{rer,net}}$ ) of a heat/energy exchanger is defined by [Formula \(9\)](#):

$$R_{\text{rer,net}} = \frac{\dot{m}_2 \left| h_1 - \frac{h_2 - (R_{\text{eat}}) h_3}{(1 - R_{\text{eat}})} \right|}{\frac{\Delta P_s Q_2}{1000 \cdot \eta_{\text{fan,s}}} + \frac{\Delta P_e Q_3}{1000 \cdot \eta_{\text{fan,e}}} + q_{\text{aux}}} \quad (9)$$

where

- $\Delta P_s$  and  $\Delta P_e$  are the measured pressure drops across the supply and exhaust sides of the exchanger, respectively
- $Q_2$  and  $Q_3$  are the leaving supply and entering exhaust volume flow rates
- $\eta_{\text{fs}}$  and  $\eta_{\text{fe}}$  is the supply and exhaust air fan and drive combined efficiencies
- $q_{\text{aux}}$  is the total auxiliary power input to the exchanger (e.g. to rotate a regenerative wheel, a pump, and to operate controls)
- $R_{\text{eat}}$  is the exhaust air transfer ratio (EATR) expressed as a ratio

In laboratory testing of heat/energy exchangers it is not usually possible to measure the power required to move air through the exchanger directly, as the blowers in the test system also are required to overcome friction pressure of the conditioning equipment, flow measurement equipment, etc. Therefore, the power required to move air through the exchanger shall be calculated, based on a reference fan and drive total efficiency which is selected for the purposes of comparison of one exchanger to another. For example, a performance rating agency could elect to use a reference fan and drive total efficiency of 0,50 in the calculation of RER for all the exchangers for which it provides ratings.

### 5.5 Outside air correction factor

The outside air correction factor ( $F_{\text{oac}}$ ) of a heat/energy exchanger at a specific operating condition is defined by [Formula \(10\)](#):

$$F_{\text{oac}} = \frac{\dot{m}_1}{\dot{m}_2} \quad (10)$$

where  $\dot{m}_{1,2}$  are the mass flow rates at stations 1 and 2

### 5.6 Exhaust air transfer ratio

The exhaust air transfer ratio ( $R_{\text{eat}}$ ) of a heat/energy exchanger at a specific operating condition is defined by [Formula \(11\)](#):

$$R_{\text{eat}} = \frac{C_2 - C_1}{C_3 - C_1} \quad (11)$$

where  $C_i$  are the concentration of tracer gas at stations  $i$  ( $i = 1, 2, 3$  or  $4$ ) during the test described in [9.3](#).

NOTE To express exhaust air transfer ratio as a percentage, multiply by 100.

### 5.7 Sensible energy transfer rate for the supply airstream

Sensible energy transfer rate ( $Q_{\text{sensible}}$ ) into or out of the supply airstream for an exchanger at a specific operating condition is defined by [Formula \(12\)](#):

$$Q_{\text{sensible}} = \dot{m}_2 \cdot (T_1 c_{p,1} - T_2 c_{p,2}) \quad (12)$$

where

$T_{1,2}$  are the temperatures at stations 1 and 2

$c_{p1,2}$  are the specific heats of dry air at stations 1 and 2

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### 5.8 Humidity transfer rate for the supply airstream

Humidity transfer rate ( $Q_{\text{latent}}$ ) into or out of the supply airstream for an exchanger at a specific operating condition is defined by [Formula \(13\)](#):

$$Q_{\text{latent}} = \dot{m}_2 \cdot \Delta W_{1-2} \quad (13)$$

where  $\Delta W_{1-2}$  is the humidity change for the supply airstream.

### 5.9 Total energy transfer rate for the supply airstream

Total energy transfer rate ( $Q_{\text{total}}$ ) into or out of the supply airstream for an exchanger at a specific operating condition is defined by [Formula \(14\)](#):

$$Q_{\text{total}} = \dot{m}_2 \cdot \Delta h_{1-2} \quad (14)$$

where  $\Delta h_{1-2}$  is the enthalpy change for the supply airstream.

## 6 General test requirements

### 6.1 Test apparatus

The test apparatus shall consist of four measurement stations. Measurements shall be taken at each station of temperature, humidity, dry air mass flow rate, tracer gas concentration, and static pressure.

### 6.2 Installation

The equipment to be tested shall be installed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. See [Figures 2](#) and [3](#).

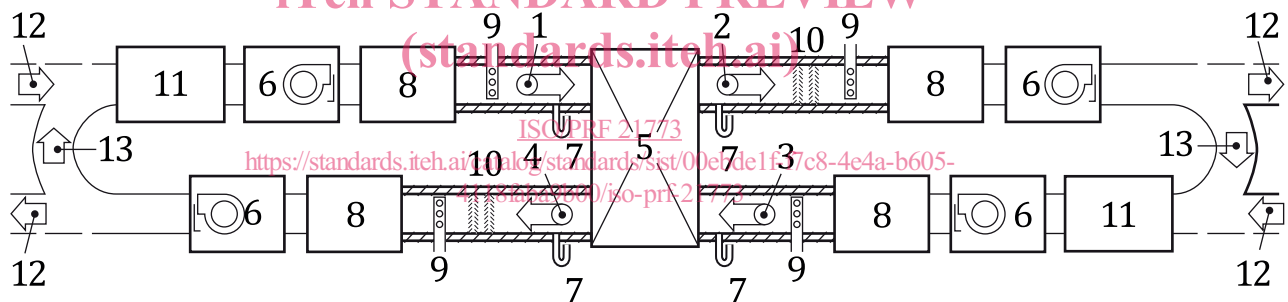
NOTE See [Annex B](#) for best practices of connecting an exchanger to test system.

### 6.3 Static pressures

Static pressures shall be measured according to ISO 3966, ISO 5167-1, ISO 5801 or ISO 13253.

### 6.4 Instrument calibration

All measurement instruments shall be calibrated using sensors, transfer standards, and primary instruments that are traceable. Calibration shall be consistent with ISO/IEC 17025:2017, 6.4 and 7.4, in order to minimize the bias of the instrument. The calibration curves associated with each instrument shall be available as a permanent record.



#### Key

- |                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1 entering supply air                 | 8 airflow measuring apparatus                                |
| 2 leaving supply air                  | 9 temperature, humidity and tracer gas measuring instruments |
| 3 entering exhaust air                | 10 air mixer   |
| 4 leaving exhaust air                 | 11 air conditioning apparatus                                |
| 5 exchanger                           | 12 relief inlet/outlet                                       |
| 6 static pressure control apparatus   | 13 optional recycling duct                                   |
| 7 static pressure measuring apparatus |  |

NOTE Refer to ISO 13253:2017, Annex C.

**Figure 2 — Basic schematic for ducted measurement setup**