



COMPETENT PERSON SCHEME

SCHEME HANDBOOK

This Handbook sets out the requirements and how applications to join the Competent Person Scheme (England & Wales) are made.

The guide includes details on the standards that are to be achieved and gives details of the inspection checklists that will be used to evaluate each applicant and registrant.

Please note that the detailed rules governing the operation of the scheme are set out in our Terms of Registration document. In the event of conflict with the Competent Person Scheme: Scheme Handbook, the Terms of Registration take precedence.

BESCA is committed to ensuring that your privacy is protected. To find out more about how we process your data and your rights, please see our online privacy policy.

ABOUT BESCA

BESCA is a trading name for Building Engineering Services Competence Assessment Ltd, a wholly owned subsidiary of the BESA (Building Engineering Services Association).

BESCA is the leading independent certification body delivering assessments nationally to businesses and individuals wishing to self-certify and notify work under the Building Regulations and meeting the standards of the Energy Act 2016. BESCA maintains and publishes registers of businesses that it has assessed against particular scheme requirements.

The Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has authorised BESCA to operate a Competent Person Scheme for England & Wales. Competent Person Schemes have been introduced by Government to allow businesses to self-certify that their work complies with the Building Regulations as an alternative to submitting a building notice or using an approved inspector.

The principles of self-certification are based on giving people who are competent in their field the ability to self-certify that their work complies with the Building Regulations without the need to submit a building notice and incur local authority inspection fees. These may be in domestic dwellings or building other than dwellings (non-dwellings).

COMPETENT PERSON SCHEME

The latest Building Regulations relevant to the building services sector introduce new energy efficiency requirements that are designed to reduce heat loss and heat gain in new and existing dwellings and non dwellings, including energy wastage from heating and hot water systems and from ventilation, air-conditioning, electrical and similar systems.

Obviously, the definition of building work is very broad but for the purposes of this scheme, any work that involves the provision or extension of an electrical, heating, hot water, mechanical ventilation and/or cooling system in a domestic dwelling or in a non-dwelling, is within scope of this scheme. This applies whether the work is in a new or an existing dwelling or non-dwelling

Additionally, any work that may cause a change to the energy status of a dwelling or non-dwelling is within scope of this scheme. This may, for example, be changing a boiler or the type of fuel serving it; fitting a large fan on a ventilation scheme that has different performance to that it is replacing; or installing a larger pump, etc.

Unless a business that is carrying out the range of work described above is registered with an approved Competent Person Scheme, it must lodge a building notice with the Local Authority Building Control (LABC) for each job that it undertakes. It must also pay a fee of several hundred pounds for each notice and then obtain approval for the work, before starting it.



However, a business that is registered with an approved Competent Person Scheme, such as that run by BESCA, will not have to provide any advanced notification or pay a fee to LABC. Instead when the work is completed, it gives the dwelling or building owner a certificate that confirms that the installation complies with the Building Regulations. Additionally, it notifies BESCA that the work has been done, and in turn BESCA notifies the LABC to that effect.

Note: The installer retains responsibility for the entire installation and if they are unable to notify any of the works they will need to make application to LABC.

SCOPE OF THE SCHEME

Carrying out work to recognised industry standards is a basic condition of registration with BESCA's Competent Person Scheme. This is verified by a risk based office review and site inspection of completed works. The audit covers both commercial and business capability as well as technical competence.

BESCA IS AUTHORISED TO OPERATE AS A CERTIFICATION BODY FOR COMPETENT PERSONS, THE SCOPE OF THE APPROVED MEASURES INCLUDE:

ELECTRICAL

- ✓ Electrical Circuit alteration or addition in a special location
- ✓ Install one or more new circuits
- ✓ Install a replacement consumer unit
- ✓ Rewire of all circuits
- ✓ Partial rewire
- ✓ New full electrical installation (new build)

OIL

- ✓ Install an oil storage tank
- ✓ Install oil supply pipework
- ✓ Installation of an oil fired boiler
- ✓ Installation of an oil fired room heater, stove or cooker

SOLID FUEL (NOT INCLUDING BIOMASS)

- ✓ Install a solid fuel dry fuel room heater, stove or cooker
- ✓ Install a solid fuel wet boiler, room heater, stove or cooker
- ✓ Install a solid fuel stove with warm air distribution system
- ✓ Install a solid fuel dry open fire

PLUMBING

- ✓ Install/replace sanitary ware
- ✓ Install wholesome cold water supply
- ✓ Install a supply of non-wholesome water to a sanitary convenience
- ✓ Install water efficient taps (non replacement only)
- ✓ Install a water efficient shower (non replacement only)

HEATING & HOT WATER

- ✓ Install a hot water system without storage
- ✓ Install an unvented hot water storage vessel
- ✓ Install a vented hot water storage vessel
- ✓ Install a heating system
- ✓ Install an extension to an existing heating system
- ✓ Install a flue gas heat recovery device

VENTILATION AND AIR CONDITIONING

- ✓ Install an air conditioning system in a dwelling
- ✓ Install an air conditioning system in a non-dwelling
- ✓ Install a mechanical ventilation system in a dwelling
- ✓ Install a mechanical ventilation system in a non-dwelling

RENEWABLES**HEATPUMPS**

- ✓ Install an air source heat pump
- ✓ Install a ground source heat pump
- ✓ Install a water source heat pump

SOLAR PV

- ✓ Install a photovoltaic System

SOLAR THERMAL HOT WATER

- ✓ Install a solar thermal system
- ✓ Install a transpired solar collector

MICRO AND SMALL WIND TURBINES

- ✓ Install a wind turbine system
- ✓ Install a small scale hydro-turbine

BIOMASS

- ✓ Install a biomass dry fuel room heater, stove or cooker
- ✓ Install a biomass wet boiler, room heater, stove or cooker
- ✓ Install a biomass stove with warm air distribution system
- ✓ Install a biomass open fire
- ✓ Install a micro CHP appliance

CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants for registration must prove that their activities are carried out in accordance with the scheme requirements issued or adopted by BESCA. To be eligible for registration with BESCA, a business must:

- ✓ satisfy BESCA's audit requirements before being accepted into the scheme, to make sure that it produces work that meets the standards set in the Building Regulations, and that the business complies with requirements of BESCA's scheme
- ✓ provide BESCA with all the required information relevant to the work type your business is registering to notify
- ✓ have access to the technical standards and Building Regulations that are appropriate to the work carried out by the business
- ✓ have one or more persons that are approved by BESCA as Accredited Certifiers, who are able to confirm that the work that has been carried out complies with the Building Regulations
- ✓ have at least two million pounds' public liability insurance
- ✓ submit an application for registration for each business address carrying out building regulations work
- ✓ employ or use competent persons that can carry out work so that it complies with the Building Regulations
- ✓ report to BESCA, within 30 days, all work that is within scope of the Building Regulations, which has been certified as being compliant
- ✓ provide domestic consumers with an insurance-backed warranty that can come into effect if the work is subsequently found to be non-compliant with Building Regulations
- ✓ allow BESCA access to the business for subsequent routine auditing
- ✓ uphold the scheme's legally enforceable Terms of Registration

To satisfy the requirements of the scheme, BESCA's Competent Person Certification audit process comprises of two parts:

OFFICE BASED AUDIT OF MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

This initial audit will establish whether your business is operating to the required processes which support the commercial and business capabilities set by BESCA. This part of the audit will take place at your office.

ON-SITE AUDIT OF INSTALLED ENERGY EFFICIENCY MEASURE(S)

The purpose of the site inspection is to demonstrate that the work done by the business meets the statutory requirements, including the Building Regulations, technical standards and other published guidance that relates to the work they do.

INSPECTION PROCESS SURVEILLANCE

OFFICE VISIT

The auditor will normally visit the business's office premises first, where he or she will determine whether its commercial and business capabilities meet the required standards set by BESCA. In particular, the auditor will look for evidence that appropriate policies and arrangements are in place, being used, and that the workforce understands them. The auditor will, for example, look for:

- ✓ Satisfactory financial accounting procedures and insurance cover
- ✓ Suitable arrangements for managing the activities of the business
- ✓ Details of the persons nominated as Accredited Certifiers
- ✓ Clearly documented policies and procedures for health and safety, the environment, customer handling and for dealing with complaints
- ✓ Suitable employment practices and an adequate training and recruitment policy, including appropriate employee records
- ✓ Independent proof of the skills, qualifications, competence and health and safety awareness of all employees and of all sub-contractors

SITE VISIT

The auditor will contact the applicant or registrant to discuss the site audit and agree a mutually acceptable date for this to take place. The auditor will select a site, or sites, to visit on work completed within the last 6-months, to determine that it complies with the technical criteria. The applicant or registrant must then make arrangements with the client for access to the work to be made available on the agreed date(s). Personnel should have the appropriate level of personal protection (PPE) for the site and risk assessments carried out to ensure safety of all personnel.

During the site inspection, the auditor will use BESCA's assessment schedules, which set out the technical standards that are required and allow the quality of the installation to be measured. The audit is undertaken in the presence of a representative of the applicant or registrant.

Where the work is found to be non-compliant, the applicant or registrant will be advised of the details at the time, and will be given a period of time to carry out and confirm rectification.

DURATION

The duration of the audit and the number of site visits required will depend upon the size, scope and complexity of the business. In most cases, BESCA organises the procedure so that the office and site inspections can take place consecutively. The time required for an audit will generally be one day for the majority of cases.

DETAILED SCHEME REQUIREMENTS

TECHNICAL STANDARDS

The business must demonstrate that their work meets the statutory requirements, technical standards and other published guidance, which relates to the work they do. It must also show that it has arrangements that ensure their employees and sub-contractors have the necessary knowledge of, and access to all such information.

Once the office-based, financial and business parts of the audit have been completed, the auditor will select and visit a site, or sites, to look at examples of the business’s work. This part of the audit will focus on work that has been completed within the last 6-months.

Appropriate sites should therefore be identified ahead of the date set for the audit, and access to the sites arranged as required. It is important that a knowledgeable person from the business goes with the auditor around the site(s). Both people should have the appropriate level of personal protection (PPE) for the site.

COMMERCIAL AND BUSINESS STANDARDS

During the assessment, the auditor will determine the business’s commitment to and support of good business and working practices. The commercial standards, which are summarised below, are used to establish that the business has a sound commercial footing. The auditor will seek evidence that the business meets these requirements.

FINANCIAL STANDING	<p>Demonstration of financial accounting procedures</p> <p>Have a fixed business address</p> <p>Be able to produce audited accounts for the past two financial years, or evidence of systematic bookkeeping and appropriate status with HM Revenue & Customs;</p> <p>Be able to provide a declaration that they do not have any unsatisfied County or High Court judgments against them.</p>
INSURANCES	<p>Applicants and registrants must have at least £2m of Public Liability Insurance cover and have an appropriate level of Employers’ Liability Insurance. Evidence that an appropriate Professional Indemnity Insurance policy is in place may also be required for businesses that undertake design work.</p>
MANAGEMENT	<p>The business must have an effective structure for planning and carrying out work and other activities. The structure must ensure that the work is done efficiently, effectively and without risk to safety, health or the environment</p> <p>Where appropriate, management sets out the responsibility and authority of individuals for setting the quality of the workforce and the standard of work, so that the work carried out always complies with the Building Regulations;</p> <p>The activities of the business’ Accredited Certifiers are managed so that all work that is within scope of the Building Regulations is properly self-certified and notified to BESCA.</p>
CUSTOMER RELATIONS	<p>The business must demonstrate that it has a system in place to provide customers with clear information about the service on offer. This must include details of the agreed price for the work to be undertaken and a timetable, from start to completion. Their work should also be conducted under written terms of contract.</p>

MANAGING COMPLAINTS	The business must be able to demonstrate that it has in place, and are operating, a written customer complaints procedure that complies with good practice. This should identify to whom complaints should be made, what the customer should do if they are not satisfied, and the timescales according to which any complaint will be processed.
WARRANTY PROVISION	Any business carrying out work in dwellings must provide an insurance backed warranty. The warranty must as a minimum, include financial protection to put right any work that is found to be non-compliant with Building Regulations. Where the work is carried out by a member of the Building Engineering Services Association (BESA), a suitable warranty is provided automatically under the terms of the BESA Double Guarantee System (Trustmark). For non-BESA members, BESCA has in place an arrangement with its insurance partner, Guarantee Protection Insurance Ltd.
MANAGING HEALTH AND SAFETY	The business must have a written health and safety policy, and control risks with workplace precautions that are suitable for the size and complexity of the business. Employees and subcontractors must be able to show that they fully understand and follow these arrangements.
ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT	The business must have a written environmental policy and demonstrate that it operates controls that are appropriate for the range of work carried out. Controls should cover the disposal of waste, control of pollution and re-cycling. The business must also demonstrate that employees and sub-contractors understand the policy and that it is applied in the work they do.
EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS	The business must be able to demonstrate that they have a written equal opportunities policy, which is appropriate to the size and complexity of the business. The business must also have in place contractual arrangements with the workforce, which comply with legal requirements
INVESTING IN THE WORKFORCE	<p>The business must maintain records of the skills and qualifications of their workforce, which confirms that all personnel, including management, are appropriately qualified for their role in the business.</p> <p>There must one or more persons within the business that are approved by BESCA as accredited certifiers. They must meet the criteria of the minimum technical competencies for their work activities. The business must demonstrate that they maintain training records, and that they carry out a review of the training needs of the business at least annually.</p>
RELATIONSHIPS WITH SUBCONTRACTORS	The business must have procedures that cover their relationships with subcontractors for whose work they are accountable. In particular, this applies where subcontracted work is carried out to the standards set in the Building Regulations and/or in BESCA's technical standards.

TECHNICAL STANDARDS

The standards required by BESCA are set out in a series of assessment schedules and can be found on the BESCA website. Work activity/ area includes:

✓ **COMMERCIAL STANDARDS** ✓ **BUSINESS STANDARDS**

WORK ACTIVITY/ AREA

- ✓ Commercial Standards
- ✓ Business standards
- ✓ General Requirements
- ✓ Design Work
- ✓ Setting-to-work, Commissioning and Hand-over
- ✓ Penetrations to the structure (Building work)
- ✓ Pipework Systems
- ✓ Heating & Hot Water Appliances, Plant & Equipment
- ✓ Ductwork Systems
- ✓ Ventilation, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration
- ✓ Plant & Equipment
- ✓ Domestic ventilations systems
- ✓ Low & zero carbon systems
- ✓ Sanitaryware & waste drainage systems
- ✓ Reclaimed water systems
- ✓ Electrical installations
- ✓ Control systems

CERTIFICATION PROCESS

The process of applying to become a Competent Person, from received application to final certification, will usually take between six to eight weeks. This process is outlined below:



APPLICATION

Apply to BESCA online or download an application form at www.besca.org.uk, or contact BESCA on **01768 860457** for an application pack.

APPLICATION REVIEW

BESCA will undertake a document review of your application and information provided to check that the business meets the scheme requirements to move onto audit. BESCA's audit team, will contact you to schedule an audit date for your office and site assessment. The number of days required for audit will be dependent on the size, scope and complexity of the business.

Note: If your business is a member of BESA and has already undertaken a BESA Competence Assessment Scheme audit within the last 12 months, entry onto the Competence Person Scheme can be made on a 'deemed to satisfy' basis. Please contact the BESCA team on **01768 860457** for more information.

AUDIT

The office and site inspections can take place consecutively. Some time spent by the business preparing for the visit will help to simplify the process and save time. When preparing for the assessment, consider the following:

- ✓ Review the audit checklist to help you prepare for the audit
- ✓ Make sure that the people involved know the date, time and where the audit will take place, and what it actually involves;
- ✓ Make sure that the auditor has been told who his or her main contact is in the business, and those that he or she will be meeting know the auditor's name;
- ✓ Set aside some office space where the auditor can work and use as a base while carrying out the audit;
- ✓ Gather together, as much as possible, the documentation that may be needed for the assessment, including details of other qualification schemes that you feel may be recognised on a 'deemed to satisfy' basis;
- ✓ Identify a number of sites that are appropriate to visit for the site inspection and, where required, obtain permission from the client for the auditor's visit;
- ✓ Pass details of these sites to BESCA before their visit and inform the auditor of any site specific health and safety requirements;

Audits that are cancelled following confirmation of date and time will incur a cancellation charge.

AUDIT REVIEW AND CERTIFICATION DECISION

After the two stage audit is complete you will receive feedback from BESCA in the form of an Audit Summary Report. The auditor carrying out your audit will not be able to tell you on the day whether your audit has been successful. The Audit Summary Report provided to you by BESCA will state the outcome of the audit and make recommendations. For example:

CERTIFICATION RECOMMENDED

Your Company will be recommended for Competent Person Scheme Certification.

CERTIFICATION NOT RECOMMENDED

Your Company does not fully comply with standards.

If the auditor's assessment shows that your company is likely to meet standards after addressing any identified issues, a recommendation will be made to further assess your Company within a given timescale. A re-assessment may be conducted through the submission of requested evidence or an additional on-site audit.

The audit summary report will be reviewed by an Audit Manager to ensure nothing has been missed and then it is passed to the BESCA decision maker who considers whether the application has been processed in accordance with the Scheme's requirements. The Decision maker then passes recommendation to the BESCA Scheme Manager who will make the final decision to accept the applicant into the scheme.

Applicants that are unsuccessful will be notified and be given the reason(s) why the business has not met the criteria. They will also be given details of how they can appeal against the decision, should they wish to do so.

CERTIFICATION GRANTED

On a successful recommendation for certification to become a Competent Person, BESCA will register your details to a public database of registered Competent Persons, which is used by specifiers and the public to select competent contractors.

You will also be provided with the Competent Person Quality Mark, which you will be able to display, subject to the conditions detailed in the Competent Person scheme rules, to demonstrate your businesses status as a Competent Person.

AFTER CERTIFICATION

Once the registration process and assessment requirements have been satisfactorily completed, an accredited BESCA Competent Person will be issued with a certificate of membership and can be promoted as a BESCA Competent Person.

ONGOING SURVEILLANCE OF REGISTRANTS

To ensure that your business continues to meet the scheme requirements, a risk-rating is applied to existing members by BESCA, reviewing technical audit outcome, which determines the frequency and extent of surveillance to be carried out. Following the issue of PAS 2030:2017 further annual surveillance of notifications submitted to BESCA will be carried out which will include an inspection of works.

NEW APPLICANT, OR REGISTRANT

An initial membership audit is carried out to determine suitability and compliance with scheme requirements. After 12 months of membership, a second audit will be undertaken to ascertain risk grading and ongoing compliance with the scheme addressing any issues and/or questions you may have.

MEMBERS

BESCA Competent Person Scheme members will undergo a risk assessment by the BESCA technical team to determine audit frequency using the most current technical audit as reference. A risk grading will be applied forwarding notification to the member. Elements that will effect Audit Risk Grading.

A 'CLEAN TRACK RECORD'

A 'clean track record' is a low risk rating covering two audit visits and can be achieved by implementing good compliance of scheme requirements and governing legislation, demonstrating this throughout processes, procedures taking understanding from non-conformities creating best working practice in the business environment.

A risk rating is reviewed at every audit and is identified from the number of Assessment Non Conformities please see below table for further information.

RISK GRADING

✓ Audit outcome	Number of Non-Conformities and scale from audit (see diagram below)
✓ Close out period	All non-conformities should be closed within 8 weeks. Non conformities not closed within the 8-week period would constitute in a high risk audit programme to ensure ongoing compliance with both Scheme and Legislative requirements.
✓ Complaints	Any involvement in a complaint with the scheme and or business client will be taken into consideration.
✓ Notifications	Notifications must be seen in the BESCA portal of works completed. Lack of notifications must be mitigated by evidence assessed by the auditor.

RISK ELEMENTS	LOW RISK 3-YEARLY AUDIT CYCLE	MEDIUM RISK 2-YEARLY AUDIT CYCLE	HIGH RISK ANNUAL AUDIT
ASSESSMENT NON CONFORMITIES			
MAJORS	0	1 or 2	3 +
MINORS	up to 3	4 or 5	6 +

	FULL COMPLIANCE	PARTIAL COMPLIANCE	POOR COMPLIANCE
GRADE MAIN REASONS FOR GRADING	<p>The result of the on-site technical assessment, and the business's track record, indicates that it meets all of the scheme criteria.</p> <p>The business has provided suitable and sufficient key pieces of information (see below) to satisfy the 'desk-top' assessment.</p>	<p>The result of the on-site technical assessment, and the business's track record, indicates that it meets practically all of the scheme criteria.</p> <p>The business has provided the key pieces of information (see below) for the annual 'desk-top' assessment, but not all of these are suitable and sufficient, or one is missing/ out-of-date.</p>	<p>The result of the on-site technical assessment, and the business's track record, indicates that it does not meet all of the scheme criteria.</p> <p>The business has failed to provide, or to upgrade and re-submit, two or more of the required key pieces of information (see below) to satisfy the annual 'desk-top' assessment, when requested to do so.</p>
SURVEILLANCE REGIME	A complete on-site technical reassessment every three years.	Normally, a complete on-site technical reassessment every two years.	Annual on-site technical assessment of the weak areas until improvement is shown, with the additional fee charged to the business.
RISK ASSESSMENT	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH

COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

Complaints received by BESCA regarding a Registrant will be documented and investigated thoroughly by BESCA and all decisions regarding the outcome of complaints will be reviewed and approved by the BESCA Schemes Board. All decisions regarding the outcome of any complaints will be advised to the Registrant in writing. Should you not be satisfied with the outcome of the complaint resolution, you have the right to appeal against the complaint. The rules regarding complaints and appeals are outlined in the Terms of Registration which all Registrants must abide by.

CONTINUED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF ACCREDITED CERTIFIERS

Accredited Certifiers are a scheme requirement to demonstrate understanding of scheme competence and legislative knowledge.

Accredited Certifiers are subject to annual re-accreditation upon scheme renewal by providing evidence of suitability and maintaining a CPD log providing evidence of certification in learning in the relevant worktype throughout the year. For more information, please refer to BESCA CPD Policy.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

The scheme's annual membership fee is due on expiry of the current Certification of Registration. Details of annual fees are published on BESCA's website. The fee must be paid in order for the business to maintain its details on the Competent Person database for a further twelve months and to access the self-certification/notification area on the BESCA website.

FURTHER INFORMATION

CONTACT BESCA

Old Mansion House, Eamont Bridge, Penrith, Cumbria CA10 2BX

Website: www.besca.org.uk

Email: info@besca.org.uk

Telephone: **01768 860457**

USEFUL WEBSITES

Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) www.communities.gov.uk

The Building Engineering Services Association (BESA) www.thebesa.com

Building Engineering Services Publications www.thebesa.com/knowledge/shop

Engineering Services SKILLcard www.skillcard.org.uk

STANDARDS AND OTHER DOCUMENTS

Building Regulations Approved Documents

PAS2030:2017

Common Minimum Technical Competences

BESCA Technical Standards

BESCA Audit Checklists

BESCA Competent Person Terms of Registration

BESCA Competent Person Code of Conduct

BESCA Competent Person Application Form and Schedule of Fees

BESCA Competent Person CPD Policy and Log Book

BESCA Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures

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