MANAGING COMPETENCE FOR VENTILATION HYGIENE ACTIVITIES- INSPECTION & AUDIT

Industry Competence Steering Group (ICSG)
Sector Led Group 10 – Installation & Maintenance (10.2 Engineering Services)
Ventilation Hygiene Competence Group (VHCG)

ICSG the Industry Competence Steering Group

EBSSA ENGINEERING & BUILDING SERVICES SKILLS ALLIANCE

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The Engineering & Building Services Skills Alliance (EBSSA) brings together leading organisations from across the engineering, building services and environmental technologies sectors to collaborate on shared workforce training and skills priorities. A coalition of Actuate UK members together with BEAMA, CIPHE, TICA-ACAD and MCS, EBSSA provides a credible voice for skills across all engineering and building services.

EBSSA would like to thank the following organisations for their participation in the development of this document:

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- Building Engineering Services Association (BESA)
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- Engineering & Building Services Skills Authority (EBSSA)
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the wake of the Grenfell Tower fire, a comprehensive review of building regulations and legislation was carried out to deliver the recommendations made in Dame Judith Hackitt's report 'Building a Safety Future'. This triggered change in both primary and secondary legislation which further embedded the requirement for demonstration of individual competence and organisational capability for those carrying out work in the built environment.

The Industry Competence Steering Group, a formal sub-committee of the Building Safety Regulator's statutory Industry Competence committee, is tasked with supporting employers to define and address approaches to demonstrating competence within their areas. Within this structure, the Ventilation Hygiene Competence Group (VHCG) was formed to lead the development and implementation of individual competence frameworks related to ventilation hygiene (air and grease hygiene).

The first phase of VHCG's work, in relation to competence requirements for ventilation hygiene operatives and technicians, was published by the Engineering and Building Services Skills Alliance (EBSSA) in Spring 2026. This document provides an extension to that work, setting out requirements for those carrying out inspection and audit activities. Following a period of consultation, finalised documentation will be approved through the Building Services Engineering Skills Partnership Committee signalling formal adoption by industry. Subsequent implementation activities will then be led by the relevant skills body.

Through this work, VHCG has explored existing mechanisms for and challenges with demonstrating competence. These include highlighting gaps in existing standards and training programmes in this area.

A functional map and framework of competencies has been set out to create a benchmark for competence. This breaks down discrete upskilling activities and sets standards for these in terms of skills, knowledge, experience & behaviour, in line with the requirements of BS 8670-1. That statements are also mapped back to other relevant standards and frameworks, such the BSE Skills NOS.

Proposed routes to competence, including evidence requirements for both initial demonstration and validation, and demonstration of currency of competence and revalidation have been set out. This includes routes for those upskilling from ventilation hygiene technician roles, those in aligned sales roles adding additional areas of competence, and experienced workers which need to demonstrate their competence. These routes are based around completion of relevant, robust training and assessment, and ongoing evidencing of experience and behaviour in line with the framework of competencies.

It is acknowledged that additional activity will be required in order to move towards this future state. An outline implementation plan setting further actions required has been included. Proposed actions will be integrated into the phase 1 implementation plan to create a coordinated approach across ventilation hygiene.

CONTENTS

1 Introduction 6

1 Scope 9

1.1 Occupational area 9
1.2 Purpose 9
1.3 Occupational relevance 9
1.4 Limitations and exclusions 10
1.5 Building types 10
1.6 Geographical scope 10

2 Background & context 11

2.1 Links to phase 1 work 11
2.2 Existing occupational standards 11
2.3 Qualifications and assessment programmes 12
2.4 Training provision 13
2.5 Initial validation, ongoing validation and currency of competence 13
2.6 Site access 14
2.7 Devolved nations consistency 14

3 Functional map and framework of competencies 15

3.1 Development background 15
3.2 The functional map and framework of competencies 15
3.3 Mapping to other standards and frameworks 15

4 The standard for competence 16

4.1 Target audiences 16
4.2 Preparing to evidence competence 16
4.3 Collecting evidence of competence 16
4.4 Validating competence 17
4.5 Revalidation of competence 17
4.6 Proposed routes to competence 17
4.7 Relationship to organisational capability 19
4.8 Ongoing monitoring and maintenance 19

5 Implementing the standard 20

Appendix 1 – Consolidated list of recommendations 21

Appendix 2 – Terms & definitions 22

Appendix 3 – Bibliography 24

INTRODUCTION

i.1 Drivers for change

In 2017, the Grenfell Tower fire created shockwaves throughout the built environment sector and generated a great deal of focus on deficiencies in both construction practices and the capability of the construction workforce.

It was recognised in the report of Dame Judith Hackitt, 'Building a Safer Future: Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety' (also known as the Hackitt Report) that a simple, more effective regulatory framework would be required to deliver change. This included moving to an 'outcomes-based' model, rather than a prescriptive rules-based model reliant on complex and detailed guidance. To achieve this, competent people who are capable of understanding their responsibilities for safety & integrity and thinking for themselves are required, alongside capable organisations which put individuals in a position where they can act competently.

The Building Safety Act 2022 (the Act) has introduced a new regulatory regime which puts a legal requirement to demonstrate competence front and centre, to directly address this issue. The Act, together with supporting secondary legislation sets a general requirement for competence at both individual and organisational levels:

- Organisational capability – Organisations must have the organisational capability to perform their functions. Organisational capability is defined within Building Regulations as having the appropriate management, policies, procedures, systems and resources in place to ensure that individuals under the control of the organisation comply with relevant regulations and that those in development are appropriately supervised
- Individual competence – Any person carrying building or design work must possess the skills, knowledge, experience and behaviours (SKEB) necessary

i.2 Addressing organisational capability and individual competence

Approaches to setting out requirements for, and implementing approaches to, demonstrating organisational capability are currently under consideration in collaboration with the wider built environment sector. This work is on-going and is not directly addressed within this document or any competence outputs created.

i.3 Addressing individual competence

The Industry Competence Steering Group (ICSG) is a formal, cross-sector working group of the Industry Competence Committee (ICC), a statutory committee of the Building Safety Regulator (BSR). ICSG provides a vehicle for industry collaboration in development and implementation of competence frameworks in the built environment.

ICSG is made up of multiple sector led groups (SLGs), each leading work in a specific area. Within this, SLG 10 is focussed on competence frameworks for installation and maintenance. The structure of SLG 10 is split into 5 super sectors, each focussed on different aspects of the installer landscape. SLG 10.2 covers roles and activities associated with engineering services, including ventilation hygiene.

i.4 The Ventilation Hygiene Competence Group (VHCG)

VHCG was formed to take forward the development of a sector-based approach to competence on behalf of SLG 10. It is formed from industry specialists and employer

representative organisations in line with the principles underpinning the work of ICSG (see page 2 for a full list of participating organisations).

The work described within this report focusses on defining an approach to individual competence in ventilation hygiene activities relating to inspection and audit, which identify and articulate system condition defects, and detailed cleaning, system remedial, or compliance requirements. The scope of this has been defined in section 1.1 and builds upon phase 1 work which set out context and pathways in relation to ventilation hygiene operatives and technicians (available here for reference).

This has been aligned with the requirements set out in BS 8670-1:2024, the code of practice for competence frameworks for building safety – core criteria.

At every stage, VHCG has endeavoured to consult with or include the work of other relevant bodies or working groups to ensure a joined-up approach to competence with allied areas.

i.5 The structure of this document

This document has been created to set out an intended 'future state' for individual competence for those carrying out ventilation hygiene inspection and audit activities (in accordance with the definition in section 1.1). This is set out in five sections:

Section 1 – Scope
This section provides information on the applicability of this document. This includes the purpose and scope of the work carried out in terms of occupation, building types and geographical area.

Section 2 – Background & context
The section provides contextual information around current competence arrangements within ventilation hygiene inspection and audit, including strengths, weaknesses, challenges and opportunities, which has informed the development of subsequent sections. Throughout this section, recommendations for improvement have been embedded, which are reflected in the proposed framework, standard for competence and/or implementation plan. These recommendations are summarised in Appendix 1 – Consolidated list of recommendations.

Section 3 – Functional map and framework of competencies
This section sets out the activities carried out within the agreed scope of ventilation hygiene inspection and audit, and the benchmark for competence within them in terms of skills, knowledge, experience, and behaviour (SKEB).

Section 4 – Standard for competence
This section includes details of how competence can be validated and revalidated against that standard to ensure both initial competence and currency of competence.

Section 5 – Implementing the standard
This section sets out expected actions required to turn the future state into a reality, including revision of standards and associated education products, and actions to ensure consistency across the training and assessment landscape.

Additional information is included within the appendices. Appendix 2 sets out terms and definitions used in the document, and appendix 3 provides a bibliography of further publications in support of this document.

This document provides industry guidance on demonstrating competence in ventilation hygiene inspection and audit. Whilst the requirements of the Building Safety Act (2022) and

secondary legislation such as the Building Regulations 2010 and their 2023 amendment have been taken into account in its production, its content does not constitute regulatory guidance and it is not intended to provide interpretation of the law. Responsibility for complying with the law sits with the individuals and organisations carrying out work. Signposting to relevant legislation and regulations can be found within Appendix 3.

i.6 The consultation and adoption process

This document is intended to provide a mechanism for consultation with the wider sector. Following closure of the consultation all comments will be reviewed by VHCG and, where required, amendments may be made to the functional map and framework of competencies, the standard for competence, and/or the implementation plan.

Final proposals post-consultation will be submitted to the Skills Partnership Committee for adoption and publication through its formal processes. Following approval, implementation will be continued by BESA (the relevant skills body) in collaboration with VHCG and other stakeholders, including training & assessment providers as appropriate.

1 SCOPE

1.1 Occupational area

Core competence requirements for ventilation hygiene operatives and technicians were set out in phase 1 of VHCG's work. The outputs of that work can be found here. In that work, the need for further activities was identified, focussed on inspection and audit. This work addresses those activities, building upon the supporting framework laid out in phase 1 to set out key requirements.

The following definition has been used to underpin the developments outlined in this document:

> *Ventilation hygiene inspection & audit identify and articulate system condition defects, and detailed cleaning, system remedial, or compliance requirements (in line with relevant legislation, standards and industry guidance).*
>
> *Inspection & audit activities extend across both air and grease hygiene, aligned with the requirements of TR19, NAAD-21, BS EN 15780 and SFG20.*

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this work is to set out an industry approach to developing, measuring, and validating the competence of those undertaking ventilation hygiene inspection and audit activities against the scope set out in section 1.1. This will ensure that defined arrangements are in place by which competence can be objectively measured and confirmed, increasing safety.

This document and its underpinning details are designed for use for a variety of purposes, including:

- Development of industry wide tools for measuring and validating competence
- Development of organisational approaches to evidencing workforce competence
- Alignment and/or recognition of existing training, assessment, qualifications
- Development of new training, assessment, qualifications, and occupational standards
- Strengthening arrangements for organisational capability through third party certification schemes or trade body membership schemes

No specific sector-based legal requirements for validation or revalidation of competence in relation to ventilation hygiene inspection and audit currently exist, however the Building Safety Act (2022) and associated legislation place an onus on individuals and employers to prove competence to work in critical activities in construction and the built environment.

1.3 Occupational relevance

This approach to competence has been designed for those carrying out ventilation hygiene inspection and audit activities within the definition in section 1.1. This includes activities which may be carried out by:

- Air hygiene technicians
- Grease hygiene technicians
- Technical specialists
- Sales representatives

1.4 Limitations and exclusions

The scope of this work applies to industrial / commercial, leisure, education, healthcare and large-scale residential and non-commercial settings.

This work applies to inspection and audit activities only. Competence requirements relating to carrying out and leading grease and air hygiene activities can be found in here.

1.5 Building types

The requirements set out in this document apply to work carried out on both new build construction sites and in existing buildings. They also apply equally to work carried out on higher-risk buildings (HRBs) and other building types.

1.6 Geographical scope

The proposals set out have been designed to apply to the whole of the UK to create a consistent standard for competence. Further discussion with bodies in devolved nations may be required to implement these proposals outside England.

2 BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

2.1 Links to phase 1 work

During VHCG's phase 1 work, discussion of the broader work carried out by organisations conducting ventilation hygiene cleaning was made. Although this was not the core focus of initial developments, an additional need for development of competence requirements in relation to inspection and audit was noted for follow up in a subsequent phase of work.

Based on these discussions, VHCG believes that the following activities need to be added to the functional map and integrated into routes to competence.

- Specify high level requirements for ventilation hygiene cleaning
- Carry out ventilation hygiene risk assessments to identify system condition defects, and detailed cleaning, system remedial or compliance requirements
- Carry out post-clean audit to confirm that cleaning has been carried out correctly

Recommendation 1: The functional map should be extended to cover inspection / audit activities as set out in section 2.1

2.2 Existing occupational standards

No current, specific standards for competence exist in relation to inspection / audit activities for ventilation hygiene (i.e. no specific National Occupational Standards (NOS) or apprenticeship occupational standards are currently in place). Elements of NOS related to broader ventilation hygiene cleaning work (BSEHV11) may embed requirements that might be relevant to this area. Work requirements are set out in TR19 air / grease, NAAD-21, BS EN 15780 and SFG20, but this does not extend to setting out explicit competence requirements.

Information contained across these documents should therefore be used to inform development of SKEB statements alongside insights from employers carrying out inspection / audit work.

Recommendation 2: Source documentation and employer insights should be used to create appropriate competence standards

It is likely that there will be cross over in competence requirements (particularly in relation to knowledge) with those set out for air and grease hygiene technicians. Competence standards should appropriately reflect this cross over to ensure that, regardless of route used, the full scope of knowledge and skills required to evidence competence in these activities is included.

Recommendation 3: Consideration should be given to overlap in knowledge requirements between relevant technician level activities within the phase 1 framework and inspection / audit activities

Evidence of experience and behaviour is still crucial to evidencing overall competence. This should be addressed in a similar manner to that included in phase 1 work.

Recommendation 4: Inclusions for experience and behaviour should mirror phase 1 work

Consideration should also be given to whether the demand is there to create NOS that align with the competence framework, in case these are required in future.

Recommendation 5: Consideration should be made of whether demand is in place to create NOS aligned to the competence framework

2.3 Qualifications and assessment programmes

No nationally recognised qualifications specific to ventilation hygiene audit or inspection currently exist. Difficulty creating traction with awarding organisations has been identified throughout mechanical engineering services. Current qualifications across the sector have limited take-up. Costs and time taken for completion are seen as barriers to learner uptake. English Apprenticeships in this area have previously been withdrawn due to low uptake linked to difficulties meeting minimum thresholds for apprenticeship duration.

Qualifications available in aligned areas, for example those delivered through the British Occupational Hygiene Society (BOHS) related to local exhaust ventilation, do not cover making definitive assessment of or recommendations for ventilation hygiene cleaning. Scope of work of their target audience is limited to making observations around system condition, performance & control of contaminants. As such, these do not provide an existing benchmark for assessment of ventilation hygiene inspection or audit skills and knowledge. Competence requirements defined by VHCG may, however, provide further progression from these qualifications for those wishing to extend their capabilities further.

Phase 1 developments for activities related to the work of ventilation hygiene operatives and technicians were centred around non-qualification models based on consistent assessment specifications, intended to drive consistency between providers and set out the scope of assessment[1]. Employers have set out a desire to see a similar model implemented in support of inspection and auditing activity. It is felt that further formal qualifications for ventilation hygiene inspection and audit will not provide the necessary support to the sector. Work should focus on ensuring that robust, non-qualification programmes of training and assessment aligned to the competence framework are available to industry.

> ***Recommendation 6: Routes to competence should build on non-qualification programmes of training and assessment, aligned to a central competence framework, currently being developed through phase 1 work***

Non-qualification programmes of training and/or assessment should align to the competence standard and framework moving forward (both initially and as time passes). It should be made clear to industry where available programmes meet or exceed the standards set.

> ***Recommendation 7: The Skills Partnership Committee should approve all products which contribute to evidence of competence and make it clear how these relate to the activities and statements set out within the competence framework***

Although these interventions address skills and knowledge, limited assessment of experience and behaviour is made. Additional mechanisms for evidencing experience and behaviour will need to be set out within routes to competence created

> ***Recommendation 8: Mechanisms for evidencing experience and behaviour should be set out within the routes to competence***

As with phase 1 work, on-site assessments for ventilation hygiene inspection and/or audit may be cost and time prohibitive. Logistics of getting assessors on to site can be difficult due to the nature of sites being worked on, permitting requirements or scheduling of work at unsociable hours. This may overlay additional costs that ultimately need to be borne by employers. Low volumes of learners split across multiple locations may not allow for economies of scale to

[1] Note, these are intended to sit alongside other industry documentation and it is anticipated that they will lean heavily on the existing BSE Skills assessment strategy. These are currently planned for development for phase 1 work.

offset these costs and drive efficiencies. The use of simulation in the assessment process should be carefully considered to mitigate this – the move to simulation is reflective of other areas of construction and the built environment and has not been found to adversely affect outcomes. Room should be left for both on-site and simulated assessment models within the assessment specification, although care should be taken to ensure parity of outcomes.

To ensure a consistent standard of robust assessment, assessment requirements should be set out centrally to ensure any assessment tools remain true to the needs of industry. This should be through extension of the assessment specification already planned through phase 1 implementation activity. Consideration of the use of simulated assessment and portfolio evidence should be made within this.

Recommendation 9: The standard assessment specification set out during phase 1 implementation should be extended to include requirements for inspection and audit activities

Recommendation 10: Provision for on-site and off-site assessment should be made in the assessment specification, ensuring parity of outcomes

2.4 Training provision

2.4.1 Industry training

Much training in ventilation hygiene takes place in the workplace, within organisations. This may be difficult to replicate in a training environment. Despite this, lack of clear direction for those carrying out training may result in differing level of capability. Training infrastructure is in place to deliver off-site training to supplement this where required.

Extending the standard training specification in development through phase 1 implementation to encompass inspection and audit activities would support both employer developed and third-party training to meet the needs of the sector[2]. Input from training providers will be essential to ensure that this guidance is fit for purpose.

Recommendation 11: The standard training specification being developed through phase 1 implementation should be extended to encompass inspection and audit activities to support consistency of training delivery

2.4.2 Manufacturers' training

Individuals should undertake any appropriate manufacturers training, alongside demonstration of baseline competence

2.5 Initial validation, ongoing validation and currency of competence

No validation mechanisms (either initial or on-going) are currently in place. Consideration should be given to how competence evidence and outcomes can be made visible. This may include additions to existing mechanisms such as SKILLCard.

Recommendation 12: Consideration should be given to how to validate competence and make outcomes visible

Currency of competence is essential to ensure that the workforce is not only capable now but remains capable in the future. A key component of the new competence regime is that competence must be maintained over time and that maintenance should be demonstrated.

[2] This is intended to clarify scope of content, and is not intended to set out standards or qualifications for trainers

No continuing demonstration of sector based SKEB is or requirements for continuing professional development (CPD) are in place, as pathways have not previously been articulated.

Recommendation 13: Routes to competence should consider the threshold(s) for continuing demonstration of competence

Completing formal CPD is not the only mechanism for retaining skills and knowledge. Consideration should be given to how continuing to evidence application of skills and knowledge (experience) plays into currency of competence.

Recommendation 14: Routes to competence should consider all potential mechanisms for ensuring currency of competence, not just formal training and/or assessment

2.6 Site access

Access to site is important for those carrying out inspection and audit based work, as this is commonly carried out on new build construction sites. As this is usually facilitated by holding the appropriate CSCS card, routes to CSCS carding should be considered as part of any routes to competence developed.

Recommendation 15: Routes to CSCS carding should be considered

2.7 Devolved nations consistency

In setting out requirements for the development, measurement and validation of competence, consideration of the best methods of ensuring consistency between England and the devolved nations is required. This is particularly important where parts of the workforce on national borders may operate in more than one nation. It is essential that a consistent bar for competence is set and adhered to throughout the UK.

Additional collaboration with skills bodies will be required to encourage take up of the additional requirements for competence identified in the devolved nations, over and above NOS, as these sit outside the direct scope of application of the Building Safety Act.

Recommendation 16: Additional collaboration with the devolved nations should be made to drive consistency in standards of competence across the UK

3 FUNCTIONAL MAP AND FRAMEWORK OF COMPETENCIES

3.1 Development background

A functional map has been created which breaks down the work carried out within the scope of ventilation hygiene inspection and audit (as defined in section 1.1) into discrete activities. These activities reflect the roles, responsibilities and types of work undertaken. These activities have then been aligned to the roles set out within that definition – this is indicative only. Individuals should demonstrate competence in these activities where they fall within their scope of work.

Each activity has then been broken down into competency statements outlining the skills, knowledge, experience, and behaviour (SKEB) required to perform that activity competently. The most recent versions of the NOS BSEHV11, relevant industry guidance, and employer insight have been used as the basis for skills and knowledge statements. Statements for experience and behaviour have been added in line with previous phase 1 work to create fit for purpose competence standards.

It is acknowledged that the full scope of health and safety included within engineering services qualifications is too broad in this case. The ‘working safely in ventilation hygiene’ activity created during phase 1 development has also been adopted for inspection and audit activities in this area, with some proposed changes to wording to reflect its extended utility. The areas included within this standard have been mapped back to the most recent version of BSEBSE01.

Together, the functional map and SKEB statements set out the benchmark for competence in each activity. These are designed to be used in conjunction with the expectations of the standard for competence set out in section 4. The routes to competence defined within that standard have been designed to facilitate demonstration of competence against this framework.

3.2 The functional map and framework of competencies

The detailed functional map and SKEB statements can be found in the spreadsheet included alongside this consultation document: VHCG – OP009 – Functional map & SKEB v1.

3.3 Mapping to other standards and frameworks

The SKEB statements developed have been mapped against BS 8670-1 and the relevant BSE Skills NOS. Details of that mapping can be found in the framework spreadsheet.

4 THE STANDARD FOR COMPETENCE

4.1 Target audiences

This standard for competence is intended to address the needs of the following:

- Upskillers progressing from Air / Grease Hygiene Technician (AHT/GHT)
- Those in technical / sales roles who need to upskill to carry out inspection and auditing activities
- Experienced workers (those already carrying out inspection / audit activities who need to demonstrate their competence)

Individuals will need to meet the requirements set out in the framework of competencies (section 3) for activities relevant to their job role. The routes to competence described in section 4.6 set out how this can be achieved.

4.2 Preparing to evidence competence

Individuals may use a combination of formal and informal learning to prepare to demonstrate competence.

Training alone (without embedded summative assessment) does not provide evidence of competence, but it is a useful enabler to prepare individuals to create the evidence of skills and knowledge required. Training may be carried out in house or through third-party training providers. When purchasing training, individuals and employers should check that this meets the requirements of the framework and will have value to them.

In addition to aiding development of knowledge and skills, informal learning in the workplace will also help to develop experience and behaviour.

4.3 Collecting evidence of competence

Individuals (in conjunction with their employer where appropriate) should select relevant activities from the functional map according to their role scope. Determination of competence should then be made through gathering evidence that the SKEB statements set out for relevant activities have been met in accordance with one of the routes to competence outlined in section 4.6.

- Evidence of skills and knowledge should be obtained through achievement of a relevant programme of assessment meeting the competence standard, approved as fit for purpose by the Skills Partnership Committee
- Experience (continuing application of skills and knowledge) can be demonstrated through collecting and storing evidence of work carried out in accordance with the benchmarks for experience set out within the selected activities
- Evidence of behaviour may be gained through performance management systems, including formal appraisals or reviews, or supervisor / team-leader feedback

Individuals who have yet to meet the required standard of competence for a particular activity should be supervised by a competent individual until competence has been demonstrated.

Where individuals are required to work at height, they should also hold the relevant qualifications / accreditations for the type(s) of access equipment / work types being employed. Guidance on appropriate programmes of learning and assessment is available through the Access Industry Forum (https://accessindustryforum.org.uk/). Where the individuals are not

personally installing or using the equipment but are protected by it, the equipment should be installed / used by individuals holding the relevant qualifications.

4.4 Validating competence

Individuals and their employers should validate that evidence of competence is in place across the full scope of relevant standards, as set out in the SKEB statements within the framework, and in accordance with the routes to competence.

It is recommended that a third-party system is utilised, to provide an objective check. For example, through a specific third-party installer certification scheme, a certificated quality management system incorporating management of individual competence, or a trade association membership scheme. Widening of the current industry registration scheme to incorporate full requirements for competence may also support industry in validating competence.

Where use of third-party validation is inappropriate, structured mechanisms for collating and checking evidence should be in place.

4.5 Revalidation of competence

Continuing demonstration of competence and revalidation of that competence are a key component of any assurance scheme. Competence should be revalidated every five years. As with initial validation, it is recommended that a third-party system is utilised to provide an objective check.

Evidence contributing to revalidation should be collected according to the routes to competence set out in section 4.6 and the requirements of the framework of competencies.

4.6 Proposed routes to competence

The following are routes to competence for each entry point. It is expected that an employer or individual will define the job role relevant to their scope of activities (as set out in section 4.3) aligned to the relevant occupation, and that individuals will be developed to that level using the appropriate route.

It should be noted that further development and agreement may be required to put these routes to competence in place, specifically to ensure that appropriate products are in place for individuals and their employers to access. Until the point where new routes to competence are available, existing competence guidance should be followed.

4.6.1 Initial evidence of competence

Individuals should develop their skills, knowledge, experience and behaviour in the workplace, supported by appropriate third-party training where required.

Individuals must provide the following evidence of competence:

- Completion of skills & knowledge assessment approved by the BSE Skills Partnership Committee as meeting or exceeding the requirements of the competence framework, in in-scope activities
    - Where individuals are upskilling from AHT/GHT roles, previous completion of assessment meeting the requirements for AHT/GHT activities signposted by the Skills Partnership may be used to demonstrate completion of relevant criteria

- Where individuals have not previously completed AHT/GHT assessment (or where refresher assessment is out of date) individuals should complete assessment across the full scope of SKEB in relevant activities

- Collated evidence of experience in line with the requirements of the competence framework, in in-scope activities
- Collated evidence of behaviour in line with the requirements of the competence framework, in in-scope activities

Individuals will be eligible for an appropriate SKILLCard upon completion of a relevant skills and knowledge assessment and the relevant CSCS HS&E test[3].

Where individuals are working at heights, they should also meet the relevant requirements (see section 4.3).

4.6.2 Addition of further competencies

Following initial demonstration of competence, individuals may need to add on competence in other activities, as their scope of work changes over time. For example, a salesperson identifying initial high level requirements for cleaning may progress into a technical role and may may also need to demonstrate ability to carry out ventilation hygiene risk assessment.

These additions may be made at various points throughout an individual's career as they extend their scope of work. Individuals should supply evidence of SKEB in relevant activities in line with the route set out in section 4.6.1.

Individuals will be eligible for an appropriate SKILLCard upon completion of a relevant skills and knowledge assessment and the relevant CSCS HS&E test[3].

Where individuals are working at heights, they should also meet the relevant requirements (see section 4.3).

4.6.3 Evidencing currency of competence

Continuing demonstration of competence and revalidation of that competence are a key component of any assurance scheme.

Evidence of currency of competence should be collected regularly throughout the five-year validation period, in order to support revalidation. Individuals must provide the following evidence of ongoing competence:

- Completion of any relevant skills / knowledge updates (CPD) (e.g. legislative updates, technological changes)
- Completion of refresher assessment in line with industry requirements and the requirements of the framework, in relevant activities
- Ongoing evidence of experience (continuing application of skills and knowledge over time) meeting the requirements of activities in the framework for which competence needs to be maintained
- Ongoing evidence of behaviour meeting the requirements of activities in the framework for which competence needs to be maintained

[3] Identification of an appropriate card type and routes to carding has been noted in the implementation plan

- Completing the relevant HS&E test where ongoing SKILLCard registration is required

It is recommended that the evidence gathered is validated by a third party to provide external, objective oversight.

4.7 Relationship to organisational capability

Alongside demonstrating the competence of individuals within their workforce, companies also need to demonstrate organisational capability.

Work has been carried out by the Building Safety Regulator's statutory Industry Competence Committee (ICC) and an Industry Task and Finish Group (ITFG) to develop guidance on organisational management of competence – a key component of organisational capability. Intended to provide high level principles and practical ways to apply these respectively, this guidance provides key prompts and case studies to support organisations in developing a proportionate approach to managing the competence of their staff and supply chain. The guidance can be found on the BSI's Built Environment Competence Hub.

4.8 Ongoing monitoring and maintenance

This standard and the functional map / framework of competencies will be managed and maintained by the BSE Skills Partnership, with practical support provided by VHCG.

The Skills Partnership will maintain a list of approved programmes which contribute towards the evidencing of competence in order to support employers in identifying appropriate provision.

5 IMPLEMENTING THE STANDARD

It has been acknowledged that further development work will be required to put in place the proposed routes to competence for the sector. The following table sets out the next steps required to fully implement the competence requirements set out within this paper. It should be noted that this list is not necessarily exhaustive, and further actions might be identified as work progresses.

Where specific product development is required, estimated time required for that development to take place has been factored into the timescale outlined. This may be subject to change as more detailed requirements emerge

Activity required	Purpose	Owner	Timescale
Explore demand for development of National Occupational Standard (NOS) for inspection & audit activities	To determine whether NOS are requirement and there is sufficient employer support to develop them	BESA / BSE Skills	TBC
Maintain list of approved provision	To make it clear to employers what has been approved as supporting demonstration of competence	Skills Partnership	Ongoing
Extend standard assessment specification to include inspection & audit activities (requirements and guidance for assessors & assessments, including provision for off-site and on-site assessment)	To drive consistency between providers	BESA / VHCG / training providers	Q3 2027
Extend standard training specification to include inspection & audit activities	To drive consistency in training & support alignment of training with assessment	BESA / VHCG / training providers	Q3 2027
Explore use of SKILLCard related to inspection & audit activities	To create registration opportunities that facilitate site access	BESA SKILLCard	Q3 2027
Develop requirements for refresher assessment and any associated training	To ensure that currency of competence can be maintained	BESA / VHCG	TBD
Engage with devolved nations stakeholders to encourage take-up of additional competence requirements	To ensure consistent requirements for competence are in place throughout the UK	BESA	Ongoing

APPENDIX 1 – CONSOLIDATED LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: The functional map should be extended to cover inspection / audit activities as set out in section 2.1

Recommendation 2: Source documentation and employer insights should be used to create appropriate competence standards

Recommendation 3: Consideration should be given to overlap in knowledge requirements between relevant technician level activities within the phase 1 framework and inspection / audit activities

Recommendation 4: Inclusions for experience and behaviour should mirror phase 1 work

Recommendation 5: Consideration should be made of whether demand is in place to create NOS aligned to the competence framework

Recommendation 6: Routes to competence should build on non-qualification programmes of training and assessment, aligned to a central competence framework, currently being developed through phase 1 work

Recommendation 7: The Skills Partnership Committee should approve all products which contribute to evidence of competence and make it clear how these relate to the activities and statements set out within the competence framework

Recommendation 8: Mechanisms for evidencing experience and behaviour should be set out within the routes to competence

Recommendation 9: The standard assessment specification set out during phase 1 implementation should be extended to include requirements for inspection and audit activities

Recommendation 10: Provision for on-site and off-site assessment should be made in the assessment specification, ensuring parity of outcomes

Recommendation 11: The standard training specification being developed through phase 1 implementation should be extended to encompass inspection and audit activities to support consistency of training delivery

Recommendation 12: Consideration should be given to how to validate competence and make outcomes visible

Recommendation 13: Routes to competence should consider the threshold(s) for continuing demonstration of competence

Recommendation 14: Routes to competence should consider all potential mechanisms for ensuring currency of competence, not just formal training and/or assessment

Recommendation 15: Routes to CSCS carding should be considered

Recommendation 16: Additional collaboration with the devolved nations should be made to drive consistency in standards of competence across the UK

APPENDIX 2 – TERMS & DEFINITIONS

Behaviour

Observable traits or ways of working that should be displayed. Observable things that an individual does or does not do

Competence / individual competence

Application of skill, knowledge, experience, and behaviour consistently by an individual to achieve a specific outcome

Standard for competence

Procedures & requirements for developing, measuring, validating, and proving competence against agreed skills, knowledge, experience, and behaviours required for an individual undertaking a role, function, activity, or task in order to perform their work to predetermined standards and expectations and maintain or improve their performance over time. This is sometimes referred to as a competence framework or competence standard

Continuing professional development (CPD)

Activities undertaken by an individual to maintain and develop competence, including formal and informal learning, self-assessment, obtaining feedback and identifying areas for improvement

Experience

Participation in relevant activities or observation of facts and events leading to acquisition, improvement or demonstration of skills and knowledge

Formal learning

Organised and structured learning against formal learning objectives

Framework of competencies

Agreed statements of skills, knowledge, experience, and behaviour against specific activities identified in the functional map

Functional map

A map of activities included in the sub-sector, split into pre-determined levels of complexity

Individual

A single human being

Informal learning

Self-directed learning, or learning from experience

Higher-risk building (HRB)

Building subject to enhanced regulatory requirements or where risks might be considered elevated (for example as a result of the physical characteristics of the building, the way in which the building is used, or as a result of human factors)

Job role

The specific combination of activities performed in a specific role, as agreed between an employee and an employer. This may change over time, or from employer to employer, or between employees of the same employer

Knowledge

Assimilation of facts, theories, and practices in relation to a given role, function, activity, or task

Occupation

The area of work undertaken by a category of employees, each of which may have a related but different job role. This is standard across the entire industry

Organisational capability

The combination of people, practices and other resources brought together by a business to allow it to function effectively and deliver value to customers and stakeholders

Qualification

A regulated programme of assessment, sometimes with aligned training, which results in the issue of a nationally recognised award being made upon completion

Revalidation

The formal process or reassessing an individual's competence against a sector-specific framework on a periodic basis to check that competence has been maintained

Sector-specific competence framework

A competence framework relevant to a specific role, function, activity, task, trade, or discipline

Skill

The ability to perform an activity or task consistently with a specific intended outcome

Validation

The formal process of assessing an individual's competence against a sector-specific framework

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