External Wall Insulation Competence Framework

Continue →

How to read this document

This document aims to outline the Competence Standard set out by the Sector Group.
The elements in the above menu are the Competence Framework elements.

Routes to Competence:
Read this document from the bottom to the top. It contains 3 swim lanes which show the routes for a new entrant, someone who has some skills, knowledge, experience and behaviours (SKEB) as well as an experienced worker.

Functional Map:
This shows the grouping of functions together to show competencies for a specific role. This will be used to form the basis of any new qualification structures in the future. It may look very similar to existing competence qualification structures as the groups of functions are likely to be the same. It is the finer detail found in the Trade Specific Competencies that will outline the next level of detail.

Core Trade Competencies:
These are the common requirements for this trade more generally.

Trade Specific Competencies:
These are the functions themselves, when put together with other functions they become the competence requirements for a particular role. Use the Knowledge and Skill tabs (where applicable) to reveal or conceal additional details within sections

Experience:
Requirements set out by the Sector Group. These will form part of any checks carried out to validate competence initially as well as what is required for revalidation purposes. This could be a number of CPD hours that an individual is expected to undertake, observation of fire or safety critical installation activities on an annual basis or requirements that in the future would be required to trigger a construction card scheme card.

Behaviours:
Based on those found in BS8670-1:2024 the behaviours are what is expected from individuals working in this role. It is felt that most of these would be monitored by an employer on an ongoing basis, some might be added to competence qualifications where they can be demonstrated during the time served on an apprenticeship for example.

Background

In the report, Building a Safer Future, Dame Judith Hackitt spoke of the industry's approach to competence as being "fragmented, encompassing a range of disciplines and different competence frameworks even within one discipline and without reference to other interacting disciplines".

The Building Safety Act 2022, together with supporting secondary legislation, has introduced a new regulatory regime, which requires the engagement of everyone working in the built environment, not just those involved in Higher-Risk Buildings (HRBs).

Regulations define competence as having the appropriate **skills, knowledge, experience** and **behaviours (SKEB),** and requires all individuals carrying out any design, construction or refurbishment work to be competent to undertake the role to which they are appointed.

Organisations must also demonstrate that they have the 'organisational capability', and it is a legal requirement for anyone appointing an individual or organisation to ensure that they meet the requirements.

In December 2024, the Industry Competence Steering Group (ICSG) was formally launched as the updated structure to the Competence Steering Group (CSG). Made up of 15 different working groups, representing all of Construction and the Built Environment, with the agreed goal of creating competence frameworks. Sector Lead Group 10 in the Industry Competence Steering Group represents Installation and Maintenance and this work has taken place in conjunction with that programme of work.

ICSG Working Groups

In September 2020, The CSG released Setting the Bar – a new competence regime for building a safety future which included recommendations from WG2 (pages 54 – 60) Under the move from the CSG to the ICSG, WG2 has become SLG10.

Since the publication of this report WG2 (now SLG10) has focussed on delivering its recommendation that the industry should adopt a framework for all the installer roles working on in- scope buildings that can also be applied to other project types. The frameworks should consist of:

- Accredited third party certification of companies
- Level 2 or 3 qualifications for individuals
- A card scheme such as, but not limited to, the CSCS
- CPD refresher training and the maintenance of individual skills
- All installers have a core knowledge of fire safety in buildings – training to be standardised and made mandatory.

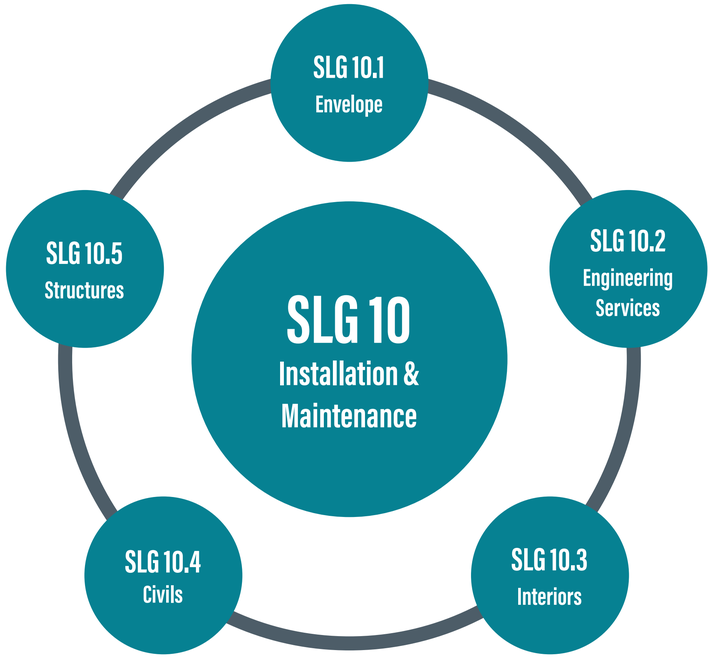
A requirement identified within the Setting the Bar report was to identify any SKEB needed for working within a Higher-Risk Building (HRB). Whilst developing the competence frameworks, the working groups noted that there is very little difference between work carried out in a non-HRB and an HRB, however, where there are differences, these have been identified within the competence frameworks.

In 2024 SLG10 scaled up its initial pilot programme into the format on the next page, grouping the work into five workstreams: Envelope, Engineering Services, Interiors, Civils and Structures.

CITB provides Developer support to all roles within its scope order, facilitating the Sector Group's work and allowing them to concentrate on defining the competence requirements with support and guidance to document the requirements set for the frameworks.

In this role CITB can support the standardisation of statements contained within the Competence Frameworks, sharing best practice between the groups. This working relationship also allows CITB to plan in any Implementation Plan actions that have been identified and that fall under its responsibility. This allows for faster implementation of the Competence Frameworks.

The Industry Competence Steering Group (ICSG)



Fire Safety in Buildings

Following the recommendations in the Building a Safer future report, a group of Industry Experts met to design and build the content for a Fire Safety in Buildings training course for all installers to undertake. CITB funded the creation of the course and it is now a free to access training resource which sits on the eLearning platform on the CITB website.

Fire Safety in Buildings Free Online Training Course

Competence Frameworks

The following documents that make up the Competence framework:

1. **The SKEB Statements** - outlining the **S**kills, **K**nowledge, **E**xperience and **B**ehaviours (SKEB) required to obtain competence in the occupation(s).
2. **A Route to Competence** - showing the path (or paths) to obtaining, and then maintaining, individual competence in the occupation(s).
3. **An Implementation Plan** - identifying what practical steps are required (as well as a timeframe) to allow every individual in scope to the competence framework to come into compliance with its requirements.

The Competence frameworks have been written in line with BS8670-1:2024 Competence frameworks for building safety which outlines the key components of a Competence Framework.

These include:

- **What Competence is defined as**
- **What Validation and Revalidation looks like**
- **How to maintain and develop Competence over time**
- **Limits of Competence**

Competence Framework Key Definitions

BS8670-1:2024 Defines the key elements of Competence Frameworks as follows:

Competence: application of skills, knowledge, experience and behaviour to achieve a defined outcome

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

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

Experience: participation in relevant activities or observation of facts and events leading to acquisition or improvement of knowledge and skills

Behaviour: observable things that an individual does or does not do

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

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

Sector Overview

External Wall Insulation Competence Framework Development

The development of the External Wall Insulation (EWI) Competence Framework aims to establish a structured, standardised approach for assessing and ensuring the competencies of installers working in the external wall insulation sector. The framework serves to address the growing demand for high-quality and safe installations, promoting the development of skilled professionals who meet industry standards.

The framework outlines key competencies required for the EWI installation process, including installation, health and safety, training and qualification landscape and any re-validation requirements. It is designed to guide training programs, qualifications, employers, workers, regulatory bodies across the industry. This competency model is intended to reduce risks associated with poor insulation practices, improve building performance, and ensure compliance with relevant regulations and standards.

Key components of the framework include:

1. **Routes to Competence:** Identification of the recognised routes to achieving competence.
2. **Competency Levels:** Clear definitions of the Skills, Knowledge, Experience & Behaviours required for each function and role of the EWI installation process.
3. **Technical Skills:** A comprehensive understanding of materials, techniques, and equipment used in EWI systems.
4. **Health and Safety:** Emphasis on safety standards to minimise accidents and ensure safe working environments.
5. **Sustainability and Efficiency:** Incorporating best practices for energy efficiency, sustainability, and the long-term performance of external wall insulation systems.

The framework is intended for use by industry professionals, training providers, and regulatory bodies to create a consistent and accountable approach to competency in EWI installations. By ensuring that installers meet the framework's requirements, the industry can improve the quality of external wall insulation projects and support regulatory compliance.

Sector Overview

Development Process

The development process involved extensive consultation and collaboration through a series of working group meetings with SLG10 Installation and Maintenance (previously WG2 Installers), INCA and other federations/ associations representation, employers, manufacturers, training providers and CITB. An online survey and webinar were also available to present the Competence Framework and offer an opportunity to review, provide feedback, support and validate the framework development.

Thorough analysis of existing competencies, existing standards, training, qualifications, current working practices and known issues and challenges were carried out to help inform the framework and identify actions that need to be addressed.

The working groups were generally very well attended and were conducted in a very cooperative, open and friendly manner with all participating getting the opportunity to contribute to the discussions and development work being carried out in relation to the SKEB.

Revalidation of competence was also considered during the development stage and will be finalised during the implementation phase.

Sector Overview

Outcomes and Findings

The following significant actions have been identified and will be addressed as part of an implementation plan:

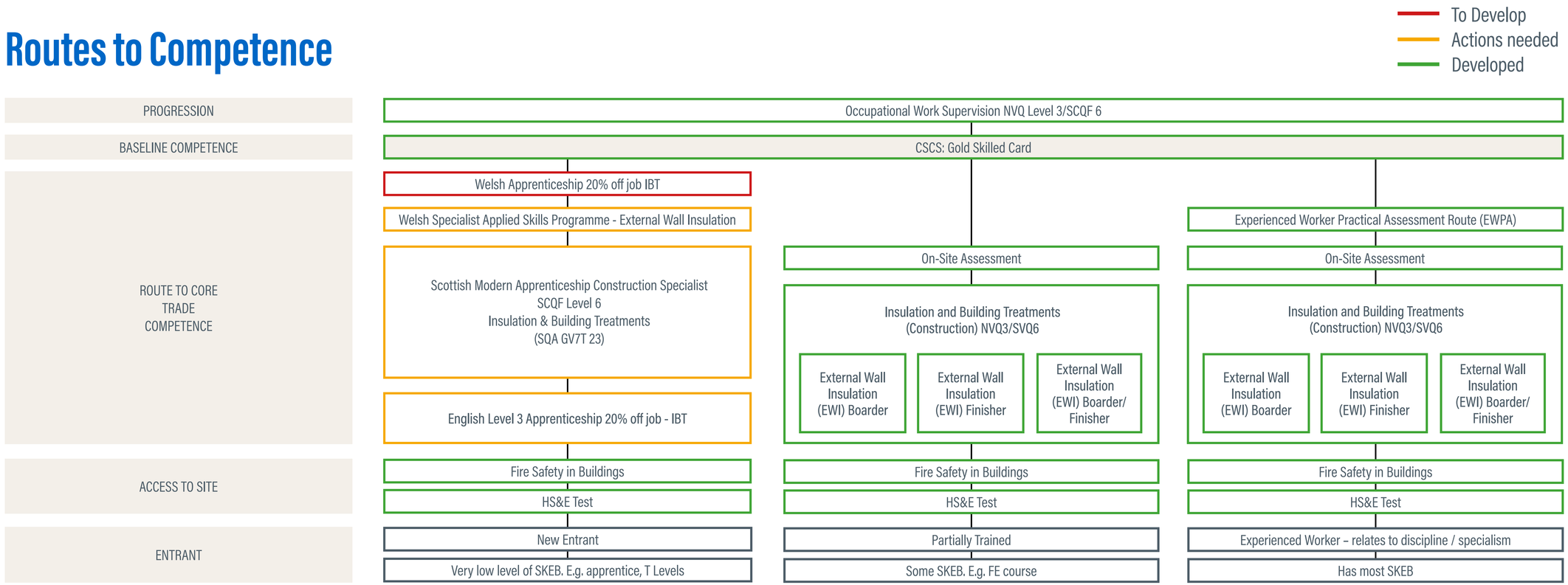
- Develop an English and Welsh apprenticeship
- Find providers for the Modern Apprenticeship in Scotland
- Roll out a Specialist Applied Programme (SAP) for the level 3 NVQ
- Develop short duration training courses that align to the Framework
- Introduce Fire Safety in Buildings training as a mandatory competence requirement for installers

Barriers identified to addressing the actions listed above include a substantial lack of assessors which will also be looked at during the implementation phase.

The National Occupational Standards (NOS) were used as a basis from which to develop the Skills and Knowledge elements of the Competence Framework. With this alignment to the Competence Framework, it has been identified these existing standards and subsequent vocational qualifications are still fit for purpose.

The working group have also identified additional content to include Experience and Behaviour requirements. When adapted either individually or through an organisation, these will promote a culture of self-development, responsibility and reinforce positive values.

Routes to Competence



Functional Map
Introduction

DEFINITIONS

SKEB Skills, Knowledge, Experience and Behaviours; **VQ** Vocational Qualification – NVQ and SVQ; **COSVR XXX** Specific National Occupational Standards; **RQF** Regulated Qualification Framework (England)

Training Pathways for Insulated Building Treatments External Wall Insulation (EWI)

PURPOSE

The Route to Competence (RtC) and Skills, Knowledge, Experience and Behaviour (SKEB) statements are to identify the standards and qualification landscape for External Wall Insulation within the Insulation and Building Treatment Sector.

Through consultation with sector experts, this will help clarify, if there is the necessary structure and provision in place to train and qualify the future workforce. There will also need to be additional provision in place to help maintain and monitor competence over time. Building regulations and industry best practice knowledge guidelines were referenced throughout consultation and fed into the Experience and Revalidation elements of this Framework.

SCOPE

The scope of the document provides the new Competence requirements and Training Pathways.

FUNCTIONAL MAP

The current competencies required as agreed by industry.

EXPERIENCE

Information on how to evidence competence and confirm the level of experience.

BEHAVIOURS

Core behavioural statements originating from the BS8670-1:2024 document, which sets out core building safety competence criteria, were considered as part of the development process. Demonstration of behaviours should form part of all competency assessment activity.

CORE CONSTRUCTION COMPETENCIES

These skills and knowledge statements are derived from a standard set of competencies that underpin all construction roles. **The Core Construction competencies have undergone a format revision and are currently draft versions pending a collective review by industry.

CORE TRADE COMPETENCIES

Core Trade skills and knowledge statements applicable for all roles of External Wall Insulation operative - EWI Boarder, EWI Finisher & EWI Boarder/Finisher.

TRADE SPECIFIC COMPETENCIES

Each function has been mapped from the NOS and provides the Skills and Knowledge of what is undertaken under each function. Continuous review of trade specific competencies in line with NOS and Apprenticeship standards well remain an iterative process across all nations.

Functional Map

Core Construction Competencies

FUNCTIONAL MAP ACTIVITIES		ENGLAND & WALES			SCOTLAND			SHORT DURATION TRAINING STANDARDS	RE-VALIDATION
		EWI BOARDER	EWI FINISHER	EWI BOARDER / FINISHER	EWI BOARDER	EWI FINISHER	EWI BOARDER / FINISHER		
CORE CONSTRUCTION COMPETENCIES									
CC001	Confirm work activities and resources for the work	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
CC002	Develop and maintain good working relationships	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
CC003	Confirm the occupational method of work	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
CC004	Conform to general health, safety and welfare in the workplace	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	▪ Fire safety in buildings	

Functional Map

Trade Specific Competencies

FUNCTIONAL MAP ACTIVITIES		ENGLAND & WALES			SCOTLAND			SHORT DURATION TRAINING STANDARDS	RE-VALIDATION
		EWI BOARDER	EWI FINISHER	EWI BOARDER / FINISHER	EWI BOARDER	EWI FINISHER	EWI BOARDER / FINISHER		
CC001	Install external wall insulation	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓	▪ Surface preparation and board installation for EWI ▪ Exterior wall surface preparation and application of a surface water repellent ▪ Preparing to and installing EWI	
CC002	Apply surface finishes to external wall insulation	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	▪ Applying surface finishes to external wall insulation	
CC003	Insulation and building treatments building construction defects and interfaces	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	▪ Insulation and building treatments (IBT) building construction, defects and interfaces	

Core Construction Competencies

Confirm work activities and resources for the work (CC001)

Function: Confirm work activities and resources for the work
Refs: COSVR209 Confirm work activities and resources for the work

Description: This function in the context of your occupation and work environment, is about identifying your own work activities, adopting safe and healthy work practices, identifying resources to carry out the work and confirmation of a work program/schedule for the work being carried out.

SKILLS

You must be able to:

Identify the work activities and the required resources

Obtain clarification and advice when the required resources are not available

Evaluate the work activities against records covering project requirements and the requirements of any significant external factors

Influencing the work relating to the following:

- other occupations and/or customers
- resources
- weather conditions
- health and safety requirements

Make the best use of the resources available by identifying the following:

- work activities that influence each other
- durations and sequencing of work activities
- sustainability of resources
- environmental requirements

Identify changes to the work activities to meet changing circumstances and justify the proposed changes to the decision makers, line management or customer

Prepare a plan for the work activities and required resources

KNOWLEDGE

Core Construction Competencies

Develop and Maintain Good Working Relationships (CC002)

Function: Develop and maintain good working relationships
Refs: COSVR210 Develop and maintain good working relationships

Description: This function in the context of your occupation and work environment, is about interpreting information, adopting safe and healthy working practices, working with, informing and supporting people and developing and maintaining good occupational working relationships.

SKILLS | KNOWLEDGE

You must be able to:

Working relationships

Develop, maintain and encourage working relationships to promote goodwill and trust

Record information on advice provided about occupational work activities and/or associated occupations

Apply the principles of equality and diversity

Inform people

Inform people about work activities in an appropriate level of detail and with an appropriate degree of urgency

Record information and advice given about carrying out the work activities:

- appropriate timescales
- health and safety requirements
- co-ordination of work procedures

Offer advice

Offer advice and help to relevant people about work activities and encourage questions, requests for clarification and comments

Record information and advice given about methods of occupational work activities to achieve the required outcome

Deal with alternative proposals

Clarify the proposals with the relevant people and discuss alternative suggestions

Outline notes of discussions relating to the occupational work activity and/or other occupations involved

Resolve conflicts

Resolve differences of opinion in ways that minimise offence and maintain goodwill, trust and respect

Outline notes of agreed activities that satisfy those involved, to meet the required outcome of the proposed method of work

Core Construction Competencies

Confirm the occupational method of work (CC003)

Function: Confirm the occupational method of work
Refs: COSVR211 Confirm the occupational method of work

Description: This function in the context of your occupation and work environment, is about assessing project data to determine occupational work methods, adopting safe and healthy working practices, selecting the methods of work, confirming the methods of work to the relevant people associated with the occupation and sourcing additional information.

SKILLS | KNOWLEDGE

You must be able to:

Assessment of project data

Assess and summarise the available project data accurately to determine the occupational work method relating to the following

Information sources for project data

Obtain additional information from alternative sources in cases where the available project data is insufficient

Identify work methods

Identify work methods that will make the best use of resources and meet project, statutory and contractual requirements

Communicate the method of work

Confirm and communicate the selected work method to relevant personnel

Keep records

Keep records about occupational work activities to achieve the required outcome relating to the following:

- information
- advice
- guidance
- notes of discussions

Core Construction Competencies

Conform to general health, safety and welfare (CC004)

Function: Conform to general health, safety and welfare in the workplace
Refs: COSVR641 Conform to general health, safety and welfare in the workplace

Description: This function in the context of your occupation and work environment, is about awareness of relevant current statutory requirements and official guidance; responsibilities, to self and others, relating to workplace health, safety and welfare; personal behaviour and security in the workplace.

SKILLS | KNOWLEDGE

You must be able to:

Workplace health, safety and welfare

Comply with all workplace health, safety and welfare legislation requirements at all times

Avoid risk by complying with given information relating to the following:

- induction
- briefings
- application of prior training (safe use of health and safety control equipment)

Adhere to statutory requirements and/or safety notices and warning signs displayed in the workplace or on equipment

Recognition of hazards

Recognise hazards, associated with the workplace and report them in accordance with organisational procedures

Recognise hazards created by changing circumstances, that have not been previously controlled, and report them in accordance with organisational procedures

Organisational policies and procedures

Accept responsibility for, and comply with, organisational policies and procedures in order to contribute to health, safety and welfare

Show personal behaviour which demonstrates active responsibility for general workplace health, safety and welfare

Comply with organisational policies and procedures relating to the following:

- consideration of others
- interpretation of given instructions to maintain safe systems of work
- contributing to discussions (offer and provide feedback)
- maintaining quality working practices
- contributing to the maintenance of workplace welfare facilities
- storage and use of equipment provided to keep people safe
- disposal of waste and/or consumable items

Security arrangements

Comply with and support organisational procedures for maintaining the security of the workplace:

- during the working day
- on completion of the day's work
- from unauthorised personnel (other operatives and/ or the general public)
- from theft

Core Trade Competencies
Interpret Information

Description: These core trade functions contain all the common competencies for anyone working in the installation of External Wall Insulation including: interpreting information, adopting safe, healthy and environmentally responsible work practices, selecting and using materials, components, tools and equipment, minimising damage, and working within the allocated time.

SKILLS | KNOWLEDGE

You must be able to:

Interpret and use the information relating to the work and resources to confirm its relevance for the following:

- drawings
- specifications
- schedules
- risk assessments
- method statements
- suppliers and manufacturers' information
- data sheets

Core Trade Competencies

Safe Work Practices

Description: These core trade functions contain all the common competencies for anyone working in the installation of External Wall Insulation including: interpreting information, adopting safe, healthy and environmentally responsible work practices, selecting and using materials, components, tools and equipment, minimising damage, and working within the allocated time.

SKILLS

You must be able to:

Comply with the legislation and official guidance to carry out the work and maintain safe and healthy work practices relating to the following:

- methods of work
- safe use of health and safety control equipment
- safe use of access equipment and harness systems
- safe use, storage and handling of materials, tools and equipment
- operative maintenance of installation equipment
- specific risks to health including mental health
- specific risks associated with ventilation and combustion appliances

KNOWLEDGE

Core Trade Competencies

Selection of Resources

Description: These core trade functions contain all the common competencies for anyone working in the installation of External Wall Insulation including: interpreting information, adopting safe, healthy and environmentally responsible work practices, selecting and using materials, components, tools and equipment, minimising damage, and working within the allocated time.

SKILLS | KNOWLEDGE

You must be able to:

Select the required quantity and quality of the following resources for the methods of work

Check the suitability, compatibility and characteristics of the materials, components and finishes, and determine if they are moisture open or moisture

Record and report issues or defects

Select tools and equipment

Core Trade Competencies

Minimise the risk of damage

Description: These core trade functions contain all the common competencies for anyone working in the installation of External Wall Insulation including: interpreting information, adopting safe, healthy and environmentally responsible work practices, selecting and using materials, components, tools and equipment, minimising damage, and working within the allocated time.

SKILLS | KNOWLEDGE

You must be able to:

Comply with company procedures to minimise the risk of damage to the work and surrounding area by:

- protecting the work and its surrounding area
- maintaining a safe, clear and tidy work area
- disposing of waste in accordance with current legislation

Core Trade Competencies

Approach to work

Description: These core trade functions contain all the common competencies for anyone working in the installation of External Wall Insulation including: interpreting information, adopting safe, healthy and environmentally responsible work practices, selecting and using materials, components, tools and equipment, minimising damage, and working within the allocated time.

SKILLS

You must be able to:

Complete your work within the estimated, allocated time and performance requirements of the system design, method statement and the required standardprotecting the work and its surrounding area

KNOWLEDGE

Trade Specific Competencies

Install External Wall Insulation (EWI001)

Function: Install external wall insulation
Refs: COSVR448 Install external wall insulation

Description: This function is about preparing and installing external wall insulation

SKILLS

+

KNOWLEDGE

+ > >

You must be able to:

Remove, measure, mark out, cut, line, level, drill, fit, fix, fill, finish, position and secure to carry out pre-installation checks, assessing, recording and reporting issues as per specification to include:

- suitable access
- vents ducts, flues and penetrations
- services (gas, electric, water, media cables)
- architectural features
- vegetation
- rainwater and soil water services
- damp proof course
- surface defects
- trim projections, cills and overhangs
- protections, such as glazing, doors, floors and roofs

Use and maintain all work tools and equipment

Cut and fix pre-formed trims and mounting blocks

Install pattresses for fixtures and fittings

Apply treatments to existing walls

Install base track and seal

Trade Specific Competencies

Apply surface finishes to external wall insulation (EWI002)

Function: Apply surface finishes to external wall insulation
Refs: COSVR449 Apply surface finishes to external wall insulation

Description: This function is about applying dash finishes, proprietary precast finishes, corner and surface beads, renders, paint finishes, and brick slips to external wall insulation

SKILLS

KNOWLEDGE

You must be able to:

Remove, measure, mark out, cut, line, level, drill, fit, fix, fill, finish, position and secure to carry out pre-installation checks, assessing, recording and reporting issues as per specification to include:

- suitable access
- vents ducts, flues and penetrations
- services (gas, electric, water, media cables)
- architectural features
- vegetation
- rainwater and soil water services
- damp proof course
- surface defects
- trim projections, cills and overhangs
- protections, such as glazing, doors, floors and roofs

Use and maintain all work tools and equipment

Cut and fix pre-formed trims and mounting blocks

Install pattresses for fixtures and fittings

Apply treatments to existing walls

Install base track and seal

Trade Specific Competencies

Insulation and building treatments building construction, defects and interfaces (EWI003)

Function: Insulation and building treatments building construction, defects and interfaces
Refs: COSVR817 Insulation and Building Treatments Construction Defects and Interfaces

Description: This function is about energy efficiency measures, methods of construction and common building defects in relation to the installation of insulation and building treatments.

SKILLS

KNOWLEDGE

You must be able to:

Demonstrate work skills to carry out pre-installation checks (external and internal) in regard to building construction, defects and material interfaces

Identify common building defects including but not limited to:

- salt contamination
- causes of dampness
- rain penetration
- rising damp
- internal moisture vapour
- damaged services
- structural defects

Experience

Information that can be evidenced to confirm level of experience

Mandatory Experience requirements

- Provide evidence of occupationally relevant qualifications (Level 3 NVQ or Level 6 SVQ or Apprenticeship Level 3)
- Relevant CSCS Card
- Provide evidence of occupationally relevant system specific training
- Provide evidence of projects worked on via digital evidence or testimony within the last 3 years
- Official written testimonials from current or previous employer within the last 3 years*
- Testimony from clients and/or customers from the last 3 years

Additional Experience requirements

- Job description and role summary from employer
- Provide evidence of additional training (EWI training, non-vocational qualification and systems specific training)
- Current CV
- Provide evidence of other occupationally relevant qualifications
- Provide further evidence of projects worked on via digital evidence or testimony

***Note this should be provided on letter headed paper to verify the employer to validate this experience**

Behaviours

You must be able to demonstrate:

Understand and respect duty of care to others including building occupants

Putting Health, Safety and wellbeing of self and others first and report any non-compliance

Considerations for the environment and sustainability when using resources and materials and carrying out processes including reuse, recycle and safe disposal of waste

Taking ownership of own work, personal judgements and actions

Promotion of a fair, diverse and inclusive culture within the workforce

Undertaking progressive and appropriate training to increase or maintain level of competence through continuous personal and professional development

Adaptability to new and changing situations with clients, customers, members of the public and other contractor trades

Working well within a team

Adaptable communication methods to suit audience

Respecting lines of communication and collaborate with others

Managing own time effectively

Recognising differing requirements of site environments compared to domestic environments

Behaviours that represent your trade and your employer in a positive manner

Upholding work ethics, including honesty, integrity and respect for others

Working within limits of own competence and seek advice from trusted sources when required

Delivering high quality work using best practice

References/Glossary

The Competence Framework page hosted by the CLC:
Competence – Construction Leadership Council

Details of the new ICSG Structure:
Industry Competence Steering Group – Construction Leadership Council

CITB Competence Framework page:
Competence Frameworks - CITB

The BSI Competence Programme pages:
Raising Competency Across the Built Environment | BSI